

GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING LEARNING OF THAI LITERATURE VALUES THROUGH MULTIMEDIA

Kittipong Phumpuang¹ and Patcharin Buranakorn^{2*}

¹Assistance Professor Dr., Naresuan University, Thailand, kittipongp@nu.ac.th

²Dr., Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, Thailand, patcharinburanakorn@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author

Abstract

This research aimed to investigate problems of learning Thai literature and to propose guidelines for improving learning Thai literature through multimedia. Methods of a survey research were applied to find out problems of teaching Thai literature by interviewing 180 students of the secondary level and of university, majoring in Thai. Group discussions of scholars were held in order to give guidelines for designing learning Thai literature through multimedia.

The research found that students did not dislike contents of Thai literature but felt bored of teachers' teaching styles focusing on reading comprehension and memorizing vocabulary without relating the stories to learners' daily life. In order to solve the problems, the focus of teaching should be on improving learners' skills of thinking, asking questions, creating games or activities, performing role-plays, solving problems of characters, relating stories in the past to nowadays lives, and analyzing or criticizing stories and values in the studied literature. Six classical Thai literature were selected for making multimedia, which were Niras Phukhaotong; Pra Apaimanee; Lilit Talaengpai; Muttanapatha; Khunchang Khunphan; and Samkok. The multimedia suggested to be created were: drawings of characters; videos making; electronic games; animated cartoons; moving pictures; graphic pictures; adding parts of films, stage dramas, or television dramas in the teaching media; audio recordings; conversations; and reading proses of the poetry. Factors making the created multimedia efficient were the focus on storyboard and the content of the six literature. Also, the careful reviews and suggestions made the completed media very effective, which motivated learners to be aware of aesthetic, social, and moral values of the six literature.

Keywords: guidelines for improving, learning, values of Thai literature, multimedia

INTRODUCTION

In spite of neither having concrete advantages nor leading to any direct career paths, to study literature brings about high levels of human's aesthetic, intelligent and mental values so that all educational institutions have both mandatory and elective subjects towards Literature for students in many levels. *Chetana Nakwatchara* (1995: 155-171) said that literary studies, which are as important as other knowledge, become the fundamental element for having intellectual and ethical lives by helping support modern-aged humans' needs. The studies can develop undergraduate education in appropriate environment of academic enthusiasm and companion's truth seeking, as well.

Chuea Satawethin (1965: 194-195) also remarked about three purposes of studying literature: 1) the aesthetic appreciation 2) the moral instruction by leveling up humans' minds 3) the understanding towards national culture leading to the senses of worthiness and conservation.

According to the aforesaid, to study literature is truly important since it does not only pass on the thing called

cultural development but also improve learners' intelligence as well as understanding humanness better. To teach literature reinforces knowledge of cultural heritage, whereas to read the works themselves expands readers' visions towards men's lives and natures for understanding socio-cultural problems whatever and whenever. The most eminent expectation towards Thai literary education, therefore, seems to be the appreciations on artistic language, values of literature and wisdoms inherited from ancestors to enrich elaborate parts of the readers' lives. (Department of Academic Affairs, Ministry of Education, 2001: 1)

Even with great importance, today's students look over literature values. *Wit Siwasariyanon* (1976: 253 – 257), herein, summed up that the learning problem comes after almost all the teachers' method: they are obsessed with difficult word translation instead of emphasizing on the aesthetic features and the enlightenment of lives found from literature

If teachers mostly overlook the problem mentioned above, Thai literary education will become harder and go further from the new generations. Finally, it may turn to be "the glorious remains of the past"; just for keeping but not satisfactorily keeping on reading. Henceforth, to improve the educational effectiveness towards literature seems the urgent responsibility of every teacher in whatever class.

To apply information technology to help support literary educational management, thus, is now considered challenging and interesting. Amongst, to use computer with software programs, so-called multimedia, becomes more popular for it mixes up colored texts, graphics, animations, audio sounds and video files. In cases of smoothly corresponding control, the system turns to be the multimedia integration through the usage of computer mouse and keyboard (*Panlop Phiriyasurawong*, 1999: 12), so multimedia lesson combined all new interaction methods together in order to create livelier courses.

Here are some examples of applying information technology in Thai Language Educational management: 1) Songrid Chimmode's thesis entitled *The Comparison Study of Achievement by Using the "Six Thinking Hats" Method and the Traditional Method with Computer Assisted Instruction in Literature, Romance of the Three Kingdoms: Guan Yu Go with to Cao Cao of Mathayomsuksa 6 Students in 2010*, 2) Pimnicha Prommanot's thesis entitled *The Development of Computer Assisted Instruction for Teaching Thai on the Topic of Tribhumpraruang Manussabhum for Mathayomsuksa 6 Students in 2010*, and 3) Paranee Chotmanset's independent study entitled *Construction of Computer-Assisted Instruction for Teaching Thai on the Topic Tri Phum Pra Raung for Grade Level 4 Students in 2008*). It has been found from all that to apply information technology in Thai language classes brings about better learning achievement and positive attitude towards the study of Thai literature.

Therefore, it is too important to design multimedia lessons to serve literary contents and learning purposes, especially for Thai language and literature department which has various essences and aims at urging learners to appreciate in artistic, socio-cultural and ethical values of literature. The development of multimedia lessons on Thai literature will cause profound understandings and effectively persuasions for students to realize all valuable aspects of the works.

From the significance of new media in literary studies, the development of multimedia to improve Thai literary educational management has become the subject of this study under the research objectives to urge the learners attention and to fulfill their needs involving with the learning purposes directly, so the research questions are 1) what learning patterns do the students expect, 2) how to improve teaching methods for clearly emphasizing the values of literature and 3) what and how the values will be obtained from the study.

RESEARCH METHOD

1. Objectives

- 1.1 To analyze problems in Thai literary educational management
- 1.2 To discover appropriate multimedia for Thai literary educational management

2. Areas of Study

- 2.1 Population and representative samples belonging to the first objective
 - 2.1.1 The population has been divided into three groups:
 - 1) *Matthayomsueksa* students from level 1 to level 3.
 - 2) *Matthayomsueksa* students from level 4 to level 6.

3) Undergraduate students majored in Thai from year 1 to year 4

2.1.2 Representative samples have been divided into three groups:

1) 60 *Matthayomsueksa* students from level 1 to level 3 who have been particularly selected (2 persons per each classroom) from 3 schools in Bangkok and peripheral areas

2) 60 *Matthayomsueksa* students from level 4 to level 6 who have been particularly selected (2 persons per each classroom) from 3 schools in Bangkok and peripheral areas.

3) 60 Undergraduate students majored in Thai from year 1 to year 4 have been particularly selected (5 persons per each year) from 3 universities.

Total 180 persons

2.2 Population and representative samples belonging to the second objective

2.2.1 Population: scholars in Thai literature with teaching experience in the university who have been promoted at least as the assistant professor or achieved doctor of philosophy degree.

2.2.2 Representative samples: five scholars in Thai literature with teaching experience in the university who have been promoted at least as the assistant professor or achieved doctor of philosophy degree (selected from different universities)

3. Research Tools

3.1 Ten interviewing questions about problems in Thai literary learning for students.

3.2 Eight points of Brain-storming questions for scholars to be discussed about Thai literary educational development through multimedia.

4. Research Procedures

4.1 Step 1 (to answer the 1st objective)

4.1.1 All 180 target persons were interviewed by asking ten questions about problems in Thai literary learning.

4.1.2 The answers were analyzed by researchers in order to make the conclusion from each aspect.

4.2 Step 2 (to answer the 2st objective)

4.2.1 The analytical results of the research were presented to the five scholars.

4.2.2 Brain-storming discussions for the scholars were organized three times (six hours per each occasion), focused on the point of supporting learners to realize literary philosophy and values more widely and deeply by the developed multimedia lessons. Here are the topics:

1) The scholars criticized on educational problems from the first two steps to make an appropriate resolution.

2) The scholars selected six pieces of literature to be discussed about their essential values which became necessary to be taught.

3) The scholars discussed about how to develop the selected pieces of literature by applying multimedia; educational methods, essences of the works and presentation strategies were mostly mentioned.

RESULTS

1. Analysis towards the Problems in Thai Literary Educational Management (to answer the 1st objective)

1.1 The interviewing questions mentioned in the aforesaid were designed as research tools before being considered and approved by three following scholars:

Assoc. Prof. *Manipin Phromsutthirak* (Ph.D.), Faculty of Arts, Silpakorn University (retired government employee)

Assoc. Prof. *Thida Mosikarat*, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University

Assist. Prof. *Somkiat Khutawikul*, Faculty of Humanities, Srinakarinwirot University

The questionnaire has been developed by adding sub-questions, both choices and open-ended ones, so that the answers became more easily selected than all former open-ended questions. An approval of the scholars was made once before starting the interview.

1.2 Examination and Problem Analysis

Three Representative Samples

As field study, the researchers themselves collected answering documents from these following samples:

1. 60 *Matthayomsueksa* students from level 1 to level 3 from *Rajavinij Suwannabhumi School*, *Rajavinij Bangkok School* and *Rattanathibet School*
2. 60 *Matthayomsueksa* students from level 4 to level 6 from *Rajavinij Suwannabhumi School*, *Rajavinij Bangkok School* and *Rattanathibet School*
3. 60 bachelor of liberal arts undergraduate students programmed in Thai language from year 1 to year 4 from Phranakhon Rajabhat University, Chandrakasem Rajabhat University and Suansunandha Rajabhat University

2. Conclusion on the Survey Research towards Problems in Thai Literary Education

1. Learners' Attitudes towards Thai Literary Education: According to the researchers' experiences, almost all learners actually like Thai literature because it lets them know new things, leads to understand history, reinforces values of national identities, reflects social phenomenal and people's viewpoints. Some replied that they enjoy the teachers' uniqueness and teaching styles, as well. Minors of these, nevertheless, dislike Thai literature since it seem uninvolved with their everyday lives.
2. Reasons of the dissatisfaction on Thai Literature: Learners do not realize about any values of literary reading. Too, the teaching media, together with teachers' styles and the literary contents, seem uninteresting and out-of-date.
3. Resolutions: Teachers should urge their own students to profoundly consider essential values of Thai literature, prepare more attractive lessons, indicate the correspondence between literary contents and today's life, and improve the teaching styles
4. Learners' Attitudes towards the Necessity on Thai Literary Education: All suggested that it is necessary to study Thai literature as it reflects Thai society, represents national history and traditional customs, and levels up readers' minds and intelligences.
5. Attractive Teaching Methods and Media: films and dramas which present or are applied from Thai literature, literary contents exhibited by many organizations, multimedia like animation, illustration and video, the high- technology presentation of the poet's routes in each *nirat*, the infographic and role-playing effectively grab students attention.
6. Improper Methods: the tonal recitation, the word memorization and the narration without any media.
7. Attractive Media: theatrical plays, real objects, all kinds of multimedia, motion pictures, videos animations, cartoons, illustrations and infographics.
8. Learners' Suggestions: multimedia should be used in classes because it seems to be more attractive and can help the students focus on the lesson and develop the teaching methods.
9. The Literary Works which look Appropriate for Multimedia Making: because of the enjoyable stories with historical knowledge and food for thought, *The Tale of Phra Abhimani*, *Ramakian*, *The Tales of Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, *Thoa Saen Pom*, *Pla Bu Thong*, *I-Nao*, *Lilit Taleng Phai*, *The Romane of Three Kingdoms*, *The Tales of Vetala and King Vikaramaditya*, *Vessantara Jataka* (*rai-yao* version) and *Krithong* have been selected by learners.

Here is the concluding table prepared for the second process:

Learners' Attitudes	Reasons of the dissatisfaction	Resolutions	Requested Educational Media	Selected Works
almost all learners actually like Thai literature because it lets them know new things, leads to understand history, teaches the proper behaviors and reflects Thai society.	the teaching media, together with teachers' styles and the literary contents, seem uninteresting and out-of-date	the making of multimedia like animation, illustration, video, motivation of the poet's route (in case of <i>nirat</i>) infographic	theatrical plays, real objects, all kinds of multimedia, motion pictures, videos animations, cartoons, illustrations and infographics	<i>The Tale of Phra Abhimani, Ramakian, The Tales of Khun Chang Khun Phaen, Thoa Saen Pom, Pla Bu Thong, I-Nao, Lilit Taleng Phai, The Romane of Three Kingdoms, The Tales of Vetala and King Vikaramaditya, Vessantara Jataka (rai-yao version) and Krithong</i>

All results from the survey were concerned again in the group discussions with scholars in order to design the educational multimedia that does not only preserve the three valuable aspects of Thai literature and its identity but also seem interesting among the new generation, who assist the necessity of Thai literary studies but need the up-to-date communication through modern electronic channels.

2. Thai Literary Educational Approach through Multimedia (to answer the 2nd objective)

2.1 The Making of Research Tools and Issue of Discussion

Eight issues had been designed as the research before being asked in three brain-storming discussions with the scholars under the approval of these three persons:

Assoc. Prof. *Manipin Phromsutthirak* (Ph.D.), Faculty of Arts, Silpakorn University (retired government employee)

Assoc. Prof. *Thida Mosikarat*, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University

Assist. Prof. *Somkiat Khutawikul*, Faculty of Humanities, Srinakarinwirot University

All scholars have been developed the issues to be clearer without redundant points in order to uncomplicatedly apply in multimedia lesson design. The approval after revising was needed, as well.

2.2 Brain-Storming Discussions

Here were five scholars whom were invited:

Assoc. Prof. *Manipin Phromsutthirak* (Ph.D.), Faculty of Arts, Silpakorn University (retired government employee)

Assoc. Prof. *Thida Mosikarat*, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University

Assoc. Prof. *Somporn Ruamsuk*, Faculty of Education, Silpakorn University

Assist. Prof. *Somkiat Khutawikul*, Faculty of Humanities, Srinakarinwirot University

Assist. Prof. *Mukda Liplap*, Faculty of Humanities, Phranakhon Rajabhat University

According to the research tools, eight points of Brain-storming questions for scholars to be discussed about Thai literary educational development through multimedia three times.

2.3 Conclusion of the Discussions

2.3.1 Reasons Why Thai Students Feel Bored of Thai Literature

According to the academic discussion, the reasons of boredom are caused by conceptual misunderstandings of many teachers. The educational management on Thai language and literature in general focuses just to know the stories, to read the texts aloud or even to be mentioned as “historic evidences” without any artistic features. Worse than that, some teachers only ask anyone in their classes to strictly memorize the old-aged difficult words which will be found in the examination; some expected that their students, who are not the experts of Thai language users, must translate the artistic literary language from verses to more elaborate proses; some concentrate on difficult trivial details that they force learners to be concerned. Finally, the studies of Thai language and literature seems like the bitter pills and lead to the problems mentioned before. In addition, to thoroughly consider the university admission examination, it mostly asks about social reflections, social values and esthetic quality so that tutorial courses becomes “necessary” for Thai students whose teachers cannot directly teach the main points found in the admission examination to them.

2.3.2 Resolutions

Here are the suggestions from the scholars

Assoc. Prof. Manipin suggested that students will be satisfied if they have chances to manifest their abilities and viewpoints, for examples; (in case of reading *Shakuntala*) allowing them to wish to be the literary character they like, then share each one’s opinion and play the assigned (for the early children) or selected roles. Adding students’ imaginary stories and Watching cartoon animation can be also effective.

Assoc. Prof. Somporn paid attention on role-playing activity which starts from reading aloud to the self-identifying interpretation with conversations and on project work cooperation after the lessons about what and why they have read each artistic piece. Besides, the six-thinking-hat game was suggested after reading and identifying as a character like “if students were *Nang Wanthong* from *The Tales of Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, which decision would you make or how would you deal with *Khun Phaen* and his minor wife named *Laothong?*” (the definition of each hat, such as the green one refers to creativity, the yellow one to imagination or the black one to pessimistic thinking, has to be clearly describe by the teachers). In most of actual cases, learners enjoy the game since it encourages them, both by team working and role playing, to systematically share their opinions and creativity towards each piece of literature. Theoretically, it brings about vivid understandings towards literary values.

Assoc. Prof Thida said that the literary lessons will become more enjoyable if learners, who have known the literature backgrounds, are freely allowed to identify themselves as any characters in order to consider the circumstances, either agree or disagree with the stories. For instance, if they were *Phra Sangthong*, what would they do to solve problem. Each student’s self will be opened-up, and the fact-based comparison between today’s situations and ones mentioned in the literature will be revealed. For role-playing game, the learners’ creativity expresses through its elements like dialogues, settings or costume design.

Assist. Prof. Somkiat absolutely claimed that the only one theory that works among matthayomsueksa students is *Reader Response theory* together with role playing lessons, whereas the alternative thinking, such as considering the works that achieved SEA Write Award from different viewpoints, is appropriate for undergraduate student.

Assist. Prof. Mukda focused on the all-processed acquisition of knowledge: content recognition should be learned together with textual and contextual analysis, like considering and interpretation. The values and didactic virtues will be understood afterward. Teachers have to guide their students properly, too. If *The Tale of Sangthong* is read by the *matthayomsueksa* students, the teachers (with true textual preciseness and well-prepare documents) are required to be the efficiency narrators to entertain the classes, while the learners should practice their reading, writing and speaking skills in order to gain the real literary appreciation together with the role-playing lessons for cultivating self-confidence and creativity. For the undergraduate students, the impressions of literature they have read in *mattayom* school makes them remember the details like ones who can sing the *Pla Bu Thong* theme song they have heard in their childhood.

Assoc. Prof. Manipin concluded that to study human’s society and culture help understand literature. Moreover, the CD-ROM lessons should be made, roughly taught about the story, society, esthetics and ethics. It needs to be brought home with each student for further thinking before the next-day conversation in classes, as well. The educational media, on the other hand, should be effectively developed by teachers

themselves in order to urge the learners' analytical thinking skill.

2.3.3 Methods to Improve Thai Literary Educational Management: Esthetics, Social Sciences and Ethics

Firstly, the word "social sciences" has been changed to be "social", which is correctly used in literary studies.

Esthetics is regarded as the most significant value of literature, so the artistic-styled writing, the well-selected wording use and the figurative language should be deliberately taught, like the ants in Thai literature refer to diligence. As for the socio-cultural value, the literary contents should be emphasized as well as guiding how to apply "lessons of life" from the work in the real world. The ethical value, according to the scholars' comments, to profoundly consider the literary characters' experiences is required.

In case of media content selection, not only the texts but also context, not only reading analysis but also synthesis, are necessary for both learning and practicing. It is needed to urge the students, such as asking questions or quoting appropriate verses or proses, to understand each value by themselves under teachers' guidance. For example, if *Phra Vessantara* is blamed of his child donation, teachers should wisely explain by quoting some textual sentences.

Learning measurement, anyway, should be estimated by all these things: examination, classwork, project and learners' behaviors (that can be observed in class). The selected contents in educational media should be discussed to find out whether the students enjoy and understand the literature and its values or not.

2.3.4 Selection of Stories for Multimedia Making

The scholars suggested that it must be better if the easy-to-comprehend stories are selected. Again, teachers play the most important part to analyze the texts in order to discover the main points. For instance, the best way to persuade readers to appreciate *The Tale of Khun Chang Khun Phaen* or the open-ended question "why *Nang Rotjana* did not tell others that she saw *Phra Sang's* golden body?" which leads to the further analytical question like "who is the cleverest among *Thao Samon's* seven daughters?"

Here are the six selected pieces of work for the multimedia lesson making:

- 1) *Nirat Phukhao Thong* and *Phra Abhaimani* for the level 1 - level 3 *Matthayomsueksa* students.
- 2) *Lilit Taleng Phai* and *The Romance of a Rose* for the level 4 - level 6 *Matthayomsueksa* students.
- 3) *The Tale of Khun Chang Khun Phaen* and *The Romance of Three Kingdoms* for undergraduate students.

2.3.5 Suggestion for the Making of Educational Multimedia

Here are the scholars' suggestions for the educational multimedia making in order to emphasize the literary values to the *Matthayom* and undergraduate students:

To introduce the literary values to learners depends on teachers' guidance with clear examples quoted from the stories. Additionally, some interesting features from Thai fairy tales, computer games or cartoon characters (who directly inform about the values) should be added up, especially in animation. Self-learning accessibility and direct messages of each valuable aspect of literature are also inevitably required.

To put teaching tools, storytelling and games that lead player to understand the various aspects of literary values is as necessary as the subjects of analyzing. Too, the assortment of direct didactic messages should be significantly regarded. Mind mapping seems to be another best choice for analytical and systematical thinking because of its lively colors and the brief ideas, as the activators and leaders, it lets the students freely and widely consider on the learning subjects. Illustrations (especially the cartoon characters) function as representative narrators and the effectively content assortment (such as some short conversations) are the proper ways of media making.

It looks quite hard to sum up teachers' ideas into the media; the deliberate analysis towards values of each work found from answering the what, why and how textual questions are required. The key words guiding users to the practical answers have to be put on the program, as well. The questionnaire with choices can be used because the educational media, which need to be concerned much about the appropriation for learners, should be variously selected: the e-book, computer game, video, power point, etc. Importantly, the try-out process for affective domain and feedback cannot be omitted.

About learning period, it was suggested by the scholars that within 50 minutes a self-learning media can be used anytime. The learners should be able to read, consider and analyze the essence of the lesson as much as the can. Researchers should pay attention on ages of learners that affect their studying attentions. Perhaps a media for one issue needs at least three studying periods with various activities, like playing game

or watching video. Each key point should be vividly emphasized: story, characters, values, etc. It will be good if the estimation comes after each topic.

For further suggestions, to arrange the teaching media should be corresponding to times and periods so that the teaching plan with each content in brief and its keystones is needed to be prepare in order to design the storyboard. As for the literary content, it should be well-organized and categorized together with the practical media to follow the lesson purposes.

Finally, the guidance of educational multimedia mentioned on six pieces of Thai literature has been revealed from the group discussions. The storyboard is counted as one of the best ways to design literary courses with deep communication in the six values of literature. Therefore, the use of multimedia lessons will bring more successful presentation of Thai literature for it is up-to-date and effectively attacks learners' attention.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

According to the guidance of the academic dignitaries, updated technology should be selected to build up the literary educational multimedia to grab learners' attention and satisfaction so that they easily and adaptively realize all three valuable aspects of literature as the essence of the works are precious sources of Thai wisdoms. The multimedia designed from six literary works should presents the stories, characters (in case of literary tales), and their esthetic, social and ethical values for educational measurement. The literary contents through the storyboards have to be carefully concerned in order to create new multimedia with deeply preserves the three values, as well. This point is corresponding to the idea of *Suwanna Kriangkraipetch* (1973 : 240) that teachers should realized about real values of Thai literature before managing any courses in order to lead their own students to reach to the topmost aim. The teachers must be both ones who appreciate and wisely criticize the works, so that the main impression that should be cultivated in the learners' minds is to concentrate elaborately esthetic aspects of mankind through literature; the circumstances occurred in it can be compare with real lives, even though something seems a bit too fantasy, since all based on the truth itself. According to the result from *Pornthip Sirisomboonvejs* (2004) thesis entitled **A Development of Thai Literature Instructional Model Based on Reader Response Theory to Enhance Literature Responding, Reading Comprehension and Reflective Thinking Abilities of Undergraduate Students**, learning systems develop from four basic features: 1) the understanding improved from previous reading experience, 2) the individual difference, 3) the learning reaction and 4) the consideration of lesson purposes, which are the encouragement of readers' ability on expressing ones' feedbacks towards literature, the close-reading and the analytical thinking.

Pornthip's result has been beneficial for designing the multimedia mentioned about these six pieces of literature in order to attain learners' attention from it update and entertaining methods that can bring to their profound understanding towards literature.

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