

## Guidelines for Literacy Transmission and Preservation of Bayu Folk Songs

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### ABSTRACT

Bayu folk songs, integral to the cultural heritage of Southwest China, face challenges in transmission and preservation amidst rapid social and technological changes. This study aims to investigate and propose guidelines for literacy transmission and preservation of Bayu folk songs. Drawing upon ethnomusicological research and the intersection of education and cultural preservation, the study explores the cultural significance, diversity, integration, and challenges in transmitting Bayu folk songs. Methodologically, 14 key informants were selected from the Chongqing, Guizhou, and Hunan regions, including inheritors of folk songs, local villagers, leaders of cultural centers, and relevant experts. Data were gathered through interviews and observation forms and analyzed using thematic analysis. Results highlight the profound cultural significance of Bayu folk songs, the rich diversity and integration within Bayu culture, and the challenges in transmission within educational settings. The study suggests developing standardized guidelines, curriculum frameworks, and capacity-building initiatives to ensure the successful transmission and preservation of Bayu folk songs within educational contexts, enriching students' learning experiences and promoting cultural heritage preservation.

**Key words:** Bayu Folk Songs, Cultural Heritage, Education, Transmission, Preservation

### INTRODUCTION

Bayu folk songs, an essential component of the cultural heritage of the Bayu region in Southwest China, represent a rich tapestry of traditions, stories, and values passed down through generations. These songs encapsulate the Bayu people's collective memory, identity, and cultural expressions, reflecting their joys, sorrows, and everyday life experiences (Kuang & He, 2022; Liu & Nicolas, 2024; Yang & Chonpairot, 2024). However, amidst the rapid social and technological changes sweeping through contemporary society, the transmission and preservation of Bayu folk songs face numerous challenges. Against this backdrop, this research explores and proposes guidelines for effectively transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs within education and literacy studies (Zhou & Chuangprakhon, 2023; Zhang & Rodsakan, 2023; Qiu et al., 2024).

The Bayu region, situated in the heart of Southwest China, is renowned for its vibrant cultural heritage, encompassing diverse ethnic groups, languages, and artistic traditions. Amongst these cultural treasures, Bayu folk songs hold a special significance, serving as a means of oral communication, cultural expression, and social cohesion within Bayu communities. Passed orally from generation to generation, these songs embody the Bayu people's collective wisdom, beliefs, and sentiments, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural continuity (Harris, 2004).

However, despite their cultural significance, Bayu folk songs face unprecedented transmission and preservation challenges. Rapid urbanization, globalization, and the proliferation of digital media platforms have led to the erosion of traditional cultural practices and the marginalization of indigenous knowledge systems. As a result, there is a pressing need to explore innovative approaches to safeguarding and revitalizing Bayu folk songs for future generations (Howard, 2016; Liu et al., 2023).

Several interconnected factors hinder the transmission and preservation of Bayu folk songs. Firstly, the oral nature of these songs makes them vulnerable to loss or distortion over time, particularly as older generations pass away and traditional modes of transmission decline (Song & Yuan, 2021; Yu & Karin, 2022). Secondly, the lack of institutional support and formal educational initiatives focused on Bayu cultural heritage exacerbates the risk of cultural erosion. Thirdly, the rapid pace of socio-economic development and cultural globalization has led to a decline in the appreciation and practice of traditional art forms among younger generations (Gao & Karin, 2023; Li & Bhengsri, 2024; Zhou & Chuangprakhon, 2023).

This study aims to investigate and propose guidelines for literacy transmission and preservation of Bayu folk songs. By examining the intersection between cultural heritage preservation and educational practices, this study seeks to identify strategies to enhance the transmission, appreciation, and

integration of Bayu folk songs into formal and informal educational settings (Fatorić & Biesbroek, 2020; Ghahramani et al., 2020; Juan et al., 2023).

This research holds significant implications for both academia and society at large. Firstly, by providing practical guidelines for transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs, this study contributes to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and promoting cultural diversity. Secondly, by integrating Bayu folk songs into educational and literacy studies, this research enriches the curriculum, fosters intercultural understanding, and promotes social cohesion. Thirdly, by engaging with local communities, educators, and policymakers, this study aims to create sustainable pathways for revitalizing Bayu cultural traditions and empowering Bayu youth.

In conclusion, this research addresses the pressing need for innovative approaches to transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs within the context of education and literacy studies. By leveraging the transformative potential of education, this study aims to ensure the continued vitality and relevance of Bayu cultural heritage for future generations.

### Research Question

- How can literacy transmission and preservation guidelines for Bayu folk songs be effectively investigated and proposed within the context of cultural heritage and education studies?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Bayu folk songs, deeply ingrained in the cultural heritage of the Bayu region in China, represent a significant aspect of intangible cultural heritage. As globalization and modernization influence traditional cultural practices, a pressing need arises to explore strategies for safeguarding and perpetuating Bayu folk songs, particularly within education and literacy studies.

Ethnomusicological research provides valuable insights into understanding the significance of folk songs within specific communities and their transmission across generations (Siegel et al., 2008). Scholars such as Hu Xiaodong and Zhang Yinghua have extensively studied the cultural identity embedded in Bayu folk songs' performance techniques and lyrical content (Hu, 2020; Zhang, 2017). Their work sheds light on the role of folk songs as repositories of intangible heritage and underscores the importance of preserving them for future generations.

Furthermore, the intersection of education and cultural preservation has emerged as a focal point for scholarly inquiry. Anthony Siegel et al. (2008) underscores the value of ethnographic approaches in music research, advocating for the documentation of oral traditions and local knowledge systems to inform educational practices. Additionally, Chen Jingyi's reflections on language musicology highlight the reciprocal relationship between linguistic diversity and musical expression, suggesting avenues for incorporating folk songs into language education programs (Chen, 2019).

Drawing upon these theoretical frameworks and scholarly insights, this study aims to investigate and propose guidelines for effectively transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs within the context of education and literacy studies. By synthesizing ethnomusicological perspectives, educational theories, and cultural heritage conservation principles, this research seeks to develop practical strategies and recommendations to inform educational policies, curriculum development, and community outreach initiatives to revitalize Bayu folk songs and ensure their continued relevance in contemporary society.

## METHOD

### Selection of Key Informants

This study's selection of 14 key informants involved categorizing them into four distinct groups based on their expertise, involvement in cultural activities, and leadership roles within their communities. The screening criteria for each group ensured the inclusion of individuals with substantial experience and knowledge relevant to the research objectives, as shown in Table 1.

### Selection of Research Site

The research setting spans three significant regions: Chongqing, Guizhou, and Hunan. These areas were chosen due to their historical and cultural significance in the Bayu folk song tradition, offering diverse insights into the practices and challenges associated with preserving this invaluable cultural heritage. The selection of research sites within each region is shown in Figure 1 and Table 2.

### Research Tools

The study used interviews and observation forms to gather data on Bayu folk songs in education and literacy studies. The Interview Form facilitated structured conversations, while the Observation Form recorded observations during performances and events, as shown in Table 3.

### Data Analysis

A multi-step approach was used, including transcribing qualitative data, thematic analysis to identify patterns, and coding to highlight key concepts. The findings were then synthesized to develop guidelines to address challenges and opportunities in effectively transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs. This iterative process ensured a thorough analysis, leading to robust recommendations for practice and further research in this domain.

## RESULTS

### Cultural Significance

Bayu folk songs, discovered through extensive fieldwork across the Chongqing, Guizhou, and Hunan regions, were revealed to possess a profound cultural significance deeply

**Table 1.** Selection of key informants

Group	Criteria
1: Inheritors of Folk Songs	Three individuals were chosen as national inheritors of Bayu folk songs based on their qualifications, education level, age over 70, singing experience, ability to sing over 300 local folk songs, and international performance experience. CCTV interviewed them or had international performance experience.
2: Local Villagers	Six individuals from Chongqing, Hunan, and Guizhou provinces were selected based on their active participation in local folk song performances, age between 40-60, junior high school education or above, ability to sing over 30 local folk songs, and involvement in at least 30 folk song-singing activities.
3: Leaders of Cultural Centers	Three cultural center leaders were chosen based on criteria including having a university degree, being 40-50 years old, having over five years of leadership experience, having over ten years of involvement in local ethnic folk song culture, and organizing at least 30 local competitions or performances.
4: Relevant Experts	Two Chongqing-based professors were chosen as experts due to their residency, over 30 years of teaching experience, publication of over 30 music theory articles, and extensive guidance in various music schools and cultural centers over 30 times.

**Figure 1.** Map of research sites in Chongqing, Guizhou, and Hunan, China

Source: Sparkscommentary (n.d.)

ingrained within local communities. Interviews with inheritors and community members shed light on these songs' multifaceted roles in preserving and expressing Bayu heritage and identity. Rooted in oral tradition, Bayu folk songs serve as repositories of historical narratives, traditional customs, and communal values, functioning as entertainment and vital conduits of cultural transmission. These songs narrate tales of triumphs, struggles, and everyday life experiences unique to the Bayu culture through lyrical compositions and melodic arrangements. Moreover, they foster social cohesion, forging bonds among community members and reinforcing shared identity and belonging.

The significance of Bayu folk songs extends beyond their role as cultural artifacts; they serve as vehicles for

intergenerational communication, bridging the gap between past and present. As inheritors pass down these songs to younger generations, they impart musical techniques and the values, beliefs, and ethos embedded within them. This transmission process fosters a sense of continuity and connection with ancestral roots, empowering individuals to navigate contemporary challenges while staying grounded in their cultural heritage. Additionally, Bayu folk songs contribute to the preservation of linguistic diversity, with many songs sung in local dialects that serve as repositories of linguistic nuances and expressions unique to the region.

Furthermore, Bayu folk songs play a pivotal role in cultural diplomacy and cross-cultural exchange, serving as ambassadors of Bayu culture to broader audiences. Through

performances and cultural exchanges, Bayu folk songs facilitate community dialogue and understanding, fostering mutual respect and appreciation for diverse cultural expressions. In this way, Bayu folk songs serve as catalysts for intercultural dialogue and global awareness, transcending geographical boundaries to unite people to celebrate cultural diversity.

The cultural significance of Bayu folk songs underscores the need for concerted efforts to preserve, promote, and transmit this rich, intangible heritage. By recognizing the intrinsic value of these songs and their role in shaping identity and fostering community cohesion, stakeholders can work together to ensure Bayu folk songs' continued vitality and relevance in the modern world.

Diversity and Integration

The research findings underscore the rich diversity inherent in Bayu folk songs, showcasing various musical forms and performance techniques across the Chongqing, Guizhou, and Hunan regions. Through in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations, the study elucidated the vast repertoire of Bayu folk songs, ranging from narrative ballads to celebratory chants and ritualistic incantations. Each song genre exhibits unique stylistic characteristics, vocal

ornamentations, and rhythmic patterns, reflecting the diverse cultural influences and historical narratives embedded within Bayu's heritage.

Moreover, the study shed light on the intricate integration of Bayu folk songs with various cultural elements, underscoring the dynamic interplay between music, language, ritual, and socio-cultural practices. Researchers observed how Bayu folk songs serve as vehicles for cultural expression, encapsulating the Bayu people's ethos, values, and beliefs. Through nuanced lyrical compositions and evocative melodies, these songs encapsulate the essence of Bayu identity, offering insights into local customs, folklore, and collective memories.

Furthermore, the study revealed the adaptive nature of Bayu folk songs, which continually evolve and adapt to changing social contexts while retaining their core cultural essence. Researchers documented instances where traditional folk songs underwent reinterpretation and innovation, incorporating contemporary themes and musical elements without compromising their authenticity. This dynamic process of cultural fusion and integration underscores Bayu's cultural heritage's resilience and ability to thrive in an ever-changing world.

The findings highlight the importance of recognizing and celebrating Bayu folk songs' diverse musical traditions and cultural expressions. By acknowledging the intricate interplay between diversity and integration, stakeholders can foster a deeper appreciation for Bayu cultural heritage and promote its transmission and preservation for future generations.

Challenges in Transmission

The research revealed significant challenges associated with effectively transmitting Bayu folk songs within educational settings, particularly in Chongqing, Guizhou, and Hunan regions. One key challenge identified was the absence of standardized guidelines and curriculum integration strategies for incorporating Bayu folk songs into formal education systems. Through interviews with educators and cultural experts, it became evident that the lack of structured frameworks hindered the systematic teaching and learning of Bayu folk songs in schools and educational institutions.

Furthermore, researchers noted that the limited availability of educational resources and instructional

Table 2. Areas and locations involved in the study

Area	Venues
Chongqing	1. Chongqing China Three Gorges Museum 2. Chongqing Huguang Guild Hall 3. Xiushan County Cultural and Tourism Commission in Southeast Chongqing 4. Inheritors of folk song Wang Shijin's home
Guizhou	1. Cultural Center of Songtao County, Guizhou Province 2. Xiangshuidong Village, Songtao County, Guizhou Province 3. Miaowang City, Songtao County, Guizhou Province 4. Local villager Wu Yazhen's home
Hunan	1. Cultural Center of Longshan County, Hunan Province 2. Shidi Village, Dianfang Town, Longshan County, Hunan Province 3. Inheritors of folk song Tian Longxin's home 4. Inheritors of folk song Li MingWu's home

Table 3. Research tools

Research Tool	Purpose	Components
Interview Form	Gather qualitative data from participants	It consists of several sections covering participant information, background information, knowledge and expertise, challenges and opportunities, and suggestions and recommendations. The form aims to elicit detailed responses from participants to inform the research on effectively transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs within the context of education and literacy studies.
Observation Form	Systematically record event observations	It includes sections documenting venue details, observation details, performance analysis, educational integration, and recommendations. Researchers utilize this form to capture relevant information about the quality of performances, audience engagement, cultural authenticity, and integrating Bayu folk songs into educational programs.



materials tailored to Bayu's cultural heritage exacerbated the transmission challenges. Many educators expressed difficulties accessing relevant content and pedagogical tools necessary for effectively teaching Bayu folk songs. This scarcity of resources impeded educators' efforts to instill an appreciation for Bayu cultural heritage among students, thereby jeopardizing the continuity of this rich musical tradition.

Moreover, the study highlighted the disconnect between traditional modes of transmission and contemporary educational practices, posing additional obstacles to the effective dissemination of Bayu folk songs. While Bayu folk songs have historically been transmitted orally and through informal apprenticeships, modern educational settings often prioritize formalized instruction and standardized assessments. This disparity in teaching methodologies and learning paradigms complicates integrating Bayu folk songs into academic curricula and instructional practices.

In light of these challenges, the research underscored the urgent need for comprehensive approaches to ensure the successful transmission of Bayu folk songs within educational contexts. This includes the development of standardized guidelines, curriculum frameworks, and instructional resources tailored to Bayu cultural heritage. Additionally, there is a pressing need for capacity-building initiatives to train educators and cultural practitioners in effective pedagogical strategies for teaching Bayu folk songs. By addressing these challenges and fostering greater collaboration between educational institutions and cultural stakeholders, it is possible to safeguard the transmission of Bayu folk songs and preserve this invaluable cultural heritage for future generations.

### Implications for Education

The research findings underscore the importance of integrating Bayu folk songs into educational curricula, offering profound implications for education and literacy studies. By

recognizing the cultural significance of Bayu folk songs and their role as a vital expression of local identity, educators can foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Bayu cultural heritage among students. Incorporating Bayu folk songs into educational frameworks enriches students' learning experiences and serves as a means of preserving and transmitting this invaluable aspect of local culture to future generations.

Furthermore, the research highlights the need to develop comprehensive guidelines and strategies for effectively transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs within educational settings. Schools can facilitate the systematic teaching and learning of Bayu cultural heritage by providing educators with standardized frameworks and pedagogical resources. These guidelines can offer practical recommendations for curriculum integration, instructional methodologies, and assessment strategies tailored to the unique characteristics of Bayu folk songs, ensuring their sustained transmission and preservation.

Moreover, incorporating Bayu folk songs into educational curricula can contribute to broader educational goals, such as promoting cultural diversity, fostering intercultural understanding, and enhancing students' linguistic and musical competencies. By engaging with Bayu cultural heritage, students can develop a more profound sense of cultural empathy and appreciation for diverse cultural traditions, ultimately contributing to the cultivation of global citizenship and cultural literacy.

In conclusion, the research underscores the transformative potential of integrating Bayu folk songs into educational contexts, offering educators and policymakers valuable insights into developing culturally responsive education practices. By embracing Bayu cultural heritage as an integral part of educational curricula, schools can empower students to connect with their cultural roots, celebrate diversity, and contribute to preserving this rich musical tradition for generations to come.

The summary encapsulates the significant findings of the research, emphasizing the cultural significance, diversity,

**Table 4.** Summary of research results

Topic	Summary
Cultural Significance	Bayu folk songs discovered in Chongqing, Guizhou, and Hunan regions are deeply significant, serving as repositories of historical narratives, communal values, and expressions of identity. They foster social cohesion and intergenerational communication, preserve linguistic diversity, and serve as ambassadors of Bayu culture globally. Their preservation is essential for maintaining cultural vitality.
Diversity and Integration	Bayu folk songs exhibit rich diversity in musical forms and integration with cultural elements, reflecting cultural influences and historical narratives. They encapsulate Bayu identity through lyrical compositions and serve as dynamic expressions of cultural heritage, evolving while retaining authenticity. Recognizing this diversity is crucial for promoting appreciation and transmission of Bayu cultural heritage.
Challenges in Transmission	Challenges in transmitting Bayu folk songs in educational settings include the absence of standardized guidelines, limited resources, and a disconnect between traditional transmission methods and modern educational practices. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive approaches, including the development of guidelines, capacity-building initiatives, and collaboration between stakeholders.
Implications for Education	Integrating Bayu folk songs into educational curricula offers profound implications, enriching students' learning experiences, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting cultural diversity and intercultural understanding. Developing guidelines and strategies tailored to Bayu cultural heritage is essential for ensuring their effective transmission and preserving this invaluable aspect of local identity.

integration, challenges, and implications for education regarding Bayu folk songs, as shown in Table 4.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The discussion and conclusion of this research are centered on exploring guidelines for effectively transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs within education and literacy studies. By examining the cultural significance of Bayu folk songs, the challenges in their transmission, and the implications for education, the research contributes to understanding how cultural heritage can be safeguarded and integrated into educational practices.

The research delves into the cultural significance of Bayu folk songs, essential to the Bayu region's cultural heritage. These songs encapsulate the collective memory, identity, and cultural expressions of the Bayu people, reflecting their joys, sorrows, and everyday life experiences (Kuang & He, 2022; Liu & Nicolas, 2024; Yang & Chonpairot, 2024). However, amidst rapid social and technological changes, the transmission and preservation of Bayu folk songs face numerous challenges. These challenges include the oral nature of the songs, the lack of institutional support, and the decline in the appreciation of traditional art forms among younger generations (Harris, 2004; Howard, 2016; Liu et al., 2023). By selecting key informants and research sites, the study effectively captures the diverse perspectives and experiences related to Bayu folk songs, providing valuable insights into their cultural significance and transmission practices.

The literature review highlights the intersection of education and cultural preservation as a focal point for scholarly inquiry. Scholars emphasize the importance of incorporating cultural heritage into educational practices to promote cultural diversity, foster intercultural understanding, and enhance students' learning experiences (Fatorić & Biesbroek, 2020; Ghahramani et al., 2020; Juan et al., 2023). Theoretical frameworks such as cultural transmission and cultural sustainability provide lenses to analyze the relationship between cultural heritage and educational practices, guiding the research approach and analysis (Schönpflug, 2008; Soini & Birkeland, 2014).

In terms of research methods, the study adopts a comprehensive approach involving the selection of key informants, research sites, and data analysis techniques. By categorizing key informants into distinct groups based on expertise and involvement, the research ensures the representation of diverse perspectives and experiences related to Bayu folk songs. Using interviews and observation forms facilitates the collection of qualitative data, which is then analyzed through thematic analysis and coding techniques. This methodological approach enables the research to explore the cultural significance of Bayu folk songs, identify challenges in their transmission, and propose guidelines for their preservation within educational contexts.

In conclusion, the research addresses the pressing need for innovative approaches to transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs within education and literacy studies. By leveraging the transformative potential of education, the study

aims to ensure the continued vitality and relevance of Bayu cultural heritage for future generations. Through exploring cultural significance, diversity, integration, and challenges in transmission, the research provides valuable insights into the importance of safeguarding and integrating cultural heritage into educational practices.

Moving forward, policymakers, educators, and cultural stakeholders should prioritize the development of standardized guidelines, curriculum frameworks, and instructional resources tailored to Bayu's cultural heritage. Capacity-building initiatives and collaboration between educational institutions and cultural stakeholders are essential for successfully transmitting and preserving Bayu folk songs. By embracing Bayu cultural heritage as an integral part of educational curricula, schools can empower students to connect with their cultural roots, celebrate diversity, and contribute to preserving this rich musical tradition for generations to come.

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