THE NEARLY FORGOTTEN MALAY FOLKLORE: SHALL WE START WITH THE SOFTWARE?

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ABSTRACT
The study focuses on the nearly forgotten Malay folklore in Malaysia. The objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the types of Malay folklore among primary school learners. The samples of the study were 100 male and female students at schools in Selangor. The samples were picked at random from several schools and they were given software to view which consisted of Malay folklore. The subjects were interviewed based on their opinions on the use of the software in disseminating the Malay folklore. The data were analysed by using the discourse analysis method by Brown & Yule (1983). The results revealed that the software has given the awareness of the forgotten Malay folklore and further, it has given the overview of most types of stories in Malay folklore. The subjects seemed to favor most of the stories and state that the technology has given them the opportunity to appreciate the forgotten Malay folklore. The study implicates school students, teachers and researchers in understanding, appreciating, disseminating and identifying the moral values from the Malay folklore.

Keywords: Malay folklore, software, primary school learners, disseminating

INTRODUCTION
Malay folklore consists of folk music and song, bardic tales, animal fables, ghost stories, epics, fairy tales, symbolic lore and myths. Each of the stories have its strengths in terms of characters, setting and storylines. The Malay folklore has started long time ago. It was based on the Malay culture and also the influence from the environment according to the timeline at the moment the stories were written (Othman Puteh, 1984; Md Sidin Ishak, 2005; Hadijah Hamat, 2006). Some of the stories were storytold and disseminated from mouth to mouth, since at that time, the stories were not written or documented. Moreover, the stories were brought down from generation to generation for the purpose of preserving the values in the stories (Mohd Taib Osman, 1988; Normaliza Abd Rahim & Siti Nur Aliaa, 2012) . Other than that, the Malay folklore were created for the purpose of pleasure, satisfaction, teaching and learning, history, for naming a place, etc. The stories have their own meaning and purposes of its existence (Roslina Abu Bakar, 2013). Thus, the Malay folklore have been the liking and favorites among the villages since at that time, there were no technology existed. Although the stories were storytold and changed from time to time, but the basic or purpose of the stories were similar and thus, the moral values of positive values were well explained and understood.

Folklore Throughout the World
Davis (2010) states that Ben Botkin (1938) defines folklore as one traditional creation in one community and was carried down as their culture from one generation to another. It is an identity of the community. The folklore is the Malay literature that will be of good use for the community. Malay foklores consist of various version that were adapted and adopted according to the storylines. According to Mohd Taib Osman (1988) in Malay folklore, the stories were based on the culture and were preserved till date. The stories were not documented properly but were disseminated from mouths to mouths from generation to another. Thus, the content and storyline were the same as the original. Bronner (2012), Miller (2013) and Roslina Abu Bakar (2013) add that the stories in folklore should be taken care of in order to preserve the originality of the stories. Bronner (2012) also focuses on the theories and research on folklore which give benefit to students, teachers, lecturers, authors, and publishers. The researchs have helped to give overview on the findings of using folklore in everyday lives. Thus, Miller (2013) concentrates on the perception of the society towards folklore. The folklore has somehow gives great impact towards the growth of the younger generation in understanding the good values of their ancestors. Hence, the good values were well mantained and practised for the harmony of living.

On the other hand, research on folklore were also done in China. Grayson (2013) concentrates on the anthology of Chinese folk and popular literature. The samples of materials of folktales, folk songs, folk rituals, epic tradition, folk drama which include puppet theatre, and folk storytelling traditions. The subjects were vast and most of the material have never been translated in English. Thus, the folklore were well kept and preserved in such a way, researchers were able to use the folklore in disseminating to the society. Grayson (2013) adds that

the area of folk literature and a valuable resource for all researchers working in the area of folk literature in China and also valuable resource for all resaerches in the subject area. Watkins (2004) agrees with Grayson (2013) and postulates that in Great Britain, folklore and popular religion during the middle age were well disseminated to the community. This way, the folklore were learnt and understood by all ages. Other than that, the folklore were well appreciated and storytold from generation to generation. Hence, Miller (2013) adds that, everyone plays a major role in giving awareness on folklore to the younger generation and to ensure that the folklore were still remembered. This way, the folklore will be preserved in terms of content and storylines.

Malay Folklore and Technology
Nowadays, in order to disseminate the folklore to the community, research were done by using various types of technology. Normaliza Abd Rahim & Siti Nur Aliaa Roslan (2012a) state that special needs children were able to storytell the stories repeatedly. With the help of digital stories prepared by the researcher, the subjects involved were given more time on the computer in order for them to read and try out the program. The stories involved were based on the Malay folklore. The folklore were about animal folklore which have a few animals that they knew. The graphics of the animals were the main attraction for the subjects to continue with the activity using the computer. Thus, Normaliza Abd Rahim (2011a; 2011b) claim that other types of Malay folklore were also the favourite among special needs children. For example, animal folklore, myths, music and song, etc. In this study, Normaliza Abd Rahim (2011a; 2011b) state that the subjects involved were children with Asperger syndrom. They were given Malay stories in the computer. Surprisingly, the subjects were able to concentrate on the story while trying out the program from the computer. Besides that, there were also other technologies used in the classroom. The use of audio from the CD which consists of songs of the story and also from the computer with many graphics.

Normaliza Abd Rahim & Siti Nur Aliaa Roslan (2012b) state that primary school students were happy and content when using the computer to learn about verbs. The stories were taken from the Malay folklore and translated to the English language. The subjects seemed to be happy with the stories since it was different from other stories. It can be seen that the subjects were able to identify the verbs in the stories and the program in the computer has given them the motivation and increase their interest in learning. Siti Musliha Isnain & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2012) proclaim that the use of computer has helped the students in discussion topics that were given to them. The computer programs which consisted of Malay folklore (animal folklore) have given them the opportunity and chance in discussing their ideas and comments towards the stories. The stories have made them want to know more about the characters, setting and storylines. The subjects were seen happy and content after the viewing and they were able to give good feedback pertaining to the program. It can be seen that the program has helped them in understanding and recognizing the Malay folklore which were nearly forgotten. They also mentioned that the animals stories that were in the program were storytold by their grandparents and they were happy to share their comments and opinions with their peers. Normaliza Abd Rahim & Siti Nur Aliaa Roslan (2012c) have the same results as the study by Siti Musliha Isnain & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2012) where the subjects were very keen in discussion. Although the study by Normaliza Abd Rahim & Siti Nur Aliaa Roslan (2012c) focussed on subjects from Ireland but they were exposed with the Malay folklore among their Malaysian friends. This can be said that the influence of folklore has given them the courage to speak out and discuss in enthusiasm.

PROBLEM STATEMENT
Othman Puteh (1989: 41) stated that it has been 35 years that the Malay folklore existed. Thus, Malaysia does not have a credible author or writer as a model for the folklore. Hence, there are authors and writers now who are active, productive and profilic but are still in the process or cannot be evaluated as a Malay folklore model. Now, after 55 years of the Malay children and youth literature, there are still problems in identifying the credibility of the authors or writers. To add, Othman Puteh (1984; 1998) claim that Malay stories for children and youth focus on Malay folklore were replaced with new stories and environment which reflect the moment that the stories been published. Thus, the Malay folklores were pushed aside to put in the new stories in the market. Next, according to Nik Rafidah Nik Muhammad Affendi, Normaliza Abd Rahim, Arbaie Sujud & Nurul Azimah Abdull Sedik (2013), the concept of Malay children and youth literature is still loose and not complete. Therefore, the Malay folklore has been forgotten and ignored.

Based on the literature review above, it can be seen that folklore are still needed for each community. Basically, different community with different folklore. The dissemination of the folklore can either be done from words of mouth but also through any different form of technology. As for the Malay folklore and in line with the new era of technology, the computer plays an important role in the dissemination of the Malay folklore. Therefore, the objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the types of Malay folklore among primary school learners.

METHODOLOGY

The samples of the study consist of 100 subjects from primary schools in Selangor, Malaysia. The subjects were picked at random aged between 9-10 years old. The subjects were divided into four groups and they were given a program of Malay folklore to view. The program consists of stories from folk music and song, bardic tales, animal fables, ghost stories, epics, fairy tales, symbolic lore and myths. After viewing, the subjects were given a set of questionnaires and they were also interviewed in accordance to the questions. The interviews were based on the views and opinions of the Malay folklore that they viewed and other folklore that they knew. The questionnaires were collected and data were analysed by using percentage. The transcripts from the interview were analyzed by using the discourse analysis by Brown & Yule (1983).

Brown & Yule (1983) state that discourse analysis is how humans use language to communicate and, in particular, how addressers construct linguistic messages for addressees and how addressees work on linguistic messages in order to interpret them. Most importantly, is the traditional concern of the descriptive linguist, to give an account of how forms of language are used in communication. The communication or utterances are considered as spoken activity and will be analysed as spoken discourse analysis. It is a study of conversation, dialogues and spoken monologues. Here, the communication or utterances took place when the subjects were asked about the views and opinions of the Malay folklore software. The utterances were transcribed and interpret for the purpose of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Folk Music & Song

Majority (100%) of the subjects preferred folk music and song. This might due to the fact that the subjects were exposed to the songs when they were young. Their parents sang the song for their siblings or for them. The songs were either for lullaby or for calming the subjects at home. The subjects stated that the songs have given them the courage to sing in public since most of the songs were well known by the rest of the children. 100% of the subjects stated that the music and songs were fun and they were able to show gestures by following the characters or verbs from the lyrics of the songs. Furthermore, the music was suitable for the subjects with piano and guitar accompliments. The subjects also mentioned that the music and songs were well suited for all ages and the lyrics of the songs have given them the idea of the whole story being delivered. They were happy to sing repeatedly either at schools or at home. Thus, at present, the subjects stated that the songs were not sang as often at schools anymore since they hardly hear the song in the classroom. This was uttered by the subjects in correspond to the questions on their opinion about learning Malay folklore through songs. The subjects suggested that the songs should be sung in the Malay language classroom and it does not matter if it will be done repeatedly every week. This will enhance their learning on Malay folklore through music and song.

Bardic Tales

Bardic tales have also been the likes of the subjects. The subjects were seen enthusiastic when asked about this folklore. Majority of the subjects (98%) agreed that bardic tales have given them the visual of the real lives of the characters. The tales have also given them the opportunity in understanding the storyline and the messages were also been delivered. Moreover, the bardic tales have shown great stories that resemble happiness and joyful among the community in the story. The subjects also commented that bardic tales have moral values that were well understood by them. The moral values were stated in between the lines and thus it have given the subjects the chance to use the values in their everyday lives. The moral values like respect, love, care, helping each other and others were in the stories. On the other hand, the characters in the bardic tales were sometimes funny and this has lead the subjects laugh and giggle while reading the stories. The enjoyment that they had, had given them the influence of good attitude; love towards reading, understanding the character and the message that the characters wanted to say. The influence not only stops at the students but also among their peers outside the classroom. Also, the influences from the good attitude were spread among the family members at home. The subjects uttered that they storytold the bardic tales that they knew from school to their family members at home. This has lead to the awareness of the tales among the family members.

Animal Fables

The animal fables were also being the favorites among the subjects. The subjects were happy to tell stories on animals that they knew. Most of the stories were famous in storybooks. The subjects (100%) agreed that the animal fables have given them the thrill, fun and satisfaction in reading. The subjects stated that the animals involved were domestic and dangerous animals such as the tiger, lion, cheetah, snakes and so on. The domestic animals were always the rabbit, cat, mouse etc, and most importantly the domestic animals were cute and friendly. All the female subjects preferred cute animals with round eyes and furry like the cat and rabbit while the boys preferred dangerous animals like the lion and tiger. Other than that, the subjects also mentioned animals that live in the jungle such as the elephant, giraffe, rhinocerous, zebra, horse etc. The subjects stated that the

animals were best included in the animal fables so that all students at schools were able to recognise the animals' features. This will enhance their learning ability that relates to science and geography. Subsequently, the subjects uttered that the animal fables consisted of moral values for humans. The moral values were stated in the stories such as love, care, respect, helping each other, sincere, generous etc. Thus, the moral values have given the subjects a great impact in their everyday lives. The subjects were happy to follow the good characters in the fables and they sometimes mentioned the characters from the books to their peers and family members.

Ghost Stories
Equal number of subjects like and dislike the ghost stories in the Malay folklore. 50% of the subjects were too scared to read the stories while the other 50% seemed to say that the ghost stories were not that scary. Most of the subjects that like the ghost stories were male and they said that the ghost stories were more fun than the rest of the Malay folklore. The subjects confirmed that the ghost stories were not real and the stories were just for enjoyment purposes. The subjects stated that most of the ghost stories were written long time ago where the people who live in the village were not exposed to television and any other technologies. So therefore, the villages created ghost stories for fun. Other than that, the ghost stories were created in order to scare their small children from going out at nights or play at dangerous places. This way, the stories will ensure that the children were scared based on the stories that they heard. Although, some of the ghost stories have no moral values but most of the stories have given great impact towards the children in visualizing bad things might happen at weird places. This way, children will stay home with their parents or go out with an adult supervision. This has led to a positive lives and meaningful day for them. To add, the subjects also uttered that the ghost stories have made them realize that good attitude will have positive outcome and endings. This way, the subjects will ensure that the ghost stories will be read to their future generations in a good way.

Epics
Majority of the subjects (60%) agreed that epics were their favorites. This might due to the fact that epics were difficult to understand. Furthermore, the subjects stated that the epics consisted of stories of the King of a country or about a strong person who lives long time ago. Apparently, majority of the subjects guessed or assumed that the stories consisted of interesting stories that were related with their lives. The female subjects were dreaming of being the queen or princess of the country or even falling in love with a handsome prince. The subjects were thrilled when they were asked about the stories that they have seen and read. They stated that the stories consisted of meaningful events and all the events were related to the main character. Usually in epics, the main characters were male and therefore, the female subjects like it so much. Thus, the male subjects like the strong characters that fight and always win. Subsequently, the subjects who disagreed (40%) on the epics were not happy with the stories other than not able to understand but they also hate being in a kingdom that does not resemble the real life. They seemed to have much difficulty in understanding the moral values in the stories. The subjects also mentioned that epics have failed in giving them the adventure or interest in reading. Also, epics have too much storyline in a story and therefore would lead to confusion. They uttered that the stories have difficult names to pronounce and also the name of the kingdom that did not exist.

Fairy Tales
Majority of the subjects (80%) agreed that they liked fairy tales. All 60 subjects were female while the other 20 subjects were male. The female subjects stated that fairy tales were fun and interesting. They also stated that the character in the fairy tales were handsome and beautiful. The male subjects like the idea of the story although they were more towards strong characters in the story rather than being good looking. The male subjects were happy and satisfied with the storyline from fairy tales although they knew that the stories were not real. All the subjects (80%) mentioned that the settings of the stories were interesting and they were able to visualize it although they knew that it does not exist now. As a matter of fact, the subjects did not compare with the setting now but to accept the setting in the fairy tales. Other than that, the subjects said that the storyline were interesting and different from one story to the other. They were no similar storyline. The stories consisted of moral values which made the subjects understand the messages in it. The subjects were content and happy with the underlying message and mostly about care, love, respect, understanding and others. This way, the subjects were able to use the moral values that they have learnt into their everyday lives with their peers and family members. Minority of the subjects (20%) disliked the fairy tales. When asked, the subjects stated that the fairy tales were stories for the female and they said that love stories were not suitable for them. Surprisingly, all the male subjects (20%) agreed with the idea of being strong and adventurous would be a good character in a story. Therefore, fairy tales will not show these characters. Thus, the subjects agreed that one day, they might like the fairy tales and will be able to accept the characters in the stories. Also, they agreed that in fairy tales should include moral values so that it will bring strong influence towards students at schools.

Symbolic Lore

Majority of the subjects (70%) stated that they liked stories on symbolic lore. The subjects stated that the symbolic lore stories were interesting and easy to understand. Thus, there were moral values in the stories. The moral values were related with their lives. The subjects add that the symbolic lore were able to give them the chance to understand the Malay culture and language. The Malay culture and language were well preserved. As a matter of fact, the subjects were able to give examples of Malay culture that were related to the stories. For example, the culture of bowing down when a person wants to walk in front of an older person. This action was seldom practised among the youngster. When asked, the subjects agreed with the actions and they agreed to follow the culture at home. A few of the subjects stated that they have already practiced most of the Malay culture at home since their parents have taught them to do so. Hence, they agreed that symbolic lore has given them positive impact in their lives. Apparently, minority of the subjects (30%) mentioned that the stories were difficult to understand. This might due to the fact that the stories were in the form of symbolic lore and they have a hard time in understanding and relate the stories. They were also confused with the integration of Malay culture in the stories. Some of the subjects might feel that it was a new culture or they have not practiced it anymore. This was disappointing since the subjects have forgotten the culture and thus, the symbolic lore would be a tool in helping them. Another reason would be because the subjects were from different races and culture and therefore, the culture from a race might be different from another and vice-versa.

Myths

When asked about myths, the subjects seemed to be excited. Majority of the subjects (96%) were fascinated with the stories related to myths. For them, the stories would make them imagine and visualize the characters in the stories. According to the subjects, with the use of technology, they were able to enjoy the stories more when they were given opportunities to experience the whole story in their mind. They also stated that myths were able to give them the chance to be creative and innovative. They were able to create new stories and the stories were favored by other students in the classroom. The characters were created based on the stories that they heard and read. Other than that, the subjects said that the characters were either human or animals. They preferred to have both characters in the stories. They also preferred animals that were created based on their likings. For example, the animal that looked like a dragon but with wings and long tail. The dragon was strong and nice. Although, the story was based on myths but it has moral values. The moral values like, love, share, respect, helpful, understanding, etc, were stated in the stories. Therefore, it can be said that myths stories were able to give positive impact to the subjects. The subjects stated that the positive impacts were able to expose the other students at schools in showing and giving good deeds towards others.

To sum up, with the use of Malay folklore software in the classroom, majority of the subjects were able to recap the stories that were nearly forgotten. The subjects seemed to be happy with the software and they enjoyed watching all the stories. The subjects were determined to give their opinions and views based on all the stories from the software. It can be said that the show of enthusiasm from the subjects during the study has shown that they were interested in the Malay folklore. They uttered that the Malay folklore were seldom discussed in the Malay language classroom. If so, the subjects suggested that the software should be disseminated to all students in Malaysia. This way, the Malay folklore will be preserved and talked among school children and even in Malay sketch, drama and movie. The results of this study were similar to the finding of the study by Othman Puteh (1984), Roslina Abu Bakar (2013) and Nik Rafidah Nik Muhammad Affendi et al., (2013) where Malay folklore should be preserved and disseminated for the next generation. The needs of the Malay folklore among the new generation will be able to reflect the lives of their ancestors. The results of the study was also similar to the study by Nurul Azimah Abdull Sedik et al., (2013) where Malay folklore should consist of interesting graphics that will be able to attract the attention of the readers. Thus, technology has played an important role in creating the graphics for the Malay folklore.

CONCLUSION

This study implicates children, teachers, lecturers, book authors, publisher, ministry of education and researchers towards the Malay folklore. It can be said that the nearly forgotten Malay folklore will be best incorporated in the Malay language classroom. This way, school children will have the awareness of the stories been existed from long time ago. To add, with the use of technology via Malay folklore software, the stories will be disseminated to everyone at all ages. It is hoped that future study will focus on the use of other means of technology in disseminating the Malay folklore.

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