Chapter 7

Crowdsourcing Translation for Community-Based Tourism Empowerment in Thailand

Narongdej Phanthaphoommee
Mahidol University, Thailand

Singhanat Nomnian
Mahidol University, Thailand

ABSTRACT

English has not only become a lingua franca for global communication, but it also carries a symbolic power that influences local people and stakeholders in community-based tourism (CBT) in Thailand. Thai villagers encounter communicative challenges due to their limited English proficiency. Thai-English speaking tour guides are valued, as they provide translation services on behalf of CBT members whose interactions with foreign tourists are minimal and marginalized. Losses in translation regarding local wisdom and heritage are inevitably unavoidable. This chapter addresses a conceptual model of crowdsourcing translation for CBT. The study hopes that the sociolinguistic and cultural gaps can be bridged for the enhancement of other CBT communities. Crowdsourcing in the form of collaborative translation and volunteering translators' efforts can potentially provide an alternative lens for possible translation scenarios. Tourism operators and stakeholders can apply these practices to assist the local people to promote lesser-known tourist attractions in remote areas in Thailand.

INTRODUCTION

Community-based tourism (CBT) has played a significant role in Southeast Asia in recent years. According to ASEAN Secretariat (2016), CBT is initiated by local people in a community in order to create a mutual engagement with relevant stakeholders and reciprocal partnership with tourism enterprises to support community projects and businesses for income generation and the improvement of the socio-economic well-being of communities, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. Tourism activities and enterprises are owned and managed by the community whose income generations and benefits will then return to the community for its socio-economic growth and sustainable development (Walia, 2020). Local community engagement is key to CBT as residents are involved in providing information based on their local knowledge-creating opportunities and local enterprises to accommodate tourists whose visits can potentially promote jobs and generate income for the community (Lo & Janta, 2020). CBT can thus be considered as the social empowerment underpinned by interactions and support between stakeholders (Dolezal & Novelli, 2020). In contrast to mass tourism, CBT is an alternative tourism approach that has grown reputation with public and private sectors as the strategic planning and policies for natural resource conservation, sustainability, and development in Thailand (Nitikasetsoontorn, 2015; Nomnian et al., 2020). CBT-related government policies, agencies, and businesses are, therefore, vital to strengthen the collaboration between the tourism industry and local community leading to shared benefits among stakeholders (Kattiyapornpong & Chuntamara, 2020).

The Thai government's Pracharat policy plays a significant role in strengthening and creating employment, social welfare, security, local heritage, healthcare, and key necessities for local people through work experience, training, and folk wisdom to be utilized as a part of human capital development (Inphoo & Nomnian, 2019; Nuchdang, 2019). Responding to such a policy, Thai AirAsia Co. Ltd. has bridged the gaps between the public and private sectors and their contribution to society by uplifting local communities' quality of life and standard of living through CBT under the project titled "Journey D".

Since 2017, Journey D has enhanced CBT by working closely with local communities on improving their tourism standards and forming a network of CBT experts and stakeholders to engage in the development of the following three key areas:

1. *Community-based Tourism Standards Enhancement and Development.* Thai AirAsia worked with expert organizations to hold workshops for community tourism leaders to improve their skills in areas such as homestay standards, waste management, tourism site management, communication, pricing and

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