

# Strategies for Thai Translation of Guangxi Intangible Cultural Heritage List in the Context of Belt and Road Initiative

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## Abstract

**In the context of the Belt and Road, Guangxi is an important gateway to Southeast Asian countries. Thailand is an important country along the Belt and Road, while Guangxi has many ethnic minorities and a rich historical and cultural heritage. To date, there are 49 national intangible cultural heritage items in Guangxi, which cover a wide range of cultural contents and have a strong ethnic and cultural flavour of Guangxi. The translation of these items will help Thailand to better understand Guangxi's culture and help "Chinese culture to go out". This paper discusses the principles and methods of Thai translation of the list of intangible cultural heritage of Guangxi to help the research of Thai translation of intangible cultural heritage and the foreign promotion of Chinese intangible heritage.**

## Keywords

**Intangible Cultural Heritage of Guangxi; Thai Translation Strategy; Translation Method.**

## 1. Introduction

Since the Belt and Road Initiative was proposed in 2013, China and countries along the ASEAN route have become increasingly connected, which is conducive to further enhancing political, economic and cultural cooperation and exchanges between the two sides. In 2017, *the Ministry of Culture's "One Belt, One Road" One of the important tasks proposed in the Action Plan for Cultural Development (2016-2020)* is to promote the establishment of intangible cultural heritage exchange and cooperation mechanisms with countries and regions along the route. Guangxi is an important gateway for China to the ASEAN countries. Thailand, on the other hand, is an important country along the ASEAN, and it is one of the important tasks nowadays to actively carry out exchanges and cooperation on intangible cultural heritage through the Belt and Road Initiative series of platforms. At the 13th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th People's Congress of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, *the Regulations on the Protection of Ethnic and Folk Traditional Culture of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region* were adopted on 1 April 2005, providing a guarantee for the protection, inheritance and promotion of the excellent ethnic and folk traditional culture, promoting economic and social development, and facilitating the construction of socialist material and spiritual civilization. Guangxi has many ethnic minorities and a rich ethnic culture. According to the data of Guangxi Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Network, so far, Guangxi has 70 national-level intangible cultural heritage lists and 914 autonomous region level intangible cultural heritage lists. In this context, exploring the Thai translation strategy and translation method of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage is a way to export and exchange Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage to Thailand.

## 2. Overview of the Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Guangxi

At present, the intangible cultural heritage list above the provincial level in Guangxi includes all categories of intangible cultural heritage, namely folk literature, traditional music, traditional

dance, traditional drama, opera, traditional sports, amusement and acrobatics, traditional arts, traditional arts, traditional medicine and folklore. There are 70 items in the folklore list, 116 items in the traditional music list, 94 items in the traditional dance list, 79 items in the traditional drama list, 23 items in the opera list, 32 items in the traditional sports, amusement and acrobatics list, 31 items in the traditional fine arts list, 258 items in the traditional arts list, 39 items in the traditional medicine list, and 242 items in the folklore list. The statistics show that the number of traditional arts and folklore are both over 200, the largest number of items in any category. For example, the traditional skills of rice noodle making (Liuzhou Snail Noodle Making Technique) and rice noodle making (Guilin Rice Noodle Making Technique) are representative of Guangxi's food culture; The folklore of the "March 3" song pike, the Rongshui Miao ethnic group wedding custom and the Dong Doye ethnic group have strong ethnic characteristics. In addition, the intangible cultural heritage of traditional sports, amusement and acrobatics, such as the Zhuang flower cannon snatching, the Sanjiang dragon boat race and the Rongshui Miao martial arts, are also items with ethnic characteristics and cultural heritage.

### **3. Current Situation of Translation of Guangxi intangible cultural heritage list**

Translation of intangible cultural heritage is essentially a cultural translation, and the intangible cultural heritage list is a high-level summary of non-heritage culture, the very core of non-heritage culture. The translation of the intangible cultural heritage list is an interpretation of cultural phenomena by local cultural standards. The translator should, as far as possible, translate in the target language of foreign propaganda in order to reduce the obstacles encountered by the audience in the reading process and to better accept our culture. The translation of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage list should follow the principle of 'identity' and enhance the sense of identity of the readers in the target country - Thailand. The intangible cultural heritage list should be translated into Thai so that readers can better understand it. A search of China National Knowledge Infrastructure shows that research on the translation of intangible cultural heritage began in 2009 and has been on the rise in recent years. As the protection of China's intangible heritage progresses, the academic community is gradually recognising the important value of translating intangible cultural heritage in communication. From the article Characteristics and Prospects of our Intangible Cultural Heritage Translation Research written by Liu Huiyun and Ren Juan, it can be seen that this kind of translation works present distinct regional and ethnic characteristics. The current research on the translation and interpretation of intangible cultural heritage is mainly in English translation and is in its infancy, and there are very few Thai translations. Under the background of "One Belt, One Road", in order to better carry out cultural exchanges with countries along the route, the Thai translation of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage is bound to become an important element of cultural dissemination. The Thai translation of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage list can be carried out on the basis of the English translation, which will be more recognisable to readers in the target language.

### **4. Strategies and Methods of Thai Translation of the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Guangxi**

#### **4.1. Thai Translation Strategies of the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Guangxi**

Translation strategy refers to the principles based on and the collection of solutions adopted in the translation process to achieve the established translation purpose. As a macro principle and scheme, it is inseparable from the participants of translation activities. The participants in

translation activities generally include the author of the original text, the translator and the recipient of the translation. The translation strategies adopted by translators can be divided into foreignization strategies and domestication strategies, depending on the orientation of the "author of the original" and the "recipient of the translation".

**Foreignization:** the essential attribute is the "original author's orientation", which means that the translator tries to be as close as possible to the original author in the translation, "that is, the translator tries not to disturb the original author, but to bring the reader to the original language environment." To try to retain the linguistic, literary and cultural qualities of the original text, to preserve the exotic flavour, and for the translator to carry out translation activities with this in mind. It is important to allow the translation to follow the original text, to follow its ideas and to avoid linguistic dominance, with the aim of spreading one's own culture and facilitating communication, not just the conversion of linguistic symbols.

The advantages of the strategy of foreignization are that it can introduce the expressions and cultural elements of the author of the original text into the translation, enriching the expression of the target language of the translation and promoting the development of the target language of the translation; it can enable the recipient of the translation to appreciate and appreciate more fully the exotic features, in this way, promote cultural exchange between different nationalities. The disadvantage is that the translation may be stiff and unnatural, and therefore affect the reception and foreignization of the translation among the recipients of the translation.

**Domestication:** the essence of domestication is the recipient orientation of the translation, which means that the translator tries to be as close to the recipient of the translation as possible, that is, the translator tries not to disturb the reader, but to bring the content created by the original author to the reader. The translator is centred on serving the reader by bringing the original text into a cultural context that is familiar to the reader, ensuring that the translation is accessible to the reader so that the reader understands it in a natural state. The aim is to communicate better, to provide assistance in finding common ground between the two cultural elements and to build a bridge of communication. In the translation process, the translator replaces the relevant content in the original with literary and cultural elements familiar to the recipient of the translation.

The advantages of the domestication strategy are that the translation is fluent and easy to understand, easily accepted by the recipient of the translation, and can be adapted to meet certain specific needs of the recipient of the translation. The disadvantage is that the linguistic and cultural elements of the original text are lost and, as a result, the recipient of the translation loses the opportunity to appreciate the language, literature and culture of the foreign country. It is also not conducive to the enrichment and development of the language and culture of the target language, and does not facilitate cultural exchange between different peoples.

The texts of intangible cultural heritage list are rich in terminology with national cultural characteristics. The translator faithfully reproduces the content of the original text with strong ethnic style and ethnic characteristics, which will be conducive to going out with culture and let Thailand know the most authentic Guangxi culture. The list may be presented in the form of a single or composite concept, and it is difficult to find an expression in Thai that corresponds exactly to the text of the list, so a strategy of domestication is required; the different experience and aesthetic standards of the recipients of the translation will also have a different impact on the acceptance of the national culture. This also requires the translator to be able to objectively understand the national and stage of development, and to focus on the effectiveness of the translation while at the same time considering the need to improve the fluency of the translation in order to facilitate the understanding of the recipient. The use of domestication strategies is therefore also essential.

A translation using the strategy of foreignization retains the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the nation and broadens the horizons of the recipient of the translation, but it is sometimes time-consuming and difficult to understand; a translation using the strategy of domestication is easy to understand and highly readable, but the culture of the original text is lost, which is not conducive to the absorption of new knowledge by the recipient of the translation. Based on the above two points, translators can mainly use the strategy of foreignization to make the translation popular and preserve the folklore and cultural elements of the original text as far as possible. At the same time, taking into account the perspective of the recipient of the translation, an appropriate combination of domestication strategies can be used to make the translation more acceptable and achieve good results.

#### 4.2. Thai Translation Methods of Guangxi Intangible Cultural Heritage List

Based on the above, after determining the basic translation principles and schemes, the translator can adopt the corresponding translation methods according to the translation strategies. These methods belong to different translation strategies, such as: phonetic translation, literal translation, etc. belong to foreignization strategy; free translation, annotation, etc. belong to domestication strategy.

Phonetic translation: it is to express some terms in the original text that cannot be replaced by the target language directly with the help of Pinyin, which can avoid misinterpretation of the cultural connotation of the word. The phonetic translation method can convey the original content of the original language, and it can also make the relatively unfamiliar intangible cultural heritage more relevant to Thai readers. For example, “DUO ye”-โดเย, “Lao yang gong”-หลาวหยังโคง and so on.

Literal translation is a word-for-word translation of the original text, which reflects the essence of the text. For some intangible cultural heritage items, the direct translation method can preserve the original appearance of the intangible cultural heritage items, and also achieve the translation purpose of accurately and efficiently conveying the cultural connotation to Thai readers. For example, “The Legend of the Mermaid”-นิทานนางเงือก, “The Legend of the Green Pearl”-นิทานไข่มุกเขียว. This is a concise and accessible translation that retains the meaning of the original.

Free translation refers to a free translation that takes the connotation of the original text as the starting point. In the process of translating intangible cultural heritage projects, translators often encounter situations where direct translation is not possible or similar terminology cannot be found due to language differences between the two countries. The free translation method starts from the connotation of the original text, maintains the general meaning of the original text, and makes reasonable changes to the form and wording of the original text, so that the translation can express itself more naturally. For example, “The practice of combining rice and fish in Sanjiang County”-ประเพณีเลี้ยงปลาในนาซานเจียง, thus accurately expressing the cultural connotation of the original term through the means of Italian translation.

Annotation refers to the use of annotations after the translation to supplement the relevant cultural knowledge in the original text, with the aim of conveying the general meaning of the original text clearly and conveying the background knowledge accurately. Through the annotation, the reader can better understand the connotation conveyed by the translation. The annotation is an indispensable aid in the translation process, and can make up for some of the problems caused by the cultural differences between the two countries. For example, “Nanning Opera”-ละครโยง (โยง: หนานหนิง), by means of annotation, clearly conveys the meaning of the original text and better increases the reader's understanding of the cultural background.

For the translation of the list of intangible cultural heritage of Guangxi, the translator uses the strategy of foreignization as the main strategy, supplemented by the strategy of domestication.

According to the specific text of the item name, various translation methods such as literal translation, literal translation+annotation, phonetic translation, phonetic translation +annotation, free translation and annotation are used to make the translation of the list preserve the folk cultural feature of the original text as far as possible, while being popularized and easier to read. Some typical items are listed here as examples of translations.

(1) literal translation, literal translation + translation free translation/ annotation

If a correspondence can be found between the translation and the original text, the translator can use the literal translation, which preserves the ethnic characteristics of the name of the NRM. It is also easier for the recipient of the translation to understand, and it promotes cultural exchange between the two countries and enriches the linguistic expression of the translation. If appropriate transliteration, paraphrasing or annotation is used as an aid. For example, "Dong Song (Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County)" translates as เพลงพื้นบ้านของชนชาติโด่ง(อำเภอปกครองตนเองชนชาติโด่งซานเจียง); "Napo Zhuang Folk Song" translates as เพลงพื้นบ้านของชนชาติจ้วงอำเภอนาโป; "Strong Drama" translates asละครจ้วง; "Dong Opera" translates asละครโด่ง; "Tea customs (Yao oil tea customs)" translates asประเพณีน้ำชาคูลุ กชนชาติเย้า; "Zhuang Copper Drum Custom" translates as ประเพณีกลองทองสัมฤทธิ์ชนชาติจ้วง; The traditional music "Butterfly Song of the Yao" translates as เพลงผีเสื้อ (เพลงพื้นบ้านชนชาติเย้า); "Gui Drama" translates as ละครก้วย (ก้วย: กวางสี). This allows the translation to better reflect the national character and makes the meaning of the project name clearer to the reader.

(2) Phonetic translation, phonetic translation+literal translation, phonetic translation+free translation

For names for which no corresponding expression can be found between the translation and the original text, the translator can use the phonetic translation-based method, which can deal with word gaps arising from cultural differences between the two countries and is a method often used in the translation process, such as traditional music "CaiDiao" translates as ละครฉายเดี่ยว; phonetic translation+literal :The traditional art of rice noodle making (Liuzhou Snail Noodle Making Technique)" is translated asวิธีการปรุงเส้นก๋วยเตี๋ยว (วิธีการปรุงก๋วยเตี๋ยวโหลชื่อหลิวโจว); "Rice Noodle Making Technique (Guilin Rice Noodle Making Technique)" translates asวิธีการปรุงเส้นก๋วยเตี๋ยว (วิธีการปรุงก๋วยเตี๋ยวก้วยหลิน); "Dong Wooden Building Construction Techniques (Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County)" translates as วิธีการก่อสร้างอาคารไม้ของชนชาติโด่ง (อำเภอปกครองตนเองชนชาติโด่งซานเจียง); Traditional Sports, Recreation and Acrobatics "Rob fireworks game(Zhuang rob fireworks game)" การควัดอกไม้เพลิง (การควัดอกไม้เพลิงชนชาติจ้วง); The folk literature "Mi Luo Tuo" is translated into บทร้องโบราณมีโลโต (ชนชาติเย้า); "BU Luo tuo" is translated into กวีนิยายปู้ทัว (ชนชาติจ้วง); The folklore of March 3 (Zhuang March 3) translates as เทศกาลชานเยวชาน (เทศกาลชานเยวชานชนชาติจ้วง), This preserves the cultural identity of the original text, while taking into account the reader's receptiveness.

(3) Integrated translation (literal translation +phonetic translation + free transliteration)

Integrated translation is the flexible use of a combination of direct translation, transliteration and paraphrasing in conjunction with the translation strategy developed. For example, The traditional technique of "Gonyang Bamboo Weaving" is translated as วิธีการทำเครื่องจักสานไม้ไผ่อำเภอกวนหยาง; Traditional sports, amusement and acrobatics "Three Rivers Dragon Boat Race" translates toการแข่งขันเรือมังกรอำเภอซานเจียง; "Luzhai Jiangkou Liang Family Fist" translates to มวยเหลียงเจีย ตำบลเจียงโข้ว อำเภอหลู่เจีย. Through a comprehensive translation, the translation will better reflect the cultural connotations of the ICH, allowing the reader to understand the meaning of the item as soon as they read the translation, and better

reflecting the core content, which is in line with the Thai reader's perception and interest in understanding the culture.

## 5. Conclusion

The Thai translation of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage list is a way to spread traditional culture from Guangxi to Thailand in the context of the Belt and Road. The research on the strategy and method of Thai translation of intangible cultural heritage has a long way to go. Through the translation of the list of intangible cultural heritage of Guangxi, the readership of the target country of foreign communication can be enhanced, and the Thai readers can better understand the intangible cultural heritage culture and customs of Guangxi. This paper examines the strategies and methods of Thai translation to promote the foreign dissemination of regional characteristics and enhance the exchange of different cultures. It will promote the "going out" of Guangxi culture, let foreigners understand the essence of Guangxi culture in depth, and better show the unique charm of Guangxi culture to the countries along the "Belt and Road".

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