

Study on External Publicity and English Translation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Fire Cracker Ball for March 3rd in Guangxi

Maofeng Ye, Aiyan Tang

College of Foreign Studies, Guilin University of Electronic Technology, Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, 541004.

Abstract: This paper focuses on the "Fire Cracker Ball" of Guangxi, an intangible cultural heritage, and explores its current translation status, translation strategies, and feasible paths for international dissemination. By analyzing the historical origins, cultural background, and the role of the "Fire Cracker Ball" in Guangxi's folk culture, this study examines the current state and challenges of translating intangible cultural heritage both domestically and internationally. Through specific translation case studies, the paper addresses issues such as cultural differences, terminology handling, and the selection of translation strategies.

Keywords: March 3rd; Intangible cultural heritage; Fire Cracker Ball; English translation

1. Research Status of Guangxi's "Fire Cracker Ball" on the Third of March

The traditional sports event "Fire Cracker Ball" of Guangxi's ethnic minorities is an intangible cultural heritage and a representative product of the ethnic festival and commercial exchange. (Zheng Wenqiang, 2016) This folk activity, with its unique cultural connotations and vibrant ceremonial atmosphere, has attracted much attention from both domestic and international scholars and cultural enthusiasts. In recent years, with the continuous development of globalization and frequent cultural exchanges between countries, the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage has gradually become a widely discussed issue in the international community. How to bring China's rich intangible cultural heritage to the international stage has become a focus of attention for both academia and the government.

As a representative cultural heritage of the Guangxi region, the "Fire Cracker Ball" on the Third of March integrates local ethnic customs and traditional beliefs, symbolizing courage, wisdom, and unity. However, against the backdrop of global cultural dissemination, how to accurately and effectively introduce this regionally distinct cultural activity to international audiences has become an urgent issue to address. Particularly in the process of English translation, how to handle cultural differences, vocabulary equivalence, and related issues, so that foreign audiences can both understand this culture and grasp its deeper cultural connotations, has become one of the key tasks of this research.

Regarding the current state of research, domestic studies on the English translation of intangible cultural heritage have made some progress. Some scholars have discussed the methods for dealing with culturally loaded terms and cultural differences, but these studies have mostly remained at the theoretical exploration stage, lacking in-depth analysis of specific cases. Research on the English translation of the "Fire Cracker Ball" as a specific intangible cultural heritage is still relatively scarce. Internationally, studies on the protection and transmission of intangible cultural heritage are more mature, but research on Chinese intangible cultural heritage is relatively limited, especially in the field of language translation and cross-cultural communication, which remains an area worthy of further exploration.

2. Research Objectives and Significance

This study aims to provide practical experience and theoretical support for the international dissemination of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage, enhance the influence of Guangxi culture in global cultural exchanges, and offer theoretical and methodological references for the translation of more Chinese intangible cultural heritage projects in the future.

The "Fire Cracker Ball on the Third of March" is not only an important part of Guangxi Zhuang culture but also a reflection of the diversity and richness of Chinese culture. By translating this intangible cultural heritage into English, it will not only allow more foreigners to understand and recognize this unique cultural phenomenon but also promote the international dissemination of Chinese culture, increasing cultural identity and influence. Translation work, while preserving the heritage, can also promote the cross-cultural dissemination of intangible cultural heritage, enabling it to thrive in the context of globalization.

The preservation and protection of China's intangible cultural heritage is progressing vigorously, but the cultural characteristics of ethnic traditional sports culture present challenges in its transmission and development (Zhou Huilan, 2019). Guangxi, as a representative region of China's ethnic minority cultures, boasts a rich array of intangible cultural heritage resources. The "Fire Cracker Ball" is one of the symbols of Guangxi culture. By translating it and utilizing international cultural platforms for dissemination, not only can the international recognition of this unique culture be enhanced, but it can also elevate Guangxi's overall international image and cultural soft power, helping Guangxi better integrate into the global cultural exchange landscape.

3. Overview of Guangxi's Intangible Cultural Heritage "Fire Cracker Ball" on the Third of March

3.1 Historical Origins and Cultural Background of the "Third of March" Festival

The "Third of March" is an important traditional festival for the Zhuang and other ethnic minorities in Guangxi, usually celebrated on the third day of the third month in the lunar calendar. This festival originates from ancient ancestor worship rituals, aiming to express respect and remembrance for the ancestors, while also marking the arrival of spring and the revival of nature. According to research, the Third of March is not only a vital component of Zhuang culture but also embodies national unity, cultural identity, and the transmission of traditional customs. During this festival, the Zhuang people celebrate through various forms, such as singing, dancing, and games, to strengthen ethnic solidarity and preserve cultural traditions.

As society has developed, the celebrations of the Third of March have gradually incorporated modern elements, creating a rich variety of ways to celebrate. Among these, the "Fire Cracker Ball" (抢花炮) is a traditional folk activity and an essential part of the festival. This activity not only carries strong local characteristics but also plays an important role in strengthening community unity and promoting social interactions.

3.2 Origin and Development of the Fire Cracker Ball

The "Fire Cracker Ball" is a traditional ethnic sports activity unique to the southwest of China, especially popular in the northern part of Guangxi, around the Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County and the Guibei Dong villages, with a history of over 500 years (He Li Ping & Liu Xikun, 2023). During the Ming Dynasty, Geliang Village was a key transportation hub and a commercial area frequented by merchants. To attract villagers to buy goods, the merchants organized the Fire Cracker Ball as a way to pray for a good harvest and good luck, successfully drawing large crowds of villagers. Initially, the Fire Cracker Ball was primarily a commercial activity, but over time, it gradually evolved into a traditional custom with cultural significance.

Additionally, the Fire Cracker Ball has incorporated local folk legends. According to legend, the Dragon King's daughter, Longnv, formed a deep bond with the villagers, who expressed their longing for her by scattering flowers. This custom later evolved into the Fire Cracker Ball, with the firecrackers symbolizing Longnv's blessings. The person who catches the firecrackers is believed to receive good luck and a bountiful harvest. This legend adds a mythological dimension to the activity, further elevating its status in local culture.

As the event continued to develop, the Fire Cracker Ball gradually transformed from a purely commercial activity into a seasonal traditional sports event with ethnic characteristics. Because it is closely related to agricultural civilization, the timing of the Fire Cracker Ball is generally set between the lunar months of January and April, a period that symbolizes the beginning of the new year. People use this event to pray for a good harvest and peace in the coming year.

3.3 The Status of the Fire Cracker Ball in Guangxi's Folk Culture

As a significant representation of Guangxi Zhuang culture, the Fire Cracker Ball not only reflects a rich folk culture but also carries the living habits and values of the Zhuang people. It symbolizes unity, courage, and wisdom and is a communal activity celebrated by the Zhuang people. In Guangxi's folk culture, the Fire Cracker Ball exemplifies the participants' spirit of collaboration and respect for traditional culture.

Furthermore, the Fire Cracker Ball also plays a role in promoting ethnic unity. During the activity, people from different ethnicities and regions come together, fostering mutual understanding and friendship, thereby advancing communication and cooperation between different ethnic groups. However, the folkloric functions of the Fire Cracker Ball are facing challenges, especially in modern society, where commercialization has led to the gradual neglect of its traditional cultural meanings. This trend presents new challenges for the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage and folk traditions.

4. English Translation of Guangxi's Intangible Cultural Heritage "Fire Cracker Ball" on the Third of March

The translation of intangible cultural heritage must strive to preserve and convey its ethnicity and cultural heterogeneity because it represents a way of life in the world's diverse cultures, reflecting the richness of global cultural diversity (Xu Min & Wang Junping, 2016). When translating intangible cultural heritage (such as Guangxi's "Fire Cracker Ball" on the Third of March), it is crucial to accurately convey

and retain its ethnic characteristics and cultural uniqueness. These traditions not only represent the cultural features of a specific ethnic group but also embody a way of life within global cultural diversity. In light of the significant differences in thinking patterns, ideologies, and value orientations between Chinese and Western readers, and the presence of culture-loaded words, proper nouns, and unique expressions in the intangible cultural heritage text, it is a major challenge to complete a proper, high-quality, and well-disseminated translation (Li Xiangyu, 2022). The following translation cases illustrate how to handle cultural differences and translation strategies.

4.1 Handling Culture-Loaded Words: "抢花炮"

"The '抢花炮' (Fire Cracker Ball) event is an important part of the 'March Third' festival. Participants scramble for flower bombs hanging high, symbolizing courage, wisdom, and unity." The term "抢花炮" refers to a cultural activity unique to the Zhuang culture in Guangxi. While the direct translation "Flower Bomb Snatching" conveys the activity's content, it would be difficult for foreign readers unfamiliar with this cultural context to fully understand its deeper cultural symbolism. To preserve cultural heterogeneity and ensure the reader understands its significance, the translation uses "Fire Cracker Ball," which conveys the literal meaning while reflecting the special folk nature of the event.

4.2 Incorporating Mythology: "The Legend of the Dragon Maiden and the Fire Cracker"

In this case, the cultural symbol of the Dragon King's daughter, "Dragon Maiden," plays a significant role in the Zhuang folk legend. To help international audiences understand this mythological element without misunderstanding, the translation begins with "Legend has it" to introduce the story. The term "Dragon Maiden" retains the cultural nuance, explaining the deep bond between her and the villagers. This approach faithfully presents the myth while allowing foreign readers to appreciate its romantic aspects and cultural context. Additionally, the transformation of the "flower scattering" custom into the "Fire Cracker Ball" highlights how cultural practices evolve over time.

4.3 Conveying Cultural Values: Unity and Wisdom

"Unity and wisdom" are core values in Zhuang culture. In translation, it is essential to convey these profound values, not just the activity itself. By using "symbolizing unity and wisdom," the translation clearly communicates the social and spiritual significance of the event. This helps foreign readers understand the deeper cultural meaning behind the Fire Cracker Ball and aligns them with these universal values.

In summary, when translating Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage "Fire Cracker Ball on the Third of March," it is important not only to preserve the literal meaning but also to explore and retain its deeper cultural connotations and spiritual values. In the context of globalization, translation is not merely a linguistic conversion but also a cultural bridge. Through the detailed handling of culture-loaded words, mythological elements, cultural values, and traditional customs in the translation cases above, we can see how to help foreign readers understand and appreciate this unique cultural phenomenon. At the same time, this provides strong support for the global dissemination of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage and promotes cross-cultural understanding and communication.

5. Conclusion

This paper focuses on the English translation of Guangxi's intangible cultural heritage, the "Fire Cracker Ball on the Third of March." It explores the historical origins, cultural connotations, current translation status, and the challenges faced in translating this cultural phenomenon. Additionally, it proposes specific translation strategies and pathways for international dissemination. Through the detailed compilation and translation analysis of the Fire Cracker Ball, this study addresses critical issues such as cultural differences, terminology handling, and the translation of culture-loaded words. It also discusses how to balance foreignization and domestication strategies in the context of globalization, ensuring that the translation retains cultural characteristics while effectively conveying them to international audiences.

By analyzing the translation of the "Fire Cracker Ball on the Third of March," a folk activity with strong regional characteristics and symbolic cultural meaning, this paper not only reveals the complexity of translating intangible cultural heritage but also provides valuable experience and methods for cross-cultural communication. In particular, the key challenge of this research lies in how to maintain fidelity to the original culture while ensuring that foreign readers can understand and appreciate the deeper symbolic meanings of these cultural practices, especially when dealing with culture-loaded words and ceremonial expressions. The study also offers optimization suggestions for the international dissemination of the "Fire Cracker Ball" using multimedia technologies, facilitating its global recognition and cultural engagement.

References

- [1] He Liping & Liu Xikun. (2023) A comparative study of Oriental rugby 's " grabbing fireworks " and Western rugby sports culture. Journal of Xingyi Normal University for Nationalities (04), 2.

- [2] Zhou Huilan. (2019) SWOT research on the development of Guangxi Fireworks Project (master 's degree thesis, Guangxi University for Nationalities).
- [3] Zheng Wenqiang. (2016) The current situation and reflection of the traditional sports of ethnic minorities in Guangxi. Science and Technology Information (15), 1.
- [4] Xu Min & Wang Junping. (2016) Study on the English translation of the cultural concept of Chinese intangible cultural heritage. Journal of Xi 'an International Studies University (02), 2.
- [5] Li Xiangyu. (2022) Research on English Translation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Texts from the Perspective of Translation Variation Theory (Master 's thesis, Fujian Normal University).

Author Profile:

Maofeng Ye (1998.3 -), male, Han nationality, Qinzhou, Guangxi, Master, Guilin University of Electronic Technology, English Translation.

Aiyan Tang, (1979. -), female, Han nationality, Guangxi, Master degree, Associate professor, Foreign Linguistics, Guilin University of Electronic Technology.

Innovation Project of GUET Graduate Education“Study on External Publicity and English Translation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Fire Cracker Ball for March 3rd in Guangxi”