

Dissemination of Values and Culture through the E-Folklore

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the values and culture in the e-folklore. The objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the values in the song lyric 'The Stork and the Mouse Deer'. The song was taken from phone application in the compilation of the 'Kingfisher stories' copyrighted by Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka. The e-folklore was rewritten from the Malay folklore stories. The results of the study showed that the stork has more values as compared to the mouse deer. The stork has good, honest, trust, believe, helpful and concern towards others by giving advices while the mouse deer has good values as in being clever and brilliant. It can be seen that the good values will be disseminated through the e-folklore in order to ensure the readers understand the true meaning of the each values and adapt the values in their everyday lives. This study has used the Malay Methodology theory by Hashim Awang (1994) which states that in all aspects of life there are ways in dealing with life, trust and culture among the society and related to humanity. It is hoped that further studies will focus on the values of e-folklore between human and animals.

Keywords: e-folklore, literature, values, younger generation, technology

INTRODUCTION

Most folklores consist of values that will be understood by listeners and readers of folklores. It can be said that long time ago, the folklores were storytold from mouth to mouth and the stories are still remembered till today. However, the folklore has not been the favourites among the younger generation since the booming of the technology (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2014a, 2014b). The younger generation would prefer to be with their handphones and laptops and play with an up-to-date games. For instance, in year 2016, Pokemon-go has been the favourite for all generation and this would lead to ignoring the folklores. Although, there were studies that helped in the process of dissemination of the folklore but to ensure that younger generations favor the stories would be a difficult task. Therefore, more studies should be done to encourage all generations to be aware of the existence of the folklore (Awang Azman Awang Pawi, 2015). Awang Azman Awang Pawi (2015) claims that the values and culture should be integrated among the younger generation and hence, the schools should play an important role for the inclusion. As such, creativity in the classroom would be appropriate and relevant (Nikitina, 2011).

STUDIES IN FOLKLORE

There were several studies done on folklore. Among a few, Normaliza Abd Rahim, Hazlina Abdul Halim & Roslina Mamat (2014) study of the integration of folklore in the form of multimedia. The study focuses on the awareness of folklore among learners. The objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the content of dicussion among students in the classroom based on their views and opinions towards the folklore. The samples of the study consists of students who learn the Malay language in the classroom. The results of the study revealed that most of the students were not aware of the folklore introduced in the classroom. Majority of the students were also not aware of the full stories since they only heard it when they were small. It can be seen that it is crucial to ensure their awareness towards the folklore due to the existence of new technology in the classroom. The result of the study by Normaliza Abd Rahim, Hazlina Abdul Halim & Roslina Mamat (2014) also showed that the folklore involves consists of the values as in love, care, helpful, responsible and respect. This study is parallel to the study done by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014b), Bronner (2012) and Bowman (2004) where the forgotten folklore has yet to be determined by the subjects in the classroom. The study by Normaliza

Abd Rahim (2014a) showed that the subjects were keen in learning the folklore and they felt that most folklores consist of values that will help learners in understanding the stories more.

On the other hand, a study by Arbaie, Normaliza Abd Rahim & Nik Rafidah Nik Affendi (2014) has nearly the same results as Normaliza Abd Rahim, Hazlina Abdul Halim & Roslina Mamat (2014) and Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014b) where animal fables from folklore will help to increase motivation among students in the classroom and the values consist in the story were love, share, responsible, helpful and friendly. Subsequently, the stories also help the students in identifying the values that can be adapted in their everyday lives. Consequently, another study by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014b) also has similar finding with the studies by Arbaie, Normaliza Abd Rahim & Nik Rafidah Nik Muhammad Affendi (2014), Normaliza Abd Rahim, Hazlina Abdul Halim & Roslina Mamat (2014) and Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014a) where the study focuses on animal fables from folklore. The study by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014b) showed that the samples involved in the study have given different perceptions towards the story ‘Bird of Paradise’ song. The results of the study also revealed that the subjects were able to retell the story according to their understanding from the lyrics of the song. The study by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014b) also showed that the dissemination of folklore can also be in the form of songs. Here, it can be seen that the song chosen (Bird of Paradise) consists of values like love, care, helpful and responsible.

Other studies related to folklore also focus on values (Awang Azman Awang Pawi, 2011; Bronner, 2012; Siti Noor Riha Sulong & Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2015; Awang Azman Awang Pawi, 2015); Nurfarhana Shahira Rosly, Normaliza Abd Rahim & Hazlina Abdul Halim, 2015; Normaliza Abd Rahim, Hazlina Abdul Halim, Roslina Mamat & Nor Shahila Mansor, 2016; Mohd Firdaus Che Yaacob & Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2016; Barker & Rice, 2016). The study by Siti Noor Riha Sulong & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2015) focuses on language register in the folklore song entitled ‘The Brilliant Judge’. Also, this study looks into the values in the folklore. The result of the study showed that the values found in the song are fair, respect and helpful. Also, the results of the study revealed the language register used in the song has made it more understandable based on the song lyrics. The study by Siti Noor Riha Sulong & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2015) was parallel to the study by Normaliza Abd Rahim, Hazlina Abdul Halim, Roslina Mamat & Nor Shahila Mansor (2016) and Bowman (2004) where the students involved in the study were more focused and understood the story better. The study by Normaliza Abd Rahim, Hazlina Abdul Halim, Roslina Mamat & Nor Shahila Mansor (2016) revealed that there were values in the folklore introduced to the students in a classroom among Korean students. The values found in the story were good, honest, trust and helpful. Hence, the study by Nurfarhana Shahira Rosly, Normaliza Abd Rahim & Hazlina Abdul Halim (2015) where the influence of animal story among special needs children has helped the children to focus and understand the content of the story. It can be seen that the study by Nurfarhana Shahira Rosly, Normaliza Abd Rahim & Hazlina Abdul Halim (2015) has shown the values of love, respect and care in the story introduced. Also, a study by Mohd Firdaus Che Yaacob & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2016) showed that there was good value in folklore among the Malay community. This study has shown great impact towards good values in doing good deeds towards others.

Based on the studies above, the objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the values in the story ‘The Stork and the Mouse Deer’.

METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on an e-folklore from phone application in the compilation of Malay folklore stories entitled ‘Kingfisher stories’. The stories were copyrighted by Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka and the lyrics of the song is written by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2016). Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka is a government body which controls the usage of Malay language and literature in Malaysia. It also published quality books, magazines and multimedia production and organized seminars and conferences pertaining to Malay language and literature. The song entitled ‘The Stork and the Mouse Deer’ was chosen to disseminate the values in the Malay folklore. This study is using the Malay Methodology theory by Hashim Awang (1994). This theory claims that the aspect of human life relates to the way and attitude of life, trust and the culture at the place among the Malay community. The functions of life can be seen as giving values to life. Although, ‘The Stork and the Mouse deer’ story is about animal folklore but the story can be related to human life in order to disseminate the values to human.

The Stork and the Mouse Deer

- [1] Mouse deer and stork are good friends
- [2] One day, they found a big rice crust
- [3] So they eat the rice crust from the right to the left
- [4] But, the mouse deer is clever
- [5] The mouse deer is brilliant

[6]So the stork got cheated
[7]The mouse deer told the stork that
[8]There is good life across the river
[9]The stork believes and the rice crust becomes the boat
[10]They row the boat together

[11]The mouse deer eats the middle of the rice crust
[12]The stork advises the mouse deer not to do so
[13]The water from the river is pouring in
[14]The stork flew away

[15]The mouse deer feels that it cheats itself
[16]Looking at the stork fly away
[17]The rice crust sinks
[18]The mouse deer tries to save itself

Synopsis of the Stork and the Mouse deer

The story entails two good friends, the stork and the mouse deer. One fine day, both of them found a big rice crust. They were so happy. They shared the rice crust and eat them from right to the left. Suddenly, the clever mouse deer had thought of an idea. The mouse deer is also considered as the brilliant animal in the animal kingdom. The mouse deer cheated the stork by telling it that there is a good life across the river. The stork believed and they decided that the rice crust will become the boat for the two of them. They rowed the boat together happily. While rowing, the mouse deer ate the middle of the crust. The stork advised the mouse deer but the mouse deer ignored. The water from the river kept pouring in. The stork flew away since the mouse deer did not listen to the advice. Then the mouse deer realized that it cheated itself. The mouse deer looked at the stork flying away. Suddenly, the rice crust began to sink. The mouse deer tried to save itself and swam to the river bank.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The value of ‘friend’ can be seen at the beginning of the song. The lines below show,

*[1]Mouse deer and stork are good friends
[2]One day, they found a big rice crust
[3]So they eat the rice crust from the right to the left*

Lines [1] [2] and [3] above show the value of ‘friend’ where both the stork and mouse deer are close to each other. Good friends also show that they share whatever they have and found. They in fact, eat the crust that they found together. Here, it can be seen that the value of ‘friend’ has played a major role in showing awareness towards children who listen to the song. The value of ‘friend’ has shown that a friend should share what they have and be happy with one another. Hashim Awang (1994) claims that all aspects of life include the way of life and attitude towards life. Here, it can be said that the value of ‘friend’ between the stork and the mouse deer has shown the attitude towards the way of life. Although both the stork and the mouse deer are animals, but the value that they showed will be of examples among readers of folklore.

However, the mouse deer is a very clever animal. It can give opinion to the stork. The lines below state,

*[4]But, the mouse deer is clever
[5]The mouse deer is brilliant*

Lines [4] and [5] above show that the mouse deer is a very clever and brilliant animal. It has been stated in most folklore that the mouse deer is a clever animal (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2014a). For instance, from the folklore entitled ‘The Mouse deer and the tiger’, ‘The Mouse deer and the crocodile’, ‘The Mouse deer and the monkey’ and soon. Here, it can be seen that the mouse deer has been a clever animal. The value in the song obviously shows the value of ‘clever’ and ‘brilliant’. In order to disseminate the value of clever in the story means that the person who reads and understands the story is also clever and brilliant. According to Hashim Awang (1994), in order a person is having attitude in life is to explore and find his/her speciality. Here, it can be seen that the mouse deer know that it is a clever and brilliant animal.

Consequently, the mouse deer has expressed to the stork that there is good life across the river. The line below states,

[8]There is good life across the river

The phrase ‘good life’ as stated above in line [8] shows that the values of good life might be ‘happiness’, ‘loving’, ‘family’, friend’ and others. Here, it can be seen that the mouse deer knew about its friend needs as in finding a good life. It knows that by tricking the stork, both of them might be able to cross the river easily. The term ‘good life’ can be referred to ‘loads of fruits’, ‘loads of food’, ‘no disturbance from other animals’, ‘no disturbance from hunters’ or in other words, ‘live in happiness and harmonious life’. All animals in the jungle will look forward to this kind of life. Barker & Rice (2016) refer good life as being pleasant and helpful. This shows that the stork looks forwards to being living in a serene environment without any hassle in between. Hashim Awang (1994) states that the function of life is to ensure the benefits towards life and therefore, good life would be the major implication.

However, the value of being honest has shown in the stork where it believes what the mouse deer has suggested. The line below states,

[9]The stork believes and the rice crust becomes the boat

[10]They row the boat together

Lines [9] and [10] above show that the stork is a good bird. It trusts the mouse deer and willing to be together with the mouse deer. Hashim Awang (1994) claims that in all aspects of life, a person will show the trust in everyone around him/her. This shows that although both the stork and mouse deers are animals but they actually show the characters like humans. Therefore, the stork has shown that it is an honest animal and believes in the mouse deer. In order for the stork to believe the mouse deer, the mouse deer has shown an honest look and states that there is good life across the river. The life of a stork can be seen that it does not have any hatred in itself. Hence, it believes in the suggestion suggested by the mouse deer. The stork also assumes that both of them would be working together in rowing the rice crust and this would lead to an easier way to go across the river. As in human life, if we work together to achieve something, we would be success. However, the collaboration between human would therefore shows the importance of trust and believe among each other. Here, it can be seen that the stork and the mouse deer show the exact life of human in trusting and believing each other to achieve something. According to Darma (2004: 9-10), the meaning of values in literary work will give a greater implication towards readers. Here, it can be seen that the value of being honest, trust, believe and helpful in the stork’s life has shown that the reader would feel good and try to be like the stork in their everyday’s life.

Subsequently, the good value in the stork does not stop there. The evidences from the lines below show,

[11]The mouse deer eats the middle of the rice crust

[12]The stork advices the mouse deer not to do so

[13]The water from the river is pouring in

[14]The stork flew away

Lines [11] [12] and [13] above show that the stork has been showing its concern towards their well being when they were on the rice crust. The stork gives advice to the mouse deer when the mouse deer eats the middle of the crust. Hashim Awang (1989) claims that in all aspects of life, it is a need for a person to help each other. Either by giving advice for the better or being helpful physically. Here, it can be seen that the stork advices the mouse deer for not eating the middle of the crust. The stork also worries about both of their safety if the crust sinks. The good values in the stork has surprise the mouse deer in the beginning but the mouse deer knows that the stork would be helpful, showing concern and willing to sacrifice its life for the both of them. The stork can just ignore the mouse deer but instead, it helps the mouse deer by giving good advice. However, the mouse deer feels that it is a winner as compared to the stork. Therefore, the mouse deer keeps on the eating the crust and the water from the river nearly sinks the rice crust. At this time, the stork has been disappointed since the mouse deer did not listen to its advice. The stork then, flew away to save itself. The stork’s action has shown that after giving so many advices and the mouse deer ignores it, it is about time to leave the matter to the mouse deer to sort it out. The stork might be thinking that the mouse deer needs a lesson to learnt.

CONCLUSION

The results above showed that there were several values in the song ‘The Stork and the Mouse Deer’ which was adapted from the Malay folklore stories. The results revealed that there are seven values in the song;

‘togetherness’, ‘loving’, ‘family’, ‘friend’, ‘honest’, ‘concern’ and ‘helpful’. The stork has shown the values of ‘togetherness’, ‘loving’, ‘family’, ‘friend’, ‘honest’, ‘concern’ and ‘helpful’ while the mouse deer has shown the values of ‘togetherness’, ‘family’, ‘friend’, and ‘helpful’ at the beginning of the story. Hence, by the end of the story, the mouse deer has changed and consists of no value except that at the end of the story, the mouse deer felt regret for cheating its friend. The result of this study is parallel to the study of Mohd Firdaus Che Yaacob & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2016), Mohd Firdaus Che Yaacob & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014) and Bronner (2012), where there are values in the folklore. Also, this study is parallel to the studies of Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014b) and Nurfarhana Shahira Rosly, Normaliza Abd Rahim & Hazlina Abdul Halim (2015), where folklore has been helpful to learners learning about values.

The results of the study implicates learners in finding values in the folklore. Hence, by disseminating the folklore, learners will also be able to disseminate the values from the stories and adapt the values in their everyday lives. Also, the study implicates educators and researchers in empowering the folklore through researches and studies. It is hoped that further studies will focus on other folklore and ways to disseminate the folklore to the world.

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