

Suwapat Tepasamondej 2009: Thainess in English and Thai-English Children's Literature. Master of Arts (English for Specific Purposes), Major Field: English for Specific Purposes, Department of Foreign Languages. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Pataraporn Tapinta, Ph.D. 130 pages.

The objectives of this study were to 1) explore and identify the elements of "Thainess" in English children's literature, and 2) analyze the possible impacts yielded by these elements of "Thainess" on Thai children's English literacy and language learning. The three major categories of sources of data in this study included: 1) 170 English reading passages from the course books used in schools (Grade 3 – Grade 9) as part of the curriculum of the Ministry of Education of Thailand, 2) 16 Thai-English storybooks, and 3) 10 Thai literary stories that are translated into English versions. The procedures of descriptive and interpretive methods of content analysis were conducted.

The findings have revealed five categories of Thai socio-cultural schematic elements imparted in those literary works: 1) Thai social values including showing respect, gratitude, generosity, the significance of religious institutions, and belief and tradition, 2) Thai lifestyle, 3) Thai history, 4) Thai art, and 5) Thai names. More importantly, based on the framework of schema theory and second language and literary learning theories, the findings indicate that these elements of "Thainess" seem to play positive roles in enhancing Thai student readers' literacy and language skills development in two main aspects: 1) the role of content schema in promoting the use of reading strategies for effective reading comprehension, and 2) the role of content schema in building motivation for language learning and learning to read.

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Thesis Advisor's signature

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