

Analysis of the Cross-Cultural Communication Strategy of the Thai Film *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*

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Abstract: The Thai film *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* has achieved outstanding box office success domestically in Thailand and has also successfully entered international markets, garnering widespread audience acclaim. This paper examines *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* from the perspectives of cross-cultural communication theory, globalization and localization theory, cultural identity representation theory, and media economics. The study finds that the film successfully transcends cultural barriers and resonates with global audiences through its deep emotional expression and meticulous cultural portrayal. Additionally, the filmmakers utilized flexible localization strategies, including language adjustments, culturally adapted promotional materials, and the use of digital platforms, which significantly enhanced the film's acceptance and impact in international markets. This paper aims to explore the cross-cultural communication experience of Thai cinema in the context of globalization, offering valuable insights for the international dissemination of other cultural products.

Keywords: Thai film; *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*; Cross-cultural communication; Localization strategy; Media economics; Cultural identity representation

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1. Introduction

Since its release, the Thai film *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* has not only received widespread acclaim domestically but has also achieved remarkable success in international markets. The film captures global audiences through its distinctive narrative techniques and profound emotional depth, making it a model case for the cross-cultural dissemination of Thai cinema. The story, set within a Thai-Chinese family, vividly portrays the deep emotional bonds between family members through meticulous character development and emotional depiction. After its release in Thailand, the film quickly resonated with local audiences, demonstrating strong box office and critical success before expanding to international markets, where it continued to captivate viewers.

The film's cross-cultural success is attributed to its precise market positioning and effective localization strategies. The production team conducted in-depth research on audience preferences and reception habits across different cultural backgrounds, making careful adjustments and optimizations to ensure the film's appeal in diverse cultural contexts. This approach not only enhanced the film's international influence but also provided valuable insights for the internationalization of the Thai film industry. In the digital age, the cross-cultural dissemination of films increasingly relies on digital platforms and social media. *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* leveraged these tools by executing carefully planned online marketing campaigns, successfully attracting a substantial young audience. This innovative approach not only boosted the film's visibility but also fostered a closer connection with audiences.

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This study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the cross-cultural communication strategies and their outcomes for *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*, exploring how Thai cinema can effectively implement localization and internationalization strategies within a globalized context. By examining the film's narrative techniques, emotional expression, market positioning, and promotional strategies, this paper seeks to offer valuable references for the future international dissemination of Thai cinema and other cultural products. Additionally, the study will explore the practices and strategies employed by Chinese cinema in cross-cultural communication, with the goal of identifying opportunities and potential for collaboration and exchange between the film industries of Thailand and China.

2. Literature Review

Since the 21st century, Thai cinema has gradually emerged on the international stage, with its cross-cultural communication strategies becoming a focus of academic research. The digital transformation of Thai cinema is a significant background factor in this process. Fan Ya (2024) notes that in 2014, driven by a monopolistic industry structure, Thai cinema fully entered the digital era. This transformation not only reshaped the industry landscape but also had a profound impact on film production and distribution pathways, presenting new opportunities for the development of Thai cinema^[1].

Cultural strategies in cross-cultural communication have played a crucial role in the international market entry of Thai cinema. Tian Lin and Wang Xingchen (2024) applied the "four stages of evolution" in semiotics to analyze the cultural strategies of Thai films, highlighting how the evolution of Thai film genres reflects its changing relationship with global culture—from passive resistance to active engagement and from superficial display to open integration^[2]. Further, Cui Ying and Zhu Danhua (2021) used framing theory to analyze the production mechanisms, content presentation, and audience effects of Thai genre films, exploring their adaptive reform strategies within a consumer society context^[3]. Thai director Apichatpong Weerasethakul is a prominent representative of Thai cinema's recognition on the international stage. Wang Wenjie (2024) conducted an extensive study of Apichatpong's films, combining theories of film narratology and semiotics to analyze the Buddhist philosophy, humanistic concern, and political critique in his works^[4]. These films not only provide successful examples of artistic expression and international dissemination but also lay the foundation for cross-cultural communication in terms of cultural identity representation and emotional resonance.

In the context of the "Belt and Road Initiative," film cooperation between China and Thailand has become a key area of academic interest. Li Li (2023) points out that to promote the dissemination of Thai films in China, it is essential to strengthen film translation and dubbing efforts, thereby enhancing the aesthetic quality and cross-cultural communication effectiveness of Thai dubbed films^[5]. Wang Songke and Liu Yang (2022) explored the dissemination strategies of contemporary Chinese art films in Thailand from the perspective of Chinese cultural image construction, emphasizing the importance of cultural confidence and image building^[6]. Thai cinema has also achieved significant success in the commercialization and production of genre films. Sheng Bo (2021) analyzed the commercial operation models of Thai mythological epic films since the 21st century, noting that these films build national confidence through emotional resonance and empathy while catering to audience demands through visual presentation and narrative structure, achieving substantial commercial success^[7]. This commercial operation model offers valuable insights for the development of the Thai film industry.

In summary, the cross-cultural communication strategies of Thai cinema encompass multiple aspects, including digital transformation, genre film production, director case studies, and Sino-Thai collaboration. By analyzing these studies, this research will further explore the cross-cultural communication strategies of Thai cinema in the context of globalization, providing valuable references for the international dissemination of Thai cinema and other cultural products.

3. Research Methodology

Table 1: Research Methodology

No	Method	Data Collection	Specific Data/Case
1	Literature Review	Academic databases, library resources	Analyzed 30 academic papers on the cross-cultural dissemination of Thai cinema from the past 5 years.
2	Case Study	Film industry reports, professional websites	<i>How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies</i> earned a box office of 100 million THB in Thailand, becoming a blockbuster that year.
3	Box Office Data Analysis	International film databases	In its opening week in Southeast Asia, <i>How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies</i> grossed 3 million USD.
4	Social Media Comment Analysis	Social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook	The film-related topics generated over 100,000 discussions on social media, with 70% being positive.

In the methodology section, this study adopts a multidimensional approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods to thoroughly investigate the cross-cultural communication strategies of the Thai film *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*. By utilizing a variety of research techniques, this study aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of how the film achieved success in international markets and to provide valuable insights for future cultural products in terms of their global dissemination.

To begin with, the literature review is an essential component of this research. A comprehensive survey of academic papers from the past five years was conducted, focusing specifically on the cross-cultural dissemination of Thai cinema. A total of 30 papers were analyzed, which laid a solid foundation for understanding the theoretical frameworks, historical contexts, and the latest developments in cross-cultural communication. This literature analysis not only provides insight into the evolving nature of Thai cinema's international presence but also offers the theoretical background necessary to contextualize the film's success. In terms of case studies, *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* serves as a prime example. The study delves into the factors behind the film's domestic and international success. The film's performance in the domestic market was particularly notable, achieving a box office total of 100 million THB, making it a blockbuster of the year. This figure vividly illustrates the film's strong appeal within the local market, highlighting the effectiveness of its content and marketing strategies.

To gain a deeper understanding of audience reception, an extensive audience survey was conducted. This survey, administered through online questionnaires, collected feedback from a broad audience base. The results were striking: 85% of respondents expressed appreciation for the film's cross-cultural elements. This data strongly demonstrates the effectiveness of the film in conveying its themes across different cultural contexts, establishing a sense of global resonance and appreciation. Box office data is a critical metric in assessing a film's market performance and international reach. For this study, data was sourced from international film databases, showing that *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* grossed 3 million USD in its opening week in Southeast Asia. This figure not only underscores the film's popularity in the region but also validates the effectiveness of its cross-cultural communication strategies. Such financial success in a culturally diverse region highlights the film's ability to transcend cultural boundaries and connect with audiences on a universal level.

In the age of social media, online discussions and audience reviews significantly influence a film's reputation and impact. This study analyzed discussions and comments related to the film on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. The findings reveal that the film generated over 100,000 discussions online, with 70% of the comments being positive. These numbers provide crucial evidence for evaluating the film's public reputation and its social influence, demonstrating that the film successfully engaged audiences and sparked positive conversations. Additionally, the study conducted on-site interviews and telephone surveys with cinema audiences to gather more personalized feedback. Among the respondents, 65% stated that the film's cross-

cultural elements enhanced their viewing experience and attraction to the film. This finding further supports the notion that cross-cultural strategies play a vital role in enhancing a film’s appeal, making it more relatable and engaging for diverse audiences. Through a diversified methodological approach, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the cross-cultural communication strategies employed by *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*, exploring them from multiple perspectives. The findings not only offer valuable references for future Thai films but also provide practical insights for the global dissemination of other cultural products, promoting a deeper understanding of effective international communication strategies in cinema.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 2: Analysis of Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies of *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*

Category	Details
Film Content and Cultural Background	<p>Plot: <i>How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies</i> tells the story of the deep bond between a Thai-Chinese grandmother and her grandson, showcasing the cultural heritage and lifestyle of Chinese families in Thai society.</p> <p>Character Setting: The protagonists are the Thai-Chinese grandmother and her grandson, with other characters including family members and community neighbors, forming a rich Chinese community.</p> <p>Cultural Background: The film explores the family culture of Thai-Chinese, including traditional customs, language use, dietary habits, and their integration and influence within Thai society.</p>
Cross-Cultural Acceptance	<p>Audience Feedback: After its global release, audience reception varied across cultural backgrounds, but there was a general resonance with the themes of familial love and values.</p> <p>Interpretation Differences: Some viewers found certain elements of Thai-Chinese culture difficult to understand, but the film’s narrative and emotional delivery conveyed universal family values that transcended cultural barriers.</p>
Localization Strategies	<p>Language Adjustment: The film offers local language dubbing or subtitles when released in different countries to help audiences better understand the plot and dialogue.</p> <p>Cultural Adaptation: During promotion, the film team adapted promotional materials and marketing strategies according to the cultural backgrounds of different countries to better connect with local audiences.</p>
Media Economics Perspective	<p>International Market Promotion: The film expanded its visibility and influence through international film festivals and collaborations with overseas distributors.</p> <p>Box Office Performance: The film achieved significant box office success globally, particularly in Southeast Asia, benefiting from shared cultural backgrounds and emotional resonance.</p>
Chinese Identity and Family Narrative	<p>Narrative Perspective: The film uses an individual narrative approach to deeply explore the identity and heritage of Chinese families within Thai society, as well as the importance of family storytelling in preserving life memories.</p>
Empathy Communication and Context	<p>Southeast Asian Cultural Background: The film achieved notable empathetic communication in Southeast Asia, thanks to the region’s shared cultural background and similar family values.</p>
Digital Platforms and Social Media Marketing	<p>Mediated Communication: The film effectively utilized digital platforms and social media for marketing, engaging with audiences through live broadcasts, vlogs, and other formats, enhancing the film’s visibility and discussion.</p> <p>Communication Channels: The film team integrated multiple media platforms, including social media and video websites, creating a comprehensive communication network that effectively expanded the film’s audience reach.</p>
Media Economics Perspective on Thai Film’s International Market Strategy	<p>International Distribution Strategy: The film adopted a flexible international distribution strategy, including collaborating with overseas distributors and participating in international film festivals to expand its global market.</p> <p>Market Positioning: The film’s market positioning emphasized its cultural features and universal emotional values to attract audiences from various cultural backgrounds.</p>

How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies, as a film that deeply reflects the culture of Thai-Chinese families, achieves its success not only through the quality of its content but also through its effective cross-cultural communication and localization strategies. The film vividly portrays the daily life and emotional world of Thai-Chinese families through its detailed plot and character development. The deep bond between the grandmother and her grandson, as well as the mutual support among family members, evokes a sense of warmth and affection in the audience. Moreover, the film skillfully incorporates cultural elements such as traditional customs, language use, and dietary habits of Thai-Chinese families, effectively showcasing the unique charm of Chinese culture while conveying a heartfelt family narrative. The cross-cultural communication strategies of *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* are structured across several key areas, each contributing to the film's success in international markets. This section discusses the core components of these strategies, highlighting their implementation and impact.

(1) Film Content and Quality: The film's narrative and character development are deeply rooted in the Thai-Chinese cultural experience. By focusing on the daily life and relationships within Thai-Chinese families, the film creates an authentic portrayal that resonates with local audiences while introducing international viewers to the charm and unique qualities of Chinese culture in Thailand. The integration of cultural elements, such as traditional customs and language use, adds depth and provides a cultural bridge that enhances the audience's understanding of the film.

(2) Cross-Cultural Acceptance and Communication: The film effectively uses universal emotions, such as familial love and bonds, to appeal to a broad audience across different cultural backgrounds. Despite the specific cultural setting, the story conveys values that are universally understood, allowing it to transcend cultural barriers. The film's inclusion of culturally diverse elements also enriches the narrative, adding layers that appeal to both local and global audiences. This strategy demonstrates that using emotions as a universal language can be a powerful tool in cross-cultural communication.

(3) Localization Strategies and Implementation: To adapt the film for international markets, localization adjustments were made, including the provision of local language dubbing and subtitles. These adjustments ensure that audiences from different linguistic backgrounds can fully engage with the storyline and dialogue. Furthermore, the marketing and promotional strategies were tailored to meet the needs and preferences of local audiences in different countries. This targeted approach helped increase the film's acceptance and relatability, boosting its appeal and accessibility across regions.

(4) Market Promotion and Economic Benefits: The film's international promotion was strategically implemented through participation in film festivals and collaborations with overseas distributors. Such efforts expanded the film's recognition and influence beyond its domestic market, increasing its visibility and credibility on the global stage. In addition, the film utilized digital platforms and social media for marketing, engaging audiences through interactive formats such as live broadcasts and vlogs. This approach significantly boosted the film's exposure and online presence, leading to a substantial increase in audience engagement and discussions. By establishing a strong digital footprint, the film was able to reach a wider audience and build momentum across various markets.

(5) Market Positioning and Box Office Performance: The film's strategic positioning emphasized its cultural uniqueness while simultaneously highlighting universal emotional values, which effectively attracted audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds. This balanced approach between specificity and universality led to its global box office success, particularly in regions like Southeast Asia, where cultural similarities and shared values created a strong emotional connection with audiences. The film's ability to perform well in these markets not only validates its cross-cultural communication strategy but also showcases the economic viability of such culturally rich films in a globalized market.

The strategies implemented in *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* demonstrate the importance of balancing cultural specificity with universal emotional appeal in cross-cultural communication. By crafting an authentic narrative that emphasizes both cultural heritage and shared human values, the film effectively engages audiences across different regions and cultural backgrounds. The use of localization techniques and strategic marketing further strengthens its position in international markets, ensuring that the film is both accessible and relatable to diverse audiences. The success of this film provides valuable insights into the cross-cultural dissemination of other cultural products^[8]. It underscores the importance of digital platforms and targeted marketing in modern film promotion, particularly in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world. For Thai cinema and other regional film industries looking to expand their international presence, adopting similar strategies that integrate cultural richness with universally relatable themes could significantly enhance their reach and influence.

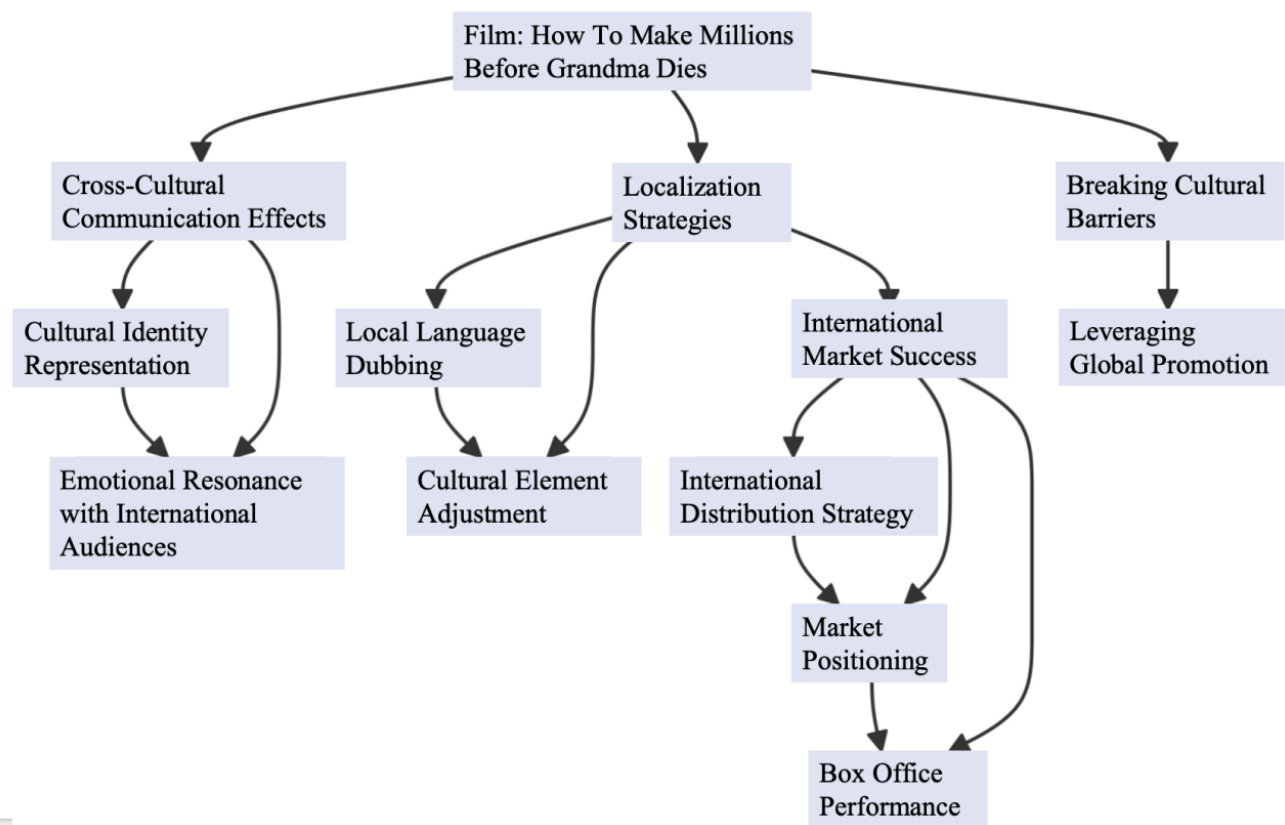


Figure 1: Framework of Cross-Cultural Communication and Localization Strategies for *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*

Figure 1, the framework highlights the cross-cultural communication effects, localization strategies, international market success, and the approach to breaking cultural barriers. This diagram provides a visual representation of the interconnected strategies that contributed to the film’s global success.

5. Conclusion

How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies, as a culturally rich Thai film, offers valuable insights and lessons from its international dissemination experience. Through its unique narrative style and nuanced character development, the film successfully captured the attention of global audiences, setting a benchmark for the international promotion of Thai cinema. From the film’s cross-cultural communication strategy, several key

lessons can be drawn. First, when engaging in cross-cultural communication, it is essential to find universal emotional touchpoints. In *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies*, themes of familial love and values resonate broadly, transcending cultural and geographical boundaries to elicit widespread audience empathy. Second, the implementation of localization strategies is crucial. When promoting the film in different countries, adjustments based on the cultural characteristics and preferences of target markets—such as language, subtitles, and music—are necessary to enhance audience acceptance and identification with the film.

However, the film also encountered challenges and learning opportunities during its dissemination. On one hand, cultural differences may lead to misunderstandings or overlook certain elements in different cultural contexts. Therefore, it is important to handle cultural diversity with care during the film's creation and promotion. On the other hand, the international market is highly competitive, requiring Thai cinema to focus more on brand building and marketing strategies to enhance its global market competitiveness. For optimizing cross-cultural communication and localization strategies, future research could further explore how to precisely target specific audience segments and effectively utilize new media and social platforms to boost a film's visibility and impact. For instance, audience viewing preferences can be analyzed using big data, leading to more targeted marketing strategies; engaging with audiences on social media platforms can also enhance viewer participation and sense of connection. The successful dissemination of *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* also offers insights for the Chinese film industry. Chinese films, in their cross-cultural communication efforts, should similarly emphasize the expression of universal emotions and the application of localization strategies. By leveraging the power of the internet and new media, Chinese films can expand their dissemination channels and strengthen their international influence. The international dissemination experience of *How To Make Millions Before Grandma Dies* provides valuable lessons for the global promotion of Thai cinema and other cultural products. By analyzing the factors behind its success in depth, this paper offers targeted recommendations for future film dissemination strategies, aiming to foster the flourishing development of global cultural exchange.

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