

Thai to Lao Translation Add-In for Microsoft Word

Version 3

Quick-start User's Guide for using translated documents

Automatic Translation Overview

The Thai to Lao Add-In for Microsoft Word automatically translates Thai text word by word into Lao text in paragraphs, tables or text boxes. It will also translate any Thai text in page headers and, optionally, the file name if that includes Thai text. The close relationship of the Thai and Lao languages means that such an approach will usually yield understandable Lao. However, the substituted Lao words may not always have the correct meaning of the corresponding Thai words since a Thai word may have more than one Lao translation. The right word to choose will then depend on the immediate context, and may not be the cognate (phonetically similar) Lao word.

The translation method uses a word list of Thai words and phrases, each of which may have one or more corresponding Lao entries. After the document has been translated into Lao, some Lao words will usually be highlighted to indicate that the translation process could not reliably suggest an appropriate Lao word to use.

As far as possible, the translation maintains the existing document structure, but line lengths and spacing may change and text flow will usually need to be adjusted, especially in text boxes.

Text Highlighting

Lao words in the translated document are highlighted if any of the following apply:

Description	Example
The Thai word (or loan word or typing error) is not a recognized dictionary entry.	(ພາສາຮັບເຮົາ - ມັນຄືມ;
The Thai word has been included in the word list but has been flagged as uncertain.	(ພາສາຮັບເຮົາ - ມັນຄືມ;
No Lao entry for the (known) Thai word has been included in the word list.	ກະທຳທີ່ໂລດໂຜນຊຶ່ງ
The Lao word is included in the word list as a translation for the Thai word but has been flagged as uncertain.	ກະທຳທີ່ໂລດໂຜນຊຶ່ງ
The Thai word has several listed Lao meanings, none of which has been identified as the default to use.	ຈະວັດແທກ ວັດໂລກ
The Thai word has several listed Lao meanings, one of which has been identified as most likely and set as the default to use.	ມັນຄືພະຍາມານບໍ່ແມ່ນຄົນ

Words highlighted in any of the first three categories should be checked and corrected individually. Note that in each case the Thai word translated has been inserted as hidden text immediately after the highlighted word, so can be easily seen when checking without needing to refer back to the original Thai document. A wordlist containing the original Thai word and listed (or transliterated) Lao equivalents for all highlighted words is produced to accompany translated documents.

Other text will not be highlighted and all highlighting can be removed when editing is complete by means of the normal ribbon-menu option for applying or removing highlighting.

The translated Lao document will be saved to a TranslatedLao/ subfolder of the original Thai document's path.

For information about using the Add-In to translate manually or automatically, and extending or customizing the wordlist used, please see the complete User's Guide.

John Durdin, August 2024