ETHNIC FOLKTALE-BASED MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS' LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

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Despite scholarly literature's attempts to promote cultural inclusiveness in education, school textbooks are being contextualized with globalization, rather than ethnicization, which is far beyond many ethnic students' cultural backgrounds. In response to this exclusion, 15 folktales were collected from four ethnic groups in Chiang Rai province, Thailand to develop ethnic folktale-based multilingual materials. 30 secondary ethnic students were asked to respond to the importance of the materials for their learning using a set of questionnaires and open-ended questions. Data was analyzed by descriptive statistics and open and axial coding techniques. The results indicated that the students had highly positive attitudes towards the ethnic folktales. They expressed that they could learn multicultural knowledge from these folktales which related to their ways of life, ideologies, beliefs, identities, and moralities. Through the learning of these ethnic folktales, they felt that they were able to better improve their ways of thinking, attitudes about the real world, appreciation of their ethnic cultural values, and local wisdom, which lead to their better multicultural understanding and a stronger sense of belonging. These were reflected in their positive desire to sustain, revitalize, and to make these folktales accessible to others. Additionally, this study advocates developing multilingual cultural materials to benefit students' learning in schools.

Keywords: Ethnic folktales; ethnic cultures; materials development; secondary students' learning

1. INTRODUCTION

Thailand has a variety of ethnic groups with a rich collection of local cultural wisdom (e.g., folktales, songs, arts). However, ethnic folktales are rarely incorporated into school textbooks or teaching materials for ethnic students' learning of their own cultures. This results in a lack of localized materials concerning ethnic local cultures for ethnic students. According to Kanoksilapatham and Channuan (2018), local culture has received less attention and has rarely been integrated into language instruction, which results in a lack of sufficient supplementary materials concerning local culture for language learning and teaching in schools. As a result, the incorporation of local culture in education is needed (Kanoksilapatham & Channuan, 2018). This concern drives the effort to incorporate ethnic cultures into school teaching and learning materials for ethnic

students who come from different cultural backgrounds in order to promote cultural inclusiveness and equity in education.

In educational contexts, teaching materials are the primary sources of input for students' learning. They are purposefully designed in a way that meets students' learning needs, promotes their learning capacities, and enables them to explore the target language and culture. The concept of materials refers to any type of information the teachers use to stimulate students' learning (Tomlinson, 2011) and encourage them to learn (Hutchinson & Water, 1987). Earlier studies have shown that materials development is pivotal for students' learning as well as critical for teachers' teaching practices. For example, materials enable teachers to organize lesson plans and activities (Hutchinson & Water, 1987; Richards, 2001), gain insight into the processes of learning and teaching and the change in students' learning (Ramos Holguín & Aguirre Morales, 2014), and encourage students' sense of learning progress (Hutchinson & Water, 1987; Ramos Holguín & Aguirre Morales, 2014).

Previous studies concerning materials development have shown that the teaching materials (e.g., worksheets and textbooks) devised by English teachers are based on the purposes of using English as the target language for students' learning of English knowledge and skills (Sismiati & Latief, 2012; Suswati, 2017; Passakornkarn & Vibulphol, 2020; Jitpranee, 2020; Hartatiningsih & EkaTristiana, 2021), national cultures (Nomnian, 2013; Meraji & Zamanian, 2014), and global cultures (Xu, 2013; Melliti, 2013). In Thailand, a study has shown that the cultural aspects in English textbooks provided by the Ministry of Education as a compulsory subject for secondary school students' learning relied heavily on Thai culture (Nomnian, 2013). Additionally, the cultural aspects in ELT supplementary materials utilized for the learning of students from diverse cultural backgrounds in the Thai context were based on Asian regional cultures (e.g., Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore), target cultures (e.g., The United States, Britain, Australia), and international cultures (e.g., Egypt, France, Brazil) (Saemee & Nomnian, 2021) rather than ethnic cultures (e.g., Hmong, Mon, Khmer) in Thailand. It could be said that those materials are trying to promote predominant cultures rather than unpopular cultures for global audiences. As a result, it seems unfeasible that ethnic cultures in Thailand will be incorporated into ELT materials, textbooks, and school curricula to address cultural inclusiveness in education.

According to Mckay (2004), one purpose of learning English as an international language is to acquire English language and vocabulary in order to explain one's own culture. Mckay further explains that learning materials should include the local cultures of the students, which could be unfamiliar to the teacher. This can facilitate the teacher to create a real context of learning for students and stimulate them to share their own cultures to others using English. Good materials should be designed in a way that meets the students' learning needs, interests, and experiences (Tomlinson, 2011; McDonough et al., 2013; Zar & Ramnath, 2016; Ayu, 2020) in order to keep them motivated and engaged with the learning activities used in the classroom.

However, there is a limited number of studies about materials development based on ethnic cultures in the context of Thailand. Thai teachers, therefore, lack resources to promote students' learning of their ethnic cultures. Also, it is difficult for Thai teachers to gain insightful information about their ethnic students' cultures and identities, which makes it almost impossible to understand their ethnic students' perceptions, values, and attitudes towards the real world. As a result, they may not be able to maximize students' cultural learning in class due to the disconnection between the cultural lessons and the students' cultural background.

Therefore, the response, which is presented in this present study, was to develop ethnic folktale-based multilingual materials in Thai, English, and Chinese languages for ethnic students' learning of languages and cultures. These results are expected to fulfill the missing parts in the scholarly literature, materials development, and cultural aspects in school textbooks and curricula in order to promote cultural inclusiveness and maximize students' learning. Furthermore, it aims to increase students' motivation in learning languages and cultures, create their optimistic perceptions towards ethnicization, raise their awareness of ethnic cultural values, and open their cultures to the rest of the world.

Drawing upon the literature concerning cultural materials development for students' learning, this study has formulated the following question for investigation: What are the ethnic students' attitudes towards the folktale-based multilingual materials in their learning?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the literature concerning the concepts of materials development and cultures in materials development for students' learning with a fundamental purpose to develop the conceptual framework of the present study. Details are discussed as follows.

2.1 Concepts of materials development

Hutchinson and Water (1987) proposed a materials design model for materials development in education. The model consists of input focus, content focus, language focus, and task focus. The input focus refers to any piece of information the teacher uses to stimulate students' learning of new language items. It provides opportunities for students to develop their skills and use their knowledge of language in different subject matters. The content focus aims to convey information for a specific group of students so that it makes learning more meaningful and productive. The language focus enables students to learn the language structures, understand how they work, and use them to generate meanings. The task focus is the activity designed for students to use the content and language learned to build up their knowledge and skills for communicative purposes. Hutchinson and Water's (1987) model has been adopted in previous studies (e.g., Soranastaporn, 2018; Yundayani & Ardiasih, 2021), and it has yielded positive results.

Meanwhile, Jolly and Bolitho (2011) proposed the framework for materials writing, consisting of six steps which teachers sometimes use to produce new teaching material. It includes 1) identification of need for materials and identifying the needs of materials development utilized for students' learning; 2) exploration of need for materials development, identifying the areas of language, functions, or skills that need to be implemented; 3) contextual realization of materials, designing new materials by finding appropriate ideas, contexts, or texts for materials development; 4) pedagogical realization of materials, finding suitable exercises, activities, or tasks for the materials and design instructions; 5) production of materials, producing materials to be implemented in the actual context; and 6) evaluation of materials against agreed objectives, evaluating the materials for improvement. Jolly and Bolitho's (2011) framework for materials writing is one of the well-known models among material developers and it has been utilized as a guideline for materials development in earlier studies (e.g., Suswati, 2017; Passakornkarn & Vibulphol, 2020) for students' learning.

2.2 Cultures and materials development

It has been noted that the cultural content in English textbooks involves source cultures (learner's own culture), target cultures, and international cultures (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). These cultures can easily be included in textbooks for teaching and learning since they are popular and recognized by global audiences. In Thailand, the source culture in English textbooks is frequently based on Thai culture (Nomnian, 2013; Chutong & Thongrin, 2020). Those textbooks may lack some important cultural aspects for students from different cultural background in the learning of their own cultures in schools, especially ethnic students. This is confirmed by the frequent use of supplementary materials by teachers in the classroom (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999) to fulfill the purposes of the lessons and serve students' learning needs. In regard to this aspect, local and global cultures should be balanced in materials development (Saemee & Nomnian, 2021). This notion has been reflected by Batari et al.'s (2015) study of materials development of local folktales of Makassar, one of the ethnic groups in the Gowa district located in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, using the Bahasa language for third-grade students. Results showed that the folktales in those materials helped students understand meanings of life, acquire cultural values, and shape their attitudes and behaviors. Similarly, a study conducted in Iran indicated that the incorporation of L1 culture into learning materials can improve students' language proficiency as well as facilitate the learning process and increase their interests and motivation in L2 cultural learning (Meraji & Zamanian, 2014). In the Thai context, earlier studies have shown that the use of localized materials (e.g., temples and folktales) can promote students' learning of cultural aspects and develop their sense of cultural belonging and appreciation (Kanoksilapatham & Channuan, 2018), enhance students' knowledge of local Thainess and the English language (Kanoksilapatham & Suranakkharin, 2021), and facilitate the learning of knowledge from a folktale (Boonyananta & Imsamraan, 2022). These imply that the incorporation of ethnic cultures into foreign or second language materials is vital since teachers can utilize those materials to engage and maximize students' learning of languages and cultures, promote their identities, and provide ethnic cultural learning for students along with its multicultural education worldwide.

2.3 Materials development and students' learning

According to Tomlinson (2006), effective learning materials are not always designed to serve a specific individual student's needs, learning styles, attitudes, cultural norms, and experiences. This notion reflects the inapplicability of materials use from one context to another context due to the mismatch between the purposes of the materials and learning objectives. This can be seen from the supplementary materials developed by EFL teachers that can better serve their students' learning needs than commercial textbooks can (Sritulanon, 2015). In materials development, communicative and authentic aspects should be considered since they enable the teacher to select specific types of materials and specifications to match students' learning conditions, connect the materials to their interests, help them experience authentic language use, make learning more engaging, and gain more knowledge from the tasks (McDonough et al., 2013). These concepts can be seen from the use of materials development based on ethnic folktales of Makassar for students' learning of ethnic cultures in

Indonesia (Batari et al., 2015), learning L1 culture in second language materials in Iran (Meraji & Zamanian, 2014), using localized materials development to enhance students' English and knowledge of Thainess (Kanoksilapatham & Suranakkharin, 2021), and designing teaching and learning activities based on a folktale for youths (Boonyananta & Imsamraan, 2022) in the Thai context. The results of these studies showed positive outcomes related to students' needs, knowledge of cultures, and attitudes towards learning. Therefore, the materials should include cultural elements close to students' culture (Estuarso et al., 2017) and link to their learning experience and talent (Tomlinson, 2005) in order to promote their confidence and learning motivation (Estuarso et al., 2017; Nambiar et al., 2020).

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

The framework for materials writing (Jolly & Bolitho, 2011) and task generator (Willis & Willis, 2007) were adapted and employed to develop the materials used in this study, as shown in Figure 1.
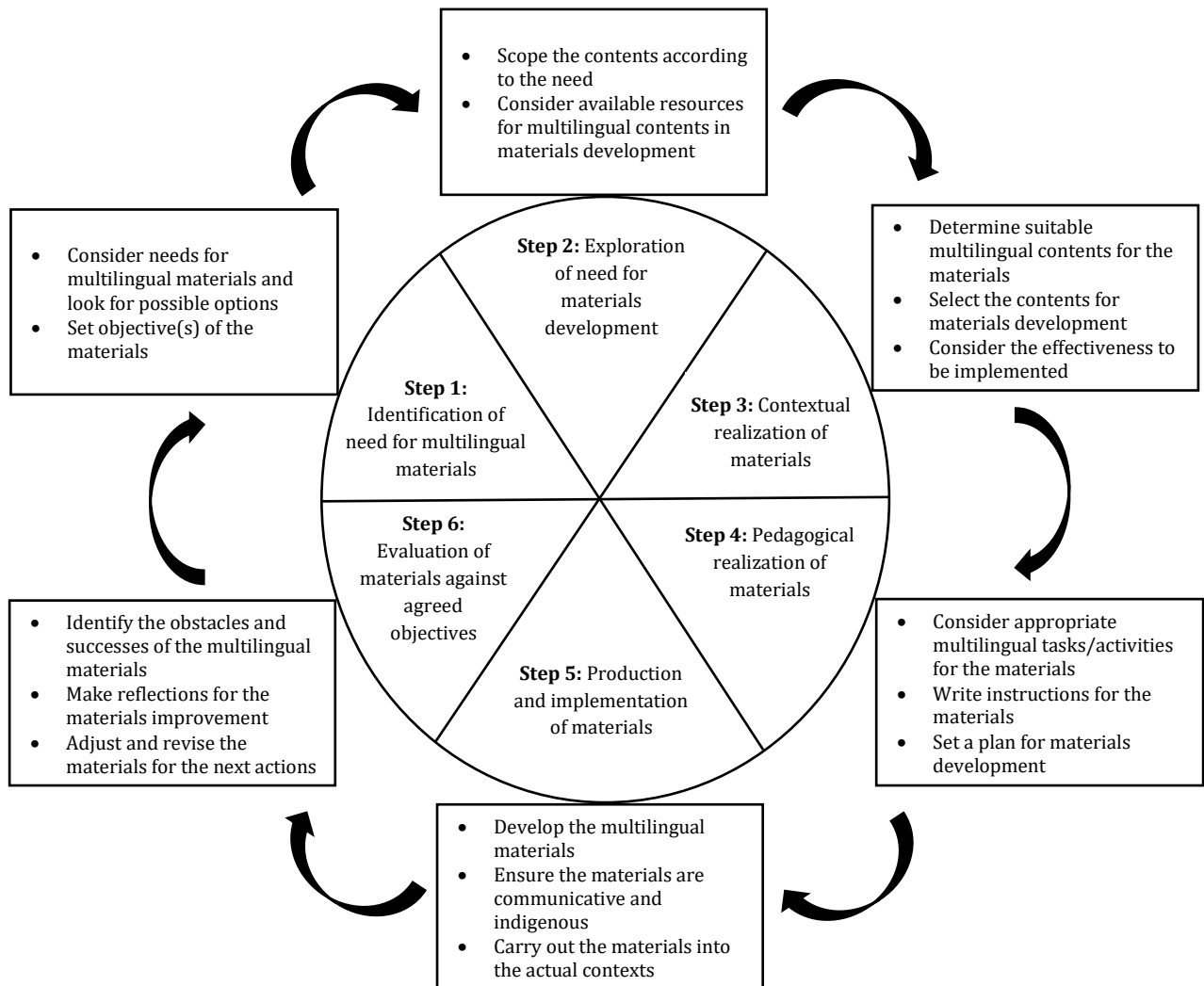
Figure 1: Framework of multilingual materials development
(Adapted from Jolly & Bolitho, 2011; Willis & Willis, 2007)

According to Jolly and Bolitho (2011), there are six steps demonstrating the dynamic processes of materials development. The first step is to identify the needs for developing multilingual materials. This step opened opportunities for the researchers to have a site visit at ethnic villages in Chiang Khong district, Chiang Rai province, Thailand. This visit enabled them to survey the ethnic villagers and local governments' opinions, needs, and policies towards community-based development in many perspectives (e.g., cultures, education, economies, arts) in order to implement a project to serve their needs for development. The interactions showed

that one of the needs was for materials development based on ethnic cultures. This need was associated with the Strategic Plan for the Balance and Sustainable Development of Chiang Khong City, Issue 1, 2015–2019, concerning one city two models (green city) in the issues of education and local cultural preservation (Rak Chiang Khong Conservation Group, 2015). Additionally, the researchers had talked with secondary school teachers in Chiang Khong, and it was found that they lacked multilingual materials for students' learning of their own ethnic cultures in schools. Most of the materials used in schools were the textbooks of the compulsory subjects approved by Ministry of Education of Thailand. In response to this gap, the researchers decided to develop multilingual materials to serve the needs of the schools and raise their awareness of the importance of ethnic cultures in education.

The second step is to explore the need for materials development. This step allowed the researchers to scope the development of the multilingual materials on ethnic folktales. Although, Chiang Khong has nine ethnic groups including Hmong, Tai Lue, Tai Yuan, Yunnan Chinese, Lahu, Akha, Iu Mien, Khamu, and Laos (Rak Chiang Khong Conservation Group, 2015), only the folktales from Hmong, Tai Lue, Tai Yuan, and Yunnan Chinese were collected and included in the materials development.

The third step is to contextualize the realization of materials. To do so, the researchers returned to the ethnic villages to collect 15 folktales from 11 significant villagers, which included five stories from Hmong, three stories from Tai Lue, two stories from Tai Yuan, and five stories from Yunnan Chinese. Those folktales are effective resources for students' learning since they are related to students' cultural backgrounds and reflect their everyday lives, both in the past and for present times. Also, the folktales are suitable for students' learning of language and cultural knowledge and can improve their imagination and creativity (Tomlinson, 2005).

The fourth step is to consider pedagogical realization of materials. The researchers utilized the data obtained from the third step to design appropriate task types based on the "task generator" (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 108) for students' learning in Thai, English, and Chinese languages. According to Willis and Willis (2007), the task generator enables teachers to think and create a set of different task types based on a topic for students' learning. The students can explore different tasks and experience a variety of linguistic challenges about the topic when they understand the basic vocabulary. The task types in the materials include 1) listing, true or false; 2) ordering and arranging, sequence the events, or arrange the pictures according to the events of the stories; 3) matching, match the events with the characters, and causes to effects; 4) comparing, compare the differences of the characters; 5) problem-solving, draw a map based on the story; 6) sharing ethnic stories, story-retelling based on pictures and plot of the story; 7) filling the blanks; and 8) multiple choice. Then the instructions were written for these tasks and implemented in the classroom. These task types are considered activity-based learning, which aims to develop students' different aspects of language skills such as vocabulary, reading for main ideas, reading for specific information, fact identification, reasoning, summarizing, and analytical and creative thinking skills.

The fifth step is to produce and implement the materials. In this step, the researchers translated the collected stories from the ethnics' languages into Thai, English, and Chinese languages. The translations were checked by two experts. The first expert was an English lecturer whose expertise is in the field of translation; the second expert was a Chinese lecturer from the field of Chinese language teaching. They were asked to check and ensure the equivalence of the translation and linguistic accuracy. After that, the researchers designed two warm-up activities and five tasks for each folktale for secondary ethnic students' learning in the classroom. The answer keys were also provided at the end of the materials for teacher guides. Then the materials were validated and verified by five experts who had at least five years of teaching experience at the Thai tertiary level for its appropriateness to the level of the students' language proficiency. The results showed that the content, language use, and illustrations (picture-assisting learning) in the materials were efficient and appropriate for secondary school students' learning. After that, the materials were used as supplementary material for the students' learning conducted by their teachers in schools for four weeks.

For the last step, the materials were evaluated for obstacles and successes based on the objectives. Then, the results were used to adjust and revise the materials for further improvement and utilization.

4. TASK TYPES IN THE MATERIALS

Two examples of tasks produced in English language based on a Hmong story entitled, "God Sends Man and Woman to Live on Earth" are demonstrated as a model in this article.

Figure 2 shows the vocabulary learning task. The three-page long Hmong story was briefly summarized into two paragraphs with a vocabulary task for students to practice. The students were taught the vocabulary, meanings, and pronunciations before doing the tasks. There were 18 words provided for filling in the 12 blanks. The students were expected to know the exact word for the correct answer. This activity

supports students' memorization of the word meanings, measures how much vocabulary they can remember from the story, and reinforces their learning process in reading.

Task 1: Vocabulary Learning Activity
Hmong Story: God Sends Man and Woman to Live on Earth

Direction: Fill in the blanks in the story with the words provided in the box. Some of the words in the box may not be used.

big stone	elephant	earth	walking	animals	everything
river	person	human	descended	boat	barefooted
road	hit	swim	crossbow	form	come

    After creating (1) _____ beings, God sent man and woman to (2) _____ a family on earth. Before descending to earth, God told them that when two of you face a bamboo clump and a (3) _____ on the way, you must cut three stems of jungle vine and (4) _____ them on the bamboo clump and the stone three times, saying that this bamboo clump must become a (5) _____ for us to cross the river and this stone must become a big (6) _____ for us to ride down to earth. The bamboo clump will turn into a boat and both of you can use it to cross the (7) _____ and the stone will become a big elephant and take both of you to earth. When you both come to meet with various kinds of (8) _____, two of you must take them to continue your ways on earth.

    When the woman (9) _____ to earth, she did (10) _____ as God had said. She then came to earth easily and got animals to continue her ways on earth. As for the man, he did not do as God told him. Thus, he had to walk (11) _____ to earth without any animals to be his own. When he was hungry, he took his (12) _____ to hunt animals in the forest for foods as we have seen today.

Figure 2: Vocabulary learning activity

Figure 3 is the picture-assisting learning task. There are six pictures related to the plot of the story for students to arrange and use to retell the story using the key vocabulary learned from the story. The students were asked to identify the beginning, middle, and ending of the story. After that, they were to retell the story in English using Wh-questions including "where, who, what, and when" as is often used in storytelling. Finally, they negotiated the setting, problem, resolution and moral of the story along with the teacher and fellow classmates. The researchers defined the question word "where", as a place in the pictures; "who", as the characters in the pictures; and "what", as the actions of the characters in the story, and "when" as the time in the pictures. With this method, it makes learning more engaging and motivating in a way that encourages students to use the target language in a meaningful way and promotes their language acquisition by producing new language items through storytelling.

Task 2: Picture Story Activity
Hmong Story: God Sends Man and Woman to Live on Earth

Direction: Arrange the following pictures according to the plot of the story and tell the story to your friends in the classroom.

Figure 3: Picture story activity

5. METHODOLOGY

This study gathered both quantitative and qualitative data. Details of the research participants and data collection and analysis are precisely described below.

5.1 Research setting and participants

The present study took place in the Chiang Khong district, Chiang Rai, Thailand. The district consists of nine ethnic groups including Hmong, Tai Lue, Tai Yuan, Yunnan Chinese, Lahu, Akha, Iu Mien, Khamu, and Laos (Rak Chiang Khong Conservation Group, 2015). With their rich collection of cultural wisdom, folktales from the four largest ethnic groups (Hmong, Tai Lue, Tai Yuan, and Yunnan Chinese) were selected for the materials development. The materials were developed and implemented in two government secondary schools. These schools were selected for two main reasons. First, they had many ethnic students. Second, both schools lacked supplementary materials concerning ethnic cultures. Only the textbooks approved by Ministry of Education of Thailand were implemented as the main sources for compulsory subjects, which frequently have cultural elements unconnected to students' cultural background and experiences.

The research participants were 30 secondary ethnic students. Among these participants, 10 were from lower secondary school and 20 were from upper secondary school. There were 24 females and 6 males and their ages were between 12 and 18 years. They learned the languages and cultural aspects from the materials conducted by their teachers in the classroom.

5.2 Instruments

A set of questionnaires and open-ended questions written in Thai language were used to collect the participants' attitudes towards the folktale-based multilingual materials. Later, they were translated into English for the purpose of the present study. Both the questionnaires and open-ended questions were designed, checked multiple times, and validated by the researchers based on the purpose of the study. The reliability of the questionnaire determined by Cronbach's alpha was 0.937, which meant that the questionnaire was highly reliable and could be used for data collection.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part was the participants' demographic data such as ages and genders. The second part was close-response items. This part encompassed 25 items divided into four sections including 1) students' learning of cultural aspects; 2) students' learning of languages and analytical thinking skills; 3) students' learning needs and motivations; and 4) students' awareness of cultural values. A five-point Likert scale was used to identify the degrees of the participants' attitudes towards the materials, ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5).

In terms of the open-ended questions, five questions were provided for students to express their opinions and attitudes towards the materials. Data from this section were validated with the data obtained from the questionnaires and were interwoven and reported for the results.

The questionnaires and open-ended questions were distributed to the students at the end of the four-week instruction period for data collection. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and open-ended questions in approximately 30 minutes and returned them back to the researchers for data analysis.

5.3 Data analysis

The data from the questionnaires were analyzed for means and standard deviations in order to identify the proportion of scores of the participants' attitudes towards the folktale-based multilingual materials. The ranges of mean scores used for data interpretation were based on Punpinij's (2008) notion as shown in the following.

4.51–5.00 = Strongly agree
3.51–4.50 = Agree
2.51–3.50 = Neutral
1.51–2.50 = Disagree
1.00–1.50 = Strongly disagree

In terms of the data from the open-ended questions, open and axial coding techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) were used. Data were decoded, analyzed, and categorized into themes. Later, they were consolidated, summarized, and reported together with the quantitative data from the questionnaires for the results.

6. RESULTS

In this section, the findings obtained from the questionnaires are initially presented and later they are elaborated by the findings from the open-ended questions.

The findings showed that most of the students perceived the importance of learning cultural features from the folktale-based multilingual materials. Data in Table 1 shows that most of the students had a high positive attitude towards the materials ($\bar{x}$ = 4.22, SD = 0.76). They agreed that the materials promoted different cultures and encouraged learning about different ways of life, local wisdom, and ethnic identities in their community.

Table 1: Students' learning of cultural aspects

No.	Statements	Mean	SD	Level of Agreement
1	I think the folktale-based multilingual materials help me learn ethnic cultures and local wisdom.	4.20	0.71	Agree
2	I think the folktale-based multilingual materials encourage me to understand different ethnic cultures and local wisdom better.	4.30	0.79	Agree
3	I can learn about the ways of life of different ethnic groups that are in the folktale-based multilingual materials.	4.27	0.73	Agree
4	I know that the folktale-based multilingual materials promote ethnic cultural identities.	4.13	0.81	Agree
	Average	**4.22**	**0.76**	**Agree**

Data in Table 2 shows that the students perceived the benefits of the folktale-based multilingual materials on their learning. ($\bar{x}$ = 4.22, SD = 0.76). They agreed that the materials provided opportunities for them to practice using Thai, English, and Chinese languages, learn more vocabulary through reading activities, and promote their analytical thinking skills. The students also perceived that the languages in the materials were clear, suitable, and matched with their language proficiency. Therefore, it could be said that the materials open opportunities for students to learn and enhance their knowledge of languages and analytical thinking skills through reading and practicing of different tasks.

Table 2: Students' learning of languages and analytical thinking skills

No.	Statements	Mean	SD	Level of Agreement
1	The folktale-based multilingual materials promote my analytical thinking skills.	4.07	0.82	Agree
2	The folktale-based multilingual materials help me learn languages through reading.	4.30	0.83	Agree
3	The folktale-based multilingual materials provide opportunities for me to practice language in use.	4.40	0.67	Agree
4	The folktale-based multilingual materials make me learn more vocabulary from many languages.	4.30	0.91	Agree
5	The folktale-based multilingual materials are suitable for my language proficiency in learning languages and cultures.	3.93	0.63	Agree
6	The languages in the folktale-based multilingual materials are suitable and are not so difficult for me.	4.30	0.83	Agree
7	The languages in the folktale-based multilingual materials are clear and comprehensible.	4.27	0.69	Agree
	Average	**4.22**	**0.76**	**Agree**

According to the data in Table 3, the students were satisfied with the materials in terms of their learning needs and motivation ($\bar{x}$ = 4.33, SD = 0.71). The results reveal that most of the students wanted to learn ethnic folktales from their community since they matched with their learning interests. The folktale-based multilingual materials did not only enable them to learn Thai, English, and Chinese languages and cultures from different stories, but also made learning and teaching fun, motivating, and engaging. Moreover, they preferred that their teachers use ethnic folktales to raise their motivation in learning, and they wanted their schools to incorporate those folktales into their classrooms' learning activities. These findings imply that teachers should scrutinize students' engagement and interests by using cultural materials which meet their learning needs in the classroom.

Table 3: Students' learning needs and motivation

No.	Statements	Mean	SD	Level of Agreement
1	I want to learn ethnic folktales from my ethnic community.	4.33	0.66	Agree
2	The folktale-based multilingual materials match with my learning needs and interests.	4.47	0.68	Agree
3	I want to learn languages and cultures from the folktale-based multilingual materials.	4.27	0.63	Agree
4	The folktale-based multilingual materials can motivate me to learn languages and ethnic cultures.	4.23	0.81	Agree
5	I want my teachers to use ethnic folktales as a story to motivate me to learn.	4.27	0.69	Agree
6	The folktale-based multilingual materials make learning and teaching fun and more engaging.	4.27	0.82	Agree
7	I want to have the materials which are designed based on my ethnic folktales for learning and teaching in school.	4.50	0.68	Agree
	Average	**4.33**	**0.71**	**Agree**

Data in Table 4 displays that the students highly perceive the value of cultures ($\bar{x}$ = 4.52, SD = 0.68). The findings indicate that they strongly agreed that all folktales from different ethnic groups were important and beautiful. Additionally, they were excited to learn their own ethnic folktales and wanted to disseminate those folktales to others. These findings suggest that a sense of cultural belonging encourages students to join in sustaining and revitalizing their ethnic cultures, open-mindedness, and willingness to share their cultures with others.

Table 4: Students' awareness of cultural values

No.	Statements	Mean	SD	Level of Agreement
1	The folktale-based multilingual materials make me proud and understand my ethnic cultural values.	4.63	0.55	Strongly agree
2	The folktale-based multilingual materials make me understand the importance of ethnic cultures and local wisdom preservation.	4.47	0.81	Agree
3	I feel excited when I know that I am learning the folktales from my community.	4.50	0.62	Agree
4	I believe that the folktale-based multilingual materials benefit people to learn the knowledge of ethnic cultures and wisdom.	4.50	0.57	Agree
5	When I have learned my ethnic folktales, I want to be part in disseminating those folktales to other people.	4.40	0.89	Agree
6	I believe that the folktales of all ethnic groups are important and beautiful.	4.63	0.66	Strongly agree
7	The folktale-based multilingual materials help record ethnic folktales from being lost.	4.57	0.72	Strongly agree
	Average	**4.52**	**0.68**	**Strongly agree**

Similar to the findings found in the questionnaires, data from the open-ended questions in Table 5 revealed that most of the students (28 students, 93.34%) felt proud and appreciative of their own cultural values. They believed that folktales were the integration between arts and sciences, which enabled them to learn more knowledge. The folktale-based materials allowed them to learn different cultures of ethnic groups such as their ways of life, identities, and beliefs, which can even be linked to their lives today. The materials also helped them in building better cross-cultural understanding and intercultural competence between ethnic groups. Additionally, the students agreed that the materials supported their cognitive skills and language learning through reading activities and story analysis. It made learning more interesting and enjoyable. The students also felt excited, motivated, and engaged with the activities used in the classroom. The findings further indicated that the students had learned the languages through folktales in the materials and preferred to share their ethnic folktales and local wisdom with other people. Furthermore, the students stated that they loved their ethnic cultures, knew cultural values, and wanted to maintain and make their cultures accessible to others.

Table 5: Ethnic students' attitudes towards the folktale-based multilingual materials

Questions	Ethnic Students' Attitudes
Q1. What are the advantages of the folktale-based multilingual materials?	1. The folktales are art and science which help students gain more knowledge. 2. The folktale-based multilingual materials enable students to learn Thai, English, and Chinese languages and ethnic cultures.
Q2. What cultural aspects do students learn from the folktale-based multilingual materials?	1. The students learn about ways of life, cultural identities, and beliefs of people in the past that related to their daily life in the present times. 2. The students learn the origin of the stories and their meanings.
Q3. How do the folktale-based multilingual materials develop students' language learning and analytical thinking skills?	1. Students' readings of the folktale-based multilingual materials support their language learning. 2. The students are able to develop their analytical thinking skills through reading and analyzing main ideas from the stories in the materials.
Q4. How do the folktale-based multilingual materials motivate students in learning?	1. The stories in the folktale-based multilingual materials are interesting and motivate students in learning languages and cultures. 2. The students feel excited to learn their own cultures through folktales which make learning fun and engaging. 3. The folktale-based multilingual materials support students' learning of languages and sharing their ethnic folktales and local wisdom with other people.
Q5. How do the folktale-based multilingual materials make the students appreciate cultural values?	1. The students love their cultures and see the beauties in them. 2. The students understand cultural values, feel proud of them, and want to preserve and disseminate their cultures to others. 3. It makes students realize the importance of cultural preservation.

7. DISCUSSION

The results clearly show that ethnic students had a high positive attitude towards the folktale-based multilingual materials that were retold by the villagers who constructed these stories. The stories gave the participants a feeling of connection with their adult family members and encouraged them to use their communities as a way to better sustain their cultures and identities. They felt that the folktale materials were interesting, motivating, and encouraging successful at raising their awareness of their unique cultural identities. These results are in line with those seen in previous studies (Tomlinson, 2011; McDonough et al., 2013; Zar & Ramnath, 2016; Ayu, 2020), which indicate that materials should be developed in association with students' learning needs, interests, and experiences.

Findings also highlight that the materials helped students raise their cultural awareness, better appreciate their own cultural values, and understand and acknowledge the value of other ethnic perspectives. They learned to appreciate the beauty of ethnic folktales and perceived them to be an important art form in storytelling that features many aspects of culture including ways of life, ideologies, beliefs, identities, and moralities from the past which can be applied to present times. These findings are consisted with the findings from Iseke and Brennue's (2011) study which uses Tom's life story to reflect the strong connections he has with his life in the past, present, and future as related to his family and other community members. In this regard, the findings clearly confirm that the lessons have had numerous positive effects on the students, such as their self-improvement, changes in their thinking and attitudes towards the outside world, an increase in their cross-cultural understanding and intercultural communication between ethnic groups, and a willingness to share their cultures with global audiences. The lessons also created a sense of belonging to their own culture, yet with an open-mind to be ready to learn different global cultures (Kanoksilapatham & Channuan, 2018).

Additionally, the results indicate that the students perceived that the materials can be used to develop analytical thinking skills, enhance multicultural knowledge, motivate, and improve language learning from the reading activities and practices. They can learn more vocabulary, do more reading exercises, and develop cognitive skills through analyzing main ideas in the different stories being presented in the materials. These findings agree with an earlier study (Tomlinson, 2008) that says materials must be explored by students authentically using English through speaking, writing, and reading in order to better experience the texts and complete the tasks with willingness for language acquisition.

Moreover, the students felt proud and appreciative towards their own cultures that were developed by their ancestors. They felt excited to learn their cultures which were used as a supplementary material along with compulsory classroom textbooks. The materials supported their learning needs as they focused on aspects of their own ethnic cultures and motivated them to accomplish the reading, speaking, and writing objectives

set forth by the curriculum. These findings confirm the notions that local materials develop students' confidence and learning motivation (Estuarso et al., 2017; Nambiar et al., 2020). Therefore, it is suggested to incorporated ethnic cultures into ELT materials and textbooks in schools. As known, the use of English as an international language (Mckay, 2004), along with its popular culture, has influenced ELT pedagogical practices and materials development. The developed materials and textbooks currently used for students' learning in Thailand are more likely based on Thai culture (Nomnian, 2013; Kanoksilapatham & Channuan, 2018), target cultures, international cultures (Arshad et al., 2020; Saemee & Nomnian, 2021), and global cultures (Xu, 2013; Melliti, 2013) in order to contextualize nationalization and internationalization rather than ethnicization. The evidence has shown that the use of ethnic cultural materials is very limited and that ethnic cultural materials are not well-known to international audiences. In this regard, the use of ethnic cultural materials should focus on emphasizing localities and ethnic cultures in schools' teaching materials for all diverse cultural background students.

In regard to these notions, the current study indicates that those perceptions should be reconceptualized for the balancing of cultural elements in materials development for students' learning. Teachers and materials developers should exert their efforts to promote cultural equity and inclusiveness of ethnic cultures, national cultures, and international cultures in education. Ethnic cultures should be accessible to both national and international audiences. Meanwhile, English language should be used as a communicative tool (Mckay, 2004) for ethnic students to express themselves and make their cultures recognized by the audiences in Thailand and beyond.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study addressed ethnic students' attitudes towards the folktale-based multilingual materials that were created for specific ethnic groups. Results indicate that the materials were perceived positively by ethnic students and served their needs when learning about their own cultures using Thai, English, and Chinese languages. The students felt proud and excited to learn about their own cultures in schools and about other multilingual cultural stories from different ethnic groups. Furthermore, they felt they gained better cross-cultural understanding and intercultural competence which allowed them to widen their views about learning through intercultural contexts.

This study suggests that the stakeholders, materials developers, teachers, and administrators should recognize the importance of cultural equity and inclusiveness in materials development for students with diverse cultural backgrounds. They should balance the integration of cultural elements from ethnic cultures, national cultures, and international cultures in materials development in order to serve students' learning needs, fulfil the missing parts in the school ELT materials, textbooks, and curricula. Moreover, they should promote diverse cultural accessibility, equity, and inclusiveness in multicultural education worldwide.

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