

Language Reflecting Society and Culture in the Provincial Folktale Literature of Northeastern Thailand and Its Value: With Special Reference to Ekarattana Udomporn's Written Work

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Abstract—The objectives of this study were to explore linguistic strategies used in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand and to explore the ways in which society and culture are reflected through folktales in Ekarattana Udomporn's written work and the value of the tales. The conceptual framework of this study consists of (1) use of strategies of language for communication namely, expression, diction and level of language and (2) reflections of society and culture, namely, beliefs, the ways of life of people in society, and the value of the language and the knowledge of the tales. A qualitative method was employed, and the data included 41 stories of provincial folktales collected by Ekarattana Udomporn. The findings revealed that there were uses of different kinds of expressions. There was use of explanative diction, exemplificative diction and descriptive diction, and among these, explanative diction was found to be foremost in the folktales because of the explanative purpose of folktales. Formal language, semi-formal language and colloquial language was found in the folktales, and among these, semi-formal and colloquial language was used primarily in order to facilitate understanding. Folktales of this region reflected not only the beliefs in society, namely, Buddhism, spirits, death, seniority, but also the way of life, namely, clothes, food, castes and relations of people in society that accorded with belief of people in society. Furthermore, the values of language, of society and culture, and of knowledge as well as other values, were also found in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand in Ekarattana Udomporn's written work.

Index Terms—language, society, culture, value, folktales

I. INTRODUCTION

A tale is a literacy work that originated from the human intellect and imagination and language and plays a major role in society. The way of life of a people is handed down from generation to generation through language (Uche, 2020). Naturally, human beings have an interest in listening to tales for entertainment and to gain general knowledge. A folktale is an important branch of literature that has long been continually created from early times up until the present day.

The folktale literature of Northeastern Thailand originated together with the lives of Northeastern people. Those tales are stories that local people told each other and have continued to tell each other. Such tales include those that convey moral teaching, those that are traditional and cultural stories, and those telling about the origins of different places in Northeastern Thailand. Presently, the different folktales of Northeastern Thailand and the specific aspects of those tales are noteworthy for their use of language and their reflection of society and culture, and their value in gaining knowledge of the Northeast. Such aspects of the folktales of Northeastern Thailand are very important for research; particularly, the studies on the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand must be done to obtain useful knowledge concerning language use, society, and culture of the region.

As observed generally, the folktales of Northeastern Thailand reflect not only the language but also socio-cultural aspects. For these reasons, the folktales are of significant value. Regarding culture, the cultural issues in the world arising from differences in certain styles can be traced back to sociological factors, which both inform and are informed by those styles; relevant factors include religious affiliation, and local or national customs (Munmun & Katharina, 2020). Especially, before appearing as the present-day society and culture, there is a relationship between the past (always judged by the scopes of the present) and the present-future. The dialectic approach emphasizes realizing analytic equilibrium in approaching the past and the present (Hamza, 2021).

In Thailand, there are many people with many doubts. These doubts have arisen as a result of inadequate knowledge regarding the language and the society and culture reflected in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand. These problems of doubt have grown seemingly to infinity. As these problems grow and remain undealt with, other issues crop up, such

as altercations and, in many cases, brawls. These create even greater disagreement for many people concerned as well as for posterity.

For this research study, there are two research questions, namely, 1. What are the linguistic strategies as used in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand? and 2. Why is this research necessary to study the reflection of society, culture and value in the provincial folktale literature of Northeastern Thailand as written by Ekarattana Udomporn?

From a survey of prior research works, it can be strongly affirmed that there was no research work that dealt with language and the reflections of society, and culture in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand, and especially, no researcher who studied the written work of Ekarattana Udomporn in terms of language use, analysis of society and culture, and assessing the value of the tales was found. Mostly, the prior research works on folktales of Northeastern Thailand were focused on Thai words and expressions; studies of language and reflections of society and culture in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand written by the writer Ekarattana Udomporn in the technological age in recent decades were not found.

In particular, when talking about the very rapid developments in the age of technology in recent decades and years, Tatyana et al. (2021) stated that we can see the impact of this significant growth on the cultural, religious, and social characteristics of societies. The increasing speed of the media has had different consequences in the cultural-religious and national spheres in societies. This view is an interesting issue to be taken into account in the present world for research on classical materials like folktales.

Therefore, it is premise of this study regarding the usage of language, the reflection of society and culture, and assessing the value of the tales that attention be paid to analytical study of the contents of the tales and thoroughly study the language that reflects society and culture that appear in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand and their value amidst the very rapid developments in the age of technology. Doing this will contribute to academic discourse concerning language and the reflection of society and culture in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand and the value of these tales.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *The Folktale as Literature*

According to the classification of the Northeastern literature, it can be said that the folktale is held to be one of the several categories of Northeastern literature in Thailand by considering the relevant content.

Atthakorn (1976, p.42) clearly stated that the folktale is a prose narrative from the past, and it was a way to express villagers' thoughts and feelings. As to the purpose of the folktale, it can be said that it mostly aimed at the entertainment of listeners, followed by providing useful knowledge.

Ooytrakool (1977, p. 18) stated that the folktale is a story that people passed on by word of mouth. Thus, it may be thought of as a form of composition similar to a letter. However, it is important to say that such narration must be done by local people or villagers in order to reflect their way of life in the context of their society.

Thongprasert (1979, p.110) stated that a folktale is a narrative that was composed by local people in different areas over a time extending long into the past and focused on entertainment and encouraging people to perform good actions according to the religious beliefs current in the local society and community, which held virtues such as loving-kindness, gratitude, honesty and generosity in making donations in high regard.

Manirat (1979, p.111) stated that a folktale is a narrative has been told by villagers or local people since early times. Hence, the word 'folktale' means all the narratives were related by local people in each region.

Punnothok (1990, p.14) stated that the folktale is an activity carried on for entertainment that human have done from the past up to present. It can be said that folktales are found in every nation and language, the only difference being the contents of folktales in each country.

B. *Folktales in Each Region of Thailand*

Truly speaking, the folktales in each region have different aspects according to the context of the area. To describe the folktale, Thai scholars delineated the folktale as follows: Satawethin (1974, p.46) stated the folktale had the following five characteristics: 1. It is a narrative, 2. The narrative is composed in prose, 3. The narrative is delivered by word of mouth, 4. The narrative expresses the thoughts and beliefs of the villagers, 5. There may be stories based on these tales circulated in Thai society. Moreover, Mallikamas (1975, p.42) also explained that the folktale possess the following three important features: 1. It is a narrative in prose, not poetry 2. It has been passed on by word of mouth for a long time, and it may have been recorded in written form later 3. The name of the original narrator is not known, and it is simply a narrative passed down by word of mouth from a storyteller who is regarded to have been an important person in the past.

Punnothok (1990, p. 132) stated that the Northeast is rich in tales because they are a form of entertainment that has enjoyed wide popularity for a long time. They present many interesting issues to be studied and researched. Generally, folktale literature has aimed primarily to provide content that was entertaining. However, the anonymous authors also inserted ethics and doctrine in the content and characters' behavior to serve as a model in the Buddhist way of life.

C. *Related Researches*

Among the researches relevant to this study, Jeennoon (2020) studied research works in relation to tales and religion. It was found that the researcher mostly focused on the components of the texts, and the research in this group was comprised a total of 58 works such as the study of Tuna (2543) on the worldview in the Northeastern literary work Sang Sinxay and the research work of Phonkham (2546) entitled Analytical Study on Principles of Buddhist Ethics in Northeastern Tales. Not only this, Wannaudorn (2007) conducted a comparative study of the Northeastern Thai and Lao versions of the tale of Busaba etc. On the basis of the research works, it can be said that a folktale is a story that has been continually told by local people in each region from the past to the present.

D. Usage of Language to Reflect Society and Culture, and Values

To communicate the content on society, culture, and values reflected in provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand, researchers adapted and applied the principles of word uses of Rodhetbhai (1979) for analyzing the linguistic strategies relevant to Thai for communication such as compound words, repeated words, reduplicated words, loanwords from foreign languages, expressions, diction, and the use of language of different levels have been employed and taken into account. Moreover, the reflections of society and culture, and values regarding the way of life and the different dimensions of Northeastern society such as family and marriage that appear in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand have also been studied to find how the provincial folktales play their important role in Northeastern Thailand (Thammawat, 2000).

After this review of the relevant literature, the researchers were able to devise a conceptual framework and proceed to conduct this study on the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand with special reference to Ekarattana Udomporn's written work.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is an analytical research focused on language to present the socio-culture and values reflection in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand. Descriptive writing of research was adopted through data collection from 41 provincial folktales collected by the writer Ekarattana Udomporn. Research was conducted by a qualitative method within an overall inductive framework. The methodology used in the study was as follows;

1. Data surveying and data collection related to language use and reflections of society, culture and values in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand were done.
2. The collected documents were classified into groups, categorized, analyzed and explained.
3. Descriptions and analyses of the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand were written.
4. The results of the research and concluding remarks were presented.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

According to the objectives of the research study as obviously mentioned above, the results of the research study were found as follows;

A. Expressions

Expressions are beautiful honeyed words used in the Thai language. They consist of about 2-3 spoken words that collected contents and displayed artifices as well as meanings of the long stories and details. Mostly, Thai expressions are derived from different sources such as nature, the environment, tradition and religious literature, for example:

(a). Rhymed Expression

(1)

ยังมีสามีภริยาผู้ยากจนเข็ญใจคู่หนึ่งกำลังอยู่ในช่วงก่อร่างสร้างตัว มีชีวิตหาเช้ากินค่ำ

แต่ก็มีความสุขตามประสาคนจน

/yaŋ mi: sǎ: mi: pha-rí-ya: phû: yâ:k con khěn cay khû: nùŋ kam-laj yù: nay chûaŋ kò: rǎŋ sâ:ŋ tua mi: chi: wít hǎ: cháw kin khâm tē: kô mi: khwa:m sùk ta:m pra-sǎ: khon con/

(There are a couple of husband and wife who are building up a fortune. They have the tough lives. However, they are happy as poor people)

(Si Sa Ket, Hen Kae Dai: 185)

(b). Comparative Expression

(2)

อาจีเห็นเป็นโอกาสดีจึงขอพระราชทานที่ดินสักเล็กน้อยคือเพียงเท่าแมวตื่นตายเท่านั้น

/ʔa: ci: hěn pen ʔo: kà:t di: cuŋ khǎ: phrá-râ:t-cha-tha:n thî: dín sàk lék nó:y khw: phiaŋ thǎw mē:w dín ta:y thǎw nán/

(Ajee saw it that was a good opportunity and so he begged for the king's grant him a small piece of land--only about enough for a cat writhing in its death throes.

(Khautee Sangban Taomaew Dintai, Surin: 13)

(c). *Repeated Expression*

- (3) ลูกเอ๋ย พ่อแม่จึงอยากให้เราไปสร้างกระท่อมอยู่ในที่ดอนนอกหมู่บ้าน ได้เปิดหูเปิดตา รู้จักสร้างชีวิตให้เจริญรุ่งเรืองอย่างคนอื่นเขาบ้าง
 /lú:k ?ǎ:y phô: mê: cuŋ yà:k hây câw pay sâ:ŋ kra-thô:m yù: nay thî: dɔ:n nâ:k mù: bâ:n dâ:y pò:t hũ: pò:t ta: rú: càk sâ:ŋ chi: wít hây ca-rə:n rûŋ ruua:ŋ yà:ŋ khon ?ù:n khăw bâ:ŋ/
 (Oh Son! We would you to build a hut outside the village. That would open your eyes and ears and teach you how to build a prosperous life and flourish like other people)

(Ai Ba Kancha, Roi Ed: 193)

Regarding the expressions as used in Thai language, there are three categories, namely; 1) rhymed expression, 2) comparative expression and 3) repeated expression. Observation of the expressions used in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand, all the categories of expressions were found to be used in Ekarattana Udomporn's written work in order to communicate the content.

B. *Diction*

Diction means the rhetorical writing or literary style of speaking. Diction is divided into a total of five types namely; 1) explanative diction 2) descriptive diction 3) analogical diction 4) exemplificative diction 5) sermonizing diction.

(a). *Explanative Diction*

Explanative diction means narration or explanation of several stories according to priority of situations focusing on the key messages, facts and ideas, as for example:

- (4) เรื่องผีบุญนี้เป็นนิทานที่มีอ้างอิงเพราะเป็นเรื่องจริงที่เกิดขึ้นจริงในสมัยกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์ ตรงกับรัชสมัยของพระบาทสมเด็จพระจุลจอมเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว (พระปิยมหาราช)
 /rûa:ŋ phĩ: bun ní: pen ní tha:n mĩ: thĩ: ?ǎ:ŋ ?iŋ phró pen rûa:ŋ ciŋ thĩ: kò:t khũm ciŋ nay sa-măy kruŋ rát-ta-na-ko:-sĩn troŋ káp rát-cha-sa-măy kho:ŋ phrá bà:t sòm dèt phrá cun-la-cɔ:m klăw câ:w yù: hũa (phrá pi-yá ma-hă: rā:t/
 (The Phi Bun story is one that has support because it based on actual events on the Bangkok Period during the reign of King Rama V, the Great Beloved King)

(Phi Boon, Roi Ed: 112)

(b). *Descriptive Diction*

Descriptive diction means language that helps readers understand and appreciate the story through the use of images, feelings and imagination in the process of transmission, for example:

- (5) ขณะนั้นท้าวหุดสามเป่าได้คำนึงถึงหน้าตาของตนที่มีหูดผุดขึ้นเต็มไปหมด ตะปุ่มตะป่ำ เม็ดเล็กเม็ดน้อย ดูน่าเกลียดน่ากลัวยิ่งนัก แต่ก็คิดว่าเป็นโอกาสที่ดีที่จะทำให้ตนมีหน้าตาหล่อเหลาเสียที จึงได้อธิษฐานจิตและตีกลองขึ้น
 /kha-nà nán thá:w hù:t sǎ:m paw dâ:y kham nuŋ thũŋ nâ: ta: khǎ:ŋ ton thĩ: mĩ: hù:t phùt khũm tem pay mòt ta-pùm-ta-pàm mét lék mét nó:y du: nâ: kliat nâ: klua yĩŋ nák tè: kô khít wâ: nĩ: pen ?o: ka:t thĩ: di: thĩ: cà tham hây ton mĩ: nâ: ta: lò: lăw sǎa thĩ: cuŋ dâ:y ?a-thít-thă:n cìt lé ti: klɔ:ŋ khũm/
 (At that time, Hood Sam Pao considered his face completely covered with warts, little ones and big ones, all knotty and bumpy, How frightfully, disgustingly ugly! However, he thought that this was a good chance for making his face look good. So, he started praying fervently and beating the drum)

(Hood Sam Pao, Si Sa Ket: 183)

(c). *Analogical Diction*

Analogical diction is used to support a story. The storyteller likes to use analogies in order to illustrate the story and clarify contents. It must enable the listeners to understand clearly, for example:

- (6) ขณะที่พระองค์ทรงกำลังตกป่าอยู่นั้นได้พบกวางทองสวยงามประดุจนางฟ้าจำแลง
 /kha-nà thĩ: phrá ?on song kam laŋ tò: kây pà: yù: nán dâ:y phóp kwa:ŋ tho:ŋ sũay ŋa:m pra-dùt na:ŋ fá: cam lɛ:ŋ/
 (While trying to lure a jungle fowl, the king saw a deer as beautiful as if transformed by angel)

(Fa Dad Soong Yang, Kalasin: 130)

(d). *Exemplificative Diction*

Exemplificative diction means presenting important and relevant examples in order to help the listeners understand the story clearly, for example:

- (7) ครั้นสร้างถนนเสร็จแล้ว พญาคันคากก็คืนร่างเป็นคางคกตามเดิม ยกกำลังทหารสารพัดสัตว์ เช่น เสือ ครุฑ นาค มด ปลวก แร้ง กา ลิง เป็นต้น ขึ้นไปบนฟ้า
 /khrán sâ:ŋ tha-nôn sèt lé:w pha-ya: khan khá:k kô khu:n rā:ŋ pen kha:ŋ khók ta:m dō:m yók kam laŋ tha-hă:n sǎ:-ra-phát sāt chên sūa khrút nā:k mót plùak ré:ŋ ka: liŋ pen tōn khūm pay bon fǎ:/
 (After building the road, the King of Toads turned himself back into a toad as before and led his army of tigers, Garudas, Nagas, ants, termites, vultures, crows, monkeys and other creatures up into the heavens.)
 (Phaya Khan Kag, Udon Thani: 119)

(e). *Sermonizing Diction*

Sermonizing diction means language used in order to teach, persuade, and reason, for example;

- (8) ชีวิตเป็นเรื่องลึกซึ้ง ละเอียดย่อน จึงไม่ควรปล่อยให้ดำเนินไปด้วยความประมาท หากแต่ควรมีสติ มีสัมปชัญญะ มีอัปมาทธรรม จึงจะมีความเรียบร้อยและงดงาม
 /chi: wít pen rūa:ŋ lúuk súŋ la-?iat ?ò:n cuŋ mây khuan plò:y hây dam nō:n pay dūay khwa:m pra-mà:t hà:k tè: khuan mi: sa-tì mi: sǎm-pa-chan-yá mi: ?àp-pa-ma:-tha-tham cuŋ cà mi: khwa:m riap ró:y lé ɣót ɣa:m/
 (Life is a profound and subtle thing, so one should not just let it go by carelessly; rather one should be mindful, aware, and vigilant, for this will lead to order and beauty)
 (Phon Bun Phon Kam, Si Sa Ket: 104)

According to the examples regarding the diction as mentioned in the above, it can be stated that there are five kinds of diction used in the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand. Among these, there are two groups, namely; main diction and supporting diction. Explanative diction and descriptive diction are in the main diction group while analogical diction, exemplificative diction, and sermonizing diction are in the supporting diction group. All of these kinds of diction are used in the provincial folktales.

V. LANGUAGE LEVEL

Language level means appropriateness of language for communication in various situations as may be determined by considering the words and sentence types and the topics, ideas and sentiments expressed in the messages according to their suitability to the communicative objectives, the receiver, and message times and places.

A. *Informal, or Colloquial, Language*

Informal, or colloquial, language means the language mostly spoken in everyday life with people with whom one is familiar. It does not emphasize correctness in grammar but focuses on communication that people will understand, as for example:

- (9) เมื่อวานนี้ มันปแมนซี่ไก่ แต่เป็นดั่งเมที่ช้อยทำไว้ต่างหากสะ
 /mūa wa:n ní: man bò: mē:n khî: kày tè: pen taŋ me: thî: khô:y tham wáy tà:ŋ hà:k là/
 (Yesterday, that was not chicken droppings; it was some nougat that I made myself)
 (Luang Phor Chan Khee Kai, Khon Kaen: 179)

B. *Semi-Formal Language*

Semi-formal language means language has well-matched proportion between informal and formal language. It contains more delicate and beautiful aspects than informal language; especially, it is used to speak with persons with whom does not have a close relationship, for example:

- (10) พระยาสิทธิกับนางมโนราอยู่ครองรักครองสุขที่เมืองภูเงินได้ระยะหนึ่งก็ทูลลาเสด็จกลับเมืองเป็งจานพร้อมด้วยนางมโนราเพื่อทำหน้าที่บริหารราชการแผ่นดินต่อไป
 /phrá ya: sǐ: thon kàp na:ŋ ma-no:-ra: yù: khro:ŋ rák khro:ŋ sùk thî: muaw phu: ɣo:n dā:y ra-yá nūŋ kô thu:n la: sa-dèt klàp muaw peŋ ca:n phró:m dūay na:ŋ ma-no:-ra: phūa tham nā: thî: bō-ri-hă:n rā:t-cha-ka:n phē:n din tò: pay/
 (Phya Sithon and Manora lived together at Bhu Ngern for a time, and then he took leave and returned to Pengjan City with Manora to find charge his duties in governing his land)
 (Sithon Manora, Ubon Ratchathani: 172)

C. *Formal Language*

Formal language means the language that conforms to conventions and rules of language regarding the usage of words, sentences and expressions, for example:

- (11) ในอดีตกาลมีนครแห่งหนึ่งนามว่า “ฟ้าแดด” มีพระมหากษัตริย์ปกครองทรงพระนามว่าพญาฟ้าแดด
 /nay ?a-dì:t-ta-ka:n mi: ná khō:n hē:ŋ nūŋ na:m wā: fǎ: dē:t mi: phrá ma-hǎ: ka-sāt pòk khro:ŋ son phrá na:m wā: pha-ya: fǎ: dē:t/
 (In former times, there was a city known as Fa Daed, and the king who governed it was named Phya Fa Daed)

(Fa Dad Soong Yang, Kalasin: 131)

As to the language levels employed in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand, it can be said that there are a total of three language levels used in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand this makes it possible to divide the content communicated into three levels, namely, informal language, semi-formal language and formal language.

VI. THE REFLECTIONS OF SOCIETY AND CULTURAL ASPECTS

Society and culture are regarded as important determinants of the lifestyle of human beings. Humans who can live and associate with others in different modes of life produce culture. Not only that, culture also plays important role in the spiritual training of human beings as well. By doing so, it fosters living together with others peacefully and happily. Hence, society and culture, as observed generally, are held as important and necessary factors for supporting each other. Herein, humans are the creators of culture, and vice versa, culture has been symbolic of human civilization in the world from former times up until the present. Society and culture are reflected in the different dimensions of beliefs in society, namely, Buddhism, spirit or creator, death and the seniority system as follows:

A. Beliefs in Northeastern Society

(a). Buddhism (Man Becomes Good by Good Action and Bad by Bad Action)

- (12) ด้วยวิบากอกุศลกรรมที่เคยแทงกบตายในชาติก่อน จึงต้องมาชาติใช้กรรมในชาตินี้
 โดยหอกที่นายพรานพุ่งนั้นถูกอวัยวะสำคัญของพระพุทธรูปจนถึงแก่มรณภาพในทันที
 /dúay wí-bà:k ?a-ku-sǒn-la-kam thí: khə:y the:ŋ kòp ta:y nay châ:t kò:n cuŋ tǎ:ŋ ma: chót cháy kam nay châ:t
 ní: do:y hò:k thí: na:y phra:n phũŋ nán thù:k ?a-way-ya-wá sǎm khan khǎ:ŋ phrá thú don con thúŋ kè: mɔ:-ra-
 ná-phā:p nay than thí:/
 (Due to the consequence of bad action by stabbing a frog in a previous existence, the monk on pilgrimage received the result of this bad action in this life, for a spear thrown by a hunter struck the monk in a vital spot and he died immediately.)

(Phon Bunn Phon Kam, Si Sa Ket: 104)

(b). Spirits

- (13) ทันใดนั้นผีอำก็เข้าสิงท้าวขลุ ทำให้ท้าวขลุไม่อยากมีชีวิตอยู่บนโลกนี้ จึงคว้าเอามีดแทงคอตัวเองตายตาม
 /than day nán phǐ: ?úa khiam kô khâw sɨŋ thá:w khu-lu: tham hây thá:w khu-lu: mǎy yà:k mi: chí: wít yù: bon
 lô:k ní: cuŋ khwá: ?aw mǐ:t the:ŋ kho: tua ?e:ŋ ta:y ta:m/
 (At that moment, the spirit of Au Kiam took possession of Khulu and it made him no longer want to live in this world, so he grabbed his knife, stabbed himself in the throat, and died)

(Tao Khulu Nang Aukiem, Roi Ed: 54)

(c). Death

- (14) ครั้นนายปรานตายไปแล้ว ก็ไปเกิดเป็นเปรต เรียกว่าเปรตปราน ทันทีที่กลายเป็นเปรต
เปรตปรานก็รีบไปหาแม่ด้วยความเป็นห่วง
 /khrán na:y pra:n ta:y pay lé:w kô pay kə:t pen prè:t riak wá: prè:t pra:n than thí: thí: kla:y pen prè:t prè:t pra:n
 kô rí:p pay há: mǐ: dúay khwa:m pen huan/
 (After Pran passed away, he was born as Pret Pran, the soul of the deceased person. Having born as a Pret, he hurried to find his mother out of concern for her.)

(Pret Pran, Kalasin: 98)

(d). The Seniority System

- (15) อาจี้ได้ที่จึงทำตามคำสั่งแม่ทุกอย่างจับน้องอาบน้ำแล้วเอามือผ่าท้อง
ควักไส้พุงออกมาทำความสะอาดจนน้องตายไป
 /?a: ci: dâ:y thí: cuŋ tham ta:m kham sǎn mǐ: thúk yà:ŋ càp nó:ŋ ?à:p ná:m lé:w ?aw mǐ:t phà: thó:ŋ khwák
 sây phuŋ ?ò:k ma: tham khwa:m sa-?à:t con nó:ŋ ta:y pay/
 (Ajee obeyed his mother and did everything she had ordered. He grabbed his younger brother and gave him a bath, then he took a knife, cut open his brother's belly, scooped out his entrails and cleaned them, and as a result, his younger brother died.)

(Kha Nong, Surin: 24)

B. The Way of Life in Northeastern Society

The way of life in Northeastern society is reflected in different aspects of local peoples' lives, namely, clothes, food, castes and relations of people in society that accorded with the beliefs of Northeastern people in society as follows:

(a). *Clothes/Dress*

- (16) วันหนึ่งนายพรานแต่งตัวด้วยชุดมอฮ่อมเข้าป่าล่าสัตว์ตามปกติ แต่ไม่ได้สัตว์สักตัว
 /wan nùŋ na:y phra:n tɛ:ŋ tua dūay chút mɔ̌:hóm khâw pà: lâ: sàt ta:m pòk-ka-ti tɛ: mǎy dâ:y sàt sàk tua/
 (One day, a hunter put on a dark blue indigo-dyed shirt and went into the forest to hunt, but he did not get even one animal)
 (Ling Kab Nai Pran, Si Sa Ket: 153)

(b). *Food/Edible Things*

- (17) หลวงพ่อฉันเพลเสร็จกลับมาวัด เห็นตังเมเกลื่อนกุฏิก็คิดว่าเป็นขี้ไก่ จึงเรียกเณรน้อยมาด
 /lūaŋ phô: chǎn phe:n sèt kláp ma: wát hǎn taŋ me: klúan kùt-tì kô khít wâ: pen khî: kǎy cuŋ riak ne:n nó:y ma: dù/
 (After Luang Phor (Ven.) took his midday meal and went back to the temple. He saw a lot of nougats on floor of his cell but thought they were chicken droppings, so he called a novice and scolded him.)
 (Luang Phor Chan Khee Kai, Khon Kaen: 177)

(c). *Castes*

- (18) ถึงวันนัดหมาย ท้าวขลุได้ออกมาด้วยความกระวนกระวายโดยอ้าวอัวเคี่ยมนั้นได้ลักลอบมากับสาวใช้
 /thūŋ wan nát mǎ:y thá:w khu-lu: dâ:y ʔò:k ma: dūay khwa:m kra-won-kra-wa:y do:y ʔâ:y ʔūay khîam nán dâ:y lǎk lô:p ma: kàp sǎ:w chá:y/
 (On the appointed day, Khulu came out anxiously in order to meet Au Kiam, who had slipped out and come with her maid)
 (Tao Khulu Nang Au Kiam, Roi Ed: 51)

(d). *Relations of People*

- (19) ยังมีภรรยาคนหนึ่งซึ่งมีฐานะยากจน ตั้งบ้านเรือนอาศัยอยู่ในเมืองแห่งหนึ่ง มีลูกชาย 1 คน มีลูกหญิง 1 คน คนพี่เป็นชายชื่อนี้ คนน้องเป็นหญิงชื่อสัจจา
 /yaŋ mi: sǎ: mi: phan-ra-ya: khû: nùŋ sūŋ mi: thǎ ná yâ:k con tân bâ:n ruan ʔa: sǎy yù: nay muay hɛ:ŋ nùŋ mi: lû:k chá:y nùŋ khon mi: lû:k yǎŋ nùŋ khon khon phî: pen cha:y chú: ma-ni: khon nó:y pen yǎŋ chú: sàt ca:/
 (A husband and wife who were poor made their home in a city. They had one son and one daughter. The elder was their son, named Mani; the younger was their daughter, named Sajja)
 (Mani Satja, Sakon Nakhon: 136)

Regarding the reflections of society and culture appearing in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand, it can be said that there are two dimensions, namely, the beliefs of Northeastern society and the way of life in Northeastern society. Although the Northeastern people have different beliefs and ways of life, they are very good at preserving their socio-cultural heritage.

VII. VALUE OF THE FOLKTALES

In the light of the illustrations above, it can be said through a thorough holistic view of the provincial folktales in the dimension of valuable approaches that such the literature has several values, which can be divided into four areas as follows:

A. *Value With Respect to Expression, Diction and Language Level*

Through the thorough folktales, the classical and modern words including loanwords are derived from different languages, namely, Pali-Sanskrit, Khmer. Especially, the first one is that undoubtedly plays very important role in reflecting the culture of Northeastern Thailand based on Buddhism and Buddhist doctrine. As for the expression and diction, the folktales use outstanding descriptive writing style with the short, well-fitting and clear content through the use of words expressing direct meanings and the whole of the messages in the folktales are expressed through clear writing. Particularly, the language level used in the folktales is good for communication. It helps the reader understand the contents and details clearly.

B. *Value With Respect to Society and Culture*

The provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand reflect the Northeasters' beliefs in former times in different dimensions, and the same, truly speaking, can be held as historical evidence showing that how much the Northeasters preferred and loved their own culture from earlier times up until the present time.

C. *Value as a Source of Knowledge*

After study on the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand, the readers receive not only entertainment, but also detailed information concerning historical and geographical sites of each province in Northeastern Thailand.

D. Value in Other Respects

Thorough study of the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand can also provide important detailed information regarding the Northeastern classical structure of the political system such as relative etc., and it also impacts on comparative or historical study of other regional literatures as well.

According to the light as mentioned above, it can be said that the value of the folktales of Northeastern Thailand has four dimensions, namely, language, society and culture, knowledge and others concerned such as relative etc. Language can help people learn about and understand socio-cultural aspects of Northeastern society and other particulars. Not only that, it also provides information about the classical structure of political system. Therefore, the value of the folktales of Northeastern Thailand is significant.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

From the research results as revealed in the above, it can be concluded that the folktale of Thailand is widespread and known generally in different provinces of each region in Thailand. As for the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand, their source is similar to the tales of other regions. A folktale is a narrative communicated by word of mouth. Prose language has been employed in folktales from former times up until the present. Folktales provide villagers a way to express themselves, and now are used to communicate in both oral and written form, both of which may provide true detailed information.

This view seems to be similar to that of Atthakorn (1976, p.42) who stated that the folktale has been narrated on prose language from the past and it was another way to express villagers' thoughts and feelings. As for the purpose of the folktale, it can be said that it mostly aimed at entertainment, followed by the exchange of knowledge of the local people. This is similar to the thought of Punnothok (1990, p.14) who stated that the folktale is an entertainment activity in which human have engaged from the past to present. Folktales are found in every nation and language. Therefore, it can be said that only the contents of folktales in each country is different.

With respect to the provincial folktales of Northeastern Thailand, it can be concluded that the folktales of Northeastern Thailand may be regarded as a useful source of knowledge on language use and the socio-cultural atmosphere of Northeastern Thailand, and the values always pervade countless in Thailand, especially Northeastern people concerned from early times up until the present day.

Regarding the language used in the folktales of Northeastern Thailand, there was use of different kinds of expressions which were widely used. More specifically, uses of explanative diction, exemplificative diction and descriptive diction are all found, led by explanative diction because of the explanative purpose of folktales. Formal language, semi-formal language and colloquial language are present, led by semi-formal and colloquial language, the use of which helps reader understand easily.

With respect to the socio-cultural aspects of the region, the provincial folktales of the Northeastern Thailand reflect not only the beliefs in the society, namely, Buddhism, spirits, death, and the seniority system, but also the way of life in society, namely, clothes, food, castes, and relations of people in the society in accord with their beliefs. With respect to the value of the folktales, it can be clearly said that these are literacy works that originated from intellect and imagination of the Northeastern people and have a major function in communication in Northeastern Thailand. The following four values were found namely, 1) value with respect to language, expression, diction language level, 2) value with respect to society and culture 3) value as a source of knowledge and 4) value in other respects. The way of life of people in the northeastern Thailand has continued from one generation to another. This view seems to be similar to that of Uche (2020) who stated that the way of life of a people is handed down from generation to generation through language.

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