

Documented Meranaw Folktales of Lanao: An Archival Collection and Study for Instructional Materials

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ABSTRACT

Meranaw folk literature is a rich collection of folktales, myths, legends, fables, riddles, epics, and proverbs. The primary objective of this research is to gather, organize, and analyze documented Meranaw folktales from Lanao to preserve and enhance the understanding of these oral traditions. As a vital component of the region's cultural heritage, Meranaw folktales offer profound insights into the values, beliefs, and social conventions of the Meranaw community. Despite their cultural significance, these narratives have often been overlooked in scholarly research due to their dispersal across various archival sources. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing qualitative content analysis and quantitative data collection. Archival research was conducted to compile data on documented Meranaw folktales, with data collection taking place at various locations in Lanao del Sur, where narrative texts are preserved, followed by content analysis to categorize themes and cultural elements present in the folktales. The quantitative analysis identified the number and distribution of folktales across reference materials. The findings revealed a total of 143 documented Meranaw folktales, which were published and distributed across six reference materials. Based on the analysis, the researcher developed instructional materials, explicitly reading resources derived from Meranaw folktales, supplemented with a glossary, illustrations, and learning activities to serve as educational aids for Mother Tongue and literature subjects.

KEYWORDS

folktales; narratives; archival research; oral traditions; reading materials.

INTRODUCTION

The Meranaw people, an indigenous ethnic group from the Lanao region of Mindanao, Philippines, possess a rich cultural heritage deeply embedded in their oral traditions. Among these traditions, folktales play a crucial role in conveying the values, beliefs, and historical narratives of the Meranaw community. These folktales, collectively known as tutul, encompass myths, legends, and moral narratives that reflect the community's cultural identity and social norms.

Despite their cultural significance, the documentation and scholarly study of Meranaw folktales remains limited. Many of these narratives remain inaccessible due to the lack of written or printed texts. McAmis (1966) noted that a substantial portion of Meranaw oral traditions still exists in unwritten form, preserved only in the memories of the older generation. While some scholars and researchers have tried to document these folktales, their work has been sporadic and incomplete. Moreover, locating cultural bearers has further hindered preservation efforts, as many of these storytellers are aging, and their memories are fading with time.

Saber (1990), a pioneering scholar known for his dedication to cultural preservation, asserted that it is not too late to salvage what remains of the Meranaw oral tradition from the highlands, lowlands, and urban centers. He emphasized that these folkways still exist and can serve as valuable instructional materials for Meranaw and non-Meranaw learners. Additionally, he suggested that incorporating these materials into educational programs could contribute to a national cultural renaissance by integrating traditional and modern influences. Similarly, Saber and Robertson (n.d.) advocate for including folklore in school curricula, arguing that it helps students develop a deeper understanding of their heritage and that of others. They contend that the enjoyment and drama of folklore enhance students' appreciation of their cultural identity and national history.

However, recent studies reveal significant challenges in implementing Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). One major issue Lactec et al. (2014) identified is the scarcity—or, in some cases, the complete absence—of books and instructional materials written in the Mother Tongue, including localized folklore resources. Teachers have expressed concerns about the inadequacy of community-based and culture-based learning materials, which have been further validated by the faculty of Mindanao State University–Integrated Laboratory School (MSU-ILS). The lack of localized vocabulary and reference materials in the Mother Tongue has posed difficulties in translating materials, especially for pupils who speak diverse languages.

Recognizing these challenges and the pressing need for preservation, this study undertakes a comprehensive archival research approach to compile and analyze documented Meranaw folktales from Lanao. By systematically collecting folktales from established archival sources and examining their thematic and narrative structures, the research aims to bridge the existing gap in the literature and provide a consolidated resource for scholars, cultural practitioners, and the Meranaw community. Furthermore, this study contributes to the broader field of folklore studies by offering insights into the narrative practices and artistic expressions of the Meranaw people.

Through this archival collection and analysis, the study seeks to enhance the visibility of Meranaw folktales, fostering a deeper appreciation of their cultural significance and ensuring their preservation for future generations. The ultimate goal is to compile *tutul* alongside learning activities and illustrations to serve as instructional materials for Mother Tongue and literature education. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions: (1) what are the existing documented Meranaw folktales? and (2) what instructional materials for local literature and Mother Tongue can be developed based on the findings?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was supported by various related literature and studies on Folktales like that of Dobson (1992), who defined folktales as traditional oral prose narratives. Yolen (1986), however, categorized folk stories into three types: oral, transcribed, and literary or art tales. Folktales are intended to be told and retold; many have been recorded in writing to ensure their preservation for future generations. These stories, brought to life through the spoken word, are powerful and mysterious. As Yolen (1986) notes, "Storytelling is a personal art form that makes public what is private and makes private what is public."

In the Introduction to the Proceedings of the International Conference on "Collecting the Oral Traditions" held in Khon Kaen, Thailand, in 1997, IFLA Chair Ralph Manning (2001) emphasized the urgency of the collection effort to preserve cultural heritage by quoting a Mali researcher who said that "every elderly person who dies represents a library going up in flames." He, moreover, saw fit to echo the warning of John Walko, who noted

that already forty complete societies have disappeared with all their traditions, culture, and knowledge. The loss is lamentable, considering the significance of folk literature or oral traditions.

Many of these tales have been rewritten, revised, and recreated, and this process continues today. Initially intended for an adult audience, what is now known as children's fairy tales were adapted over time. With the rise of technological advances and a demand for more sophisticated literacy and intellectual reasoning, these tales were transformed to provide moral lessons and entertainment for younger audiences (Chinen, 1992; Zipes, 1988).

These studies provide valuable context and methodologies closely related to the archival and preservation efforts described in the research on Meranaw folktales. According to Black (2011) research, "Preserving Indigenous Knowledge: The Role of Archives and Libraries," methods for preserving Indigenous knowledge through archival practices and library systems are investigated. This study offers relevant insights into archival strategies that can be applied to maintain and protect cultural narratives, including Meranaw folktales. Similarly, S. Alibatas's (2002) "The Oral Tradition of Muslim Mindanao: An Annotated Bibliography" presents a comprehensive bibliography of oral traditions in Muslim Mindanao, providing valuable insights into archiving and classifying such materials, which helps understand the documentation process of Meranaw folktales. Furthermore, Himli's (2014) "An Annotated Collection of Folktales from Southern Saudi Arabia" focuses on collecting and translating folktales, emphasizing archival research and genre classification. This approach parallels the methodology used in studying Meranaw folktales, highlighting the importance of systematic archival techniques.

RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used in the research designs for this study. The researcher conducted archival research to collect secondary data on documented folktales. This research was conducted in various locations in Lanao del Sur where narrative texts are stored and maintained, including organizations such as libraries, college and university archives, government archives, religious archives, museums, special collections, and internet searches. The researcher then collected and compiled the documented folktales (*tutul*). On the other hand, the study is limited by the availability and accessibility of documented folktales. Some materials may be incomplete, damaged, or inaccessible due to archival constraints. Additionally, the study may not capture the full diversity of Meranaw folktales if some are undocumented or significant variations in oral traditions are not represented in the archival sources.

Guided by the analysis result, the researcher proceeded to develop reading materials for Mother Tongue and Literature subjects. This is designed to cover the significant skills in reading: literary appreciation, vocabulary, comprehension, and study skills. The ethical considerations for this study are as follows: Provide letters to various organizations during archival research; handle all folktales and cultural materials with respect, acknowledging their significance to the Meranaw people; avoid misrepresentation or exploitation of cultural narratives; engage with community elders and cultural experts to ensure that the documentation process respects traditional knowledge and practices; and adequately attribute all sources of folktales while acknowledging the contributions of individuals and communities involved in the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To address the problem, what are the existing documented Meranaw folktales? The data

gathered through archival research were collected and documented. Table 1 below shows the total number of documented Meranaw folktales (*tutul*) from various sources.

Table 1. The Total Number of Documented Meranaw Folktales (*tutul*)

| Title of the Books | Authors & Year Publication | Place of Resources | Number of Folktales (<i>Tutul</i>) |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| Agamaniyog Folktales, Book II | Folklore Division Staff, Mindanao Art & Culture Series (1986) | MSU- Mamitua Saber Resource Center Library & MSU-Main Library | 10 |
| Buadi Sakayo Folktales | Orfia A. Saber Mindanao Art & Culture Series, (1989) | MSU- Mamitua Saber Resource Center Library & MSU-Main Library | 20 |
| Aden a Totolan | Angelito G. Flores, Sr. et al, (2001) | MSU-Main Library, Marawi City | 23 |
| Panitikang Meranaw: Mga Piling Alamat at Kuwento | Sandor B. Abad (2013) | Private Library | 50 |
| Thotholan: Mga Alamat at Pabulang Meranaw | Almayrah A. Tiburon (2017) | Private Library | 34 |
| DepEd Collection of Meranaw story, Big books | Mona Miscille T. Domato et al. (2019) | DepEd, Division Office, Marawi City & MSU- ILS Library | 6 |
| Total Number of Folktales (<i>Tutul</i>) | | | 143 |

This study was conducted to examine the existing Meranaw folktales (*tutul*) documented in Lanao Del Sur. The table shows that one hundred forty-three (143) existing documented Meranaw folktales (*tutul*) were published across six reference materials. These resources are in the MSU Main Library, Mamitua Saber Research Center (MSRC), a private library, and the DepEd Division Office. However, there are only two collections of Meranaw folktales available at the MSU Main Library: Agamaniyog Folktales: Book I (Mindanao Arts and Culture series, 1984) and Selected Meranaw Folktales (Tawano, 2001), with no Meranaw translations. According to Prof. Elin C. Guro, the current Director of the MSU Library, the limited access to Meranaw textual materials for these oral genres is due to the absence of printed texts, as many remain to be collected and documented. Similarly, Dr. Labi Riwarung, Chairperson of the Folklore Division at MSU-MSRC, noted that while the Meranaw are rich in oral literature, especially folktales, most are not documented. She also mentioned that before efforts by some literary scholars and researchers in Lanao, many Meranaw folktales were lost due to a fire at the MSU-Mamitua Saber Library and the Marawi Siege at the Dansalan Research Center. Meranaw folk literature, including undocumented and yet-to-be-collected pieces, constitutes a vast body of work that ranges from epics or folk narratives such as the Darangen and Radia Indarapatra to folktales in various forms, poems, proverbs (*pananaroon*), riddles (*antoka*), and songs (*bayok*).

Whatever collections exist, even if fragmentary, can be compared to the "tip of the iceberg." Many more are yet to be collected from the field. However, gathering these materials may prove challenging for field workers. The memories of storytellers, who mainly belong to older generations, may have faded over time and may no longer be as reliable. Furthermore, many of these storytellers have already passed away. A significant issue is the lack of intergenerational transmission or continuity, as the older generations failed to pass on the folktales to the younger generation. This ignorance of the folktales is

part of the broader intergenerational disruption or gap.

Agamaniyog Folktales: Book I (Mindanao Arts and Culture series, 1984) presents a collection of folktales from diverse locations, including Agamaniyog, Balantankairan, Bandiyarmasir, Romaging, Indaratila, Babel, Hindi, Kodiyad, Todiombiro, Tadalkairan, Maganding, Bongarsa, Darolkaya, Kaironisa, and even as far afield as Saudi Arabia. The characters in the collection are culturally diverse, ranging from the poorest to the richest and from giants to angels. It also includes a *Kissa*, a story adapted from the Holy Book, such as the story of the Prophet Usop. However, the collection primarily features tales from a single location and includes some unique plots. These tales were interestingly narrated by a storyteller named Bai sa Bayabao Pokil Mamarinta of Buadi Sakayo, Marawi City, who was about 75 years old at the time.

It bears repeating that reading these folktales provides not only insight into the wisdom of the people but also an understanding of their ways of thinking, problem-solving, and interpreting significant events. This offers students of the social sciences a means to effect change, highlighting one of the services folklore provides to our technocrats (Saber, 1978). As recognized early on by the wise leaders of Singapore, particularly Lee Kuan Yew, the architect of the young nation, it is essential to strike a delicate balance between cultural growth and economic survival.

This dilemma and aspiration were discussed by Liang (1999) in the article "Inter-Generational Transmissions in Singapore," which addressed what the author described as the "critical situation" of the nation regarding oral tradition caused by the imbalance between cultural and economic survival. The development plan for the young nation-state largely neglected culture, which is the soul of any nation. The push to develop Singapore into an English-speaking nation came at the expense of the Mother Tongue, leading to a gradual erosion of oral traditions. However, recognizing the need for cultural preservation, the government swiftly initiated a preservation project through historical lessons. The Oral History Centre was established as the sole national institution systematically collecting and maintaining an oral history archive.

Today, some contemporary Meranaw writers and folklorists are earnestly dedicated to preserving Meranaw literature by rewriting, revising, and recreating Meranaw folktales to engage young learners in reading, appreciating, and understanding their culture. Sandor B. Abad (2013) is a folklorist interested in collecting Meranaw literature. Her book, *Panitikang Meranaw: Mga Piling Alamat at Kuwento*, is a valuable contribution to the limited knowledge of Philippine Muslim folklore and includes tales from Lanao del Sur. The collection features fifty folktales from several sources, including books from Dansalan College Foundation Inc., Mindanao State University, Mamitua Saber Research Center, and the Local Government of the Islamic City of Marawi.

The book *Panitikang Meranaw: Mga Piling Alamat at Kuwento* contains texts categorized into three types: myths, legends, and fables. These forms are commonly found in various classification systems or typologies, such as those developed by Eugenio (2002) and Nagasura T. Madale (1977). The categories of texts from *Mga Piling Alamat at Kuwento* are displayed in the table above.

Another contemporary Meranaw writer in Filipino literature is Almayrah A. Tiburon, who is interested in writing poems, short stories, and prose narratives. In her book *Thotolan: Mga Alamat at Pabulang Meranaw* (2017), she collected twenty-five fables and twenty-five legends that address historical events and the origins of places, things, and animals in Lanao Del Sur. The five folktales selected from Tiburon's collection, *Thotolan: Mga Alamat at Pabulang Meranaw*, consist of two fables and three legends. These tales and those from the preceding collection are believed to be engaging reading materials for

elementary students. Fables, fairy tales, and myths—stories that often explain the origins of natural phenomena or geographical landmarks—hold significant charm for young audiences.

The numerous lists of folktales from various sources and collections demonstrate that Meranaw literature is extensive and unique. It encompasses multiple genres, including humorous stories, myths, legends, fables, adventure tales, narratives about legendary figures, and the so-called *kissa*, or stories from Scripture. The typology or classification system offered by Madale (1977) illustrates this diversity effectively. He identified three distinct types of Moro (Philippine Muslim) stories: 1) Short vulgar stories—humorous and laughable tales; 2) Legends and myths—cultural, etiological, and nature myths; and 3) Stories of deeds and adventures of legendary characters. He then subdivided short stories (*tutul*) into: 1) Legends (*tutul sa pakapuun*); 2) Funny stories (*tutul a piyakakeyakeyad*); 3) Fables (*tutul a pangangayamen*); and 4) Stories about birds and fishes. Interestingly, he cited the Pilandok tales as an example of *tutul a piyakakeyakeyad*. This collection of tales is claimed to originate from the stories known as "*Kalilah and Dimnah*," which are related to the tales of the Arabian Nights.

Folk literature holds a unique place in Meranaw culture. The Meranaw consider some of these stories to be historical accounts of their ancestors' lives and activities. The concept of the Meranaw as "historians" or chroniclers was explored in Tawagon's (1978) study, *The Pengampong: Multiple Sultanates of Lanao*. According to Tawagon (1978), the Meranaw lacks a historical sense. Firstly, they do not write down their history (*tutulan*), and secondly, their genealogical accounts (*Salsila*) contain minimal historical data. These accounts do not include precise dates and are primarily person-oriented, focusing on figures or personages and their descent or lineage, thus neglecting the broader events surrounding them.

They take pride in being a "society of royalty," an image corroborated by Marohomsalic (1995) in his book *Aristocrats of the Malay Race: A History of the Bangsa Moro in the Philippines*. The Meranaw trace their ancestry to heroic characters in the Radia Indarapatra folk narrative and the Darangen epic. In other words, the past can be pieced together and reconstructed through these folk narratives, highlighting their excellent value for the Meranaw people and the nation.

Although many are still in oral form and have yet to be printed, these stories live on and are preserved in the hearts of the Meranaw, particularly in rural areas where traditional culture continues to flourish and remains a steadfast part of daily life. These findings suggest that writers and folklorists should continue to collect and document folk literature while it is still alive in the minds of the Meranaw. Lanao boasts hundreds of stories, legends, fables, and humorous tales. These stories are found throughout Meranaw communities, although the characters and incidents may vary due to personal interpretations. While the origins of these stories are unknown, they are universally enjoyed. Their widespread appeal should greatly aid in their collection and preservation.

Moreover, several studies support the collection of folktales. Himli (2014) conducted a study entitled *An Annotated Collection of Folktales from Southern Saudi Arabia*. This thesis focused on the collection and translation of folktales rather than on epistemological theorizing. It included a collection of folktales from intensive fieldwork conducted in 2008 in the Jizan region of southern Saudi Arabia. The researcher translated the tales into Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and English, then classified them into three genres: fantasy, humorous narratives/jokes, and legend. The study also analyzed the types and motifs of these folktales.

Preservation projects are a government priority in various countries, including

Singapore. Lee Kuan Yew, the architect of modern Singapore, led the advocacy for preserving the Mother Tongue, the language in which the people's proverbs and fables are expressed. He stated, "It is the learning of a whole value system, a whole philosophy of life that can maintain the fabric of our society intact..." (Yew, 1972; Liang, 2001).

No less than the leading Meranaw scholar Saber (1990), who did pioneering work in the field, affirmed that it is never too late for the Meranaws to salvage their folk literature from the limbo of forgotten things. More determined efforts must be pursued in the highlands, the lowlands, and urban centers. The gathered materials can be developed into instructional resources for Meranaw and non-Meranaw students. Additionally, they can assist the government in its efforts toward a cultural renaissance that blends traditional and contemporary practices.

This study supports the concept of the intimate and indissoluble relationship between language and literature. Language serves as the medium of communication, while literature represents a written form of any matter in a particular language. Literature is a specialized use of language, extending its verbal possibilities. Julia Kristeva refers to this as the "infinity of the code." Moreover, literature fosters an interest in reading. Ideas or themes expressed through exposition or discursive prose often lack the impact the same ideas presented through poetry, drama, or story can achieve. This is because reading prose tends to be a more cerebral or intellectual exercise.

Thus, reading a literary piece engages the whole being of the reader: the full range of their senses, imagination, emotions, and critical thinking. Through narrative stories such as folktales, myths, legends, or other forms of oral literature, writers aim to convey messages to the younger generation. Simply put, the forms of literature are the ornaments of language.

As discussed, studying literature satisfies curiosity about various topics, including history, culture, language, philosophy, psychology, politics, and aesthetics. It begins with a detailed literary analysis and expands to address more significant questions about who we are and how we experience and represent ourselves, our world, and each other. Literature enables people to develop new ideas and ethical viewpoints (Sapir, 1921).

Meranaw literature is rich and well-preserved, though some aspects remain unwritten or only partially recorded and studied (Laubach, 1930). According to Chinen (1992) and Zipes (1988), many of these folktales have been rewritten, revised, and recreated, and this process continues today. As the technological age demanded more sophisticated literacy and complex intellectual reasoning, these tales were transformed to provide moral lessons and entertainment for the young.

Thus, Meranaw folklore encompasses more than just stories. It also embodies many symbolic themes of Meranaw society, history, and culture. These tales' historical origins and transformations present intriguing challenges that folklorists have only recently begun to explore. Solving these issues will require the combined "tools of anthropology, sociology, linguistics, Islamic studies, history, and theology" (Eggan, 1966).

On the other hand, in response to the inquiry regarding developing instructional materials for local literature and Mother Tongue, this study's findings have led to the creation of an instructional reading material focused on Meranaw folktales (*tutul*), accompanied by a glossary of challenging vocabulary. The figures below are a sample collection of folktales for reading materials and a mini dictionary of difficult/unfamiliar Meranaw words.

Part 1: Reading Materials
SI PILANDOK A GO SO LOMESAED A MANOK



So Lomesaed a manok na pepeloba sa pangenengken sa kilid a ig, na di' niyan katawi na miyatoka iyan a mata o bowaya a tatambonan iyan a lawas iyan sa petaed. Kiyararangitan so bowaya na giyander iyan so manok ka pelameden iyan. Mitaengka'i a miyakaoma si Pilandok. Pitaero' o bowaya so miyaolaola, na iniisae' iyan on a antonaa i sala'. Tig i Pilandok a,

“Layog ka, ka kaekan ka! Kana ngka ka melayog sekaniyan!” So Lomesaed a manok na minggagaan lomayog na miyakapalagoy! Na so bowaya na miyaori. Si Pilandok na inawaan iyan so bowaya a tanto a pekaerarangitan.

Miyakaisa a alongan na so bowaya na somiyong ko lawig i Pilandok a ig', Si Pilandok na sisii sa liyo sa waketo to. Sa masa oto na kagiya paeto si Pilandok na tomiyareg na miyananawag sa tig iyan a, “lawig akin a ig', ba aden sisan sa soled?” Miyananawag peman, “Lawig aken a ig', o da' a sisan sa soled na di' sembag,” Somimbag so bowaya, “Da a sisii.” Miyalagoy si Pilandok.

Miyakaisa peman na somiyong so bowaya ko paridi'i Pilandok na penayaon iyan sekaniyan roo. Da' mataey na miyakaoma si Pilandok a maawid sa laya'. Kagiya pataego'an i Pilandok sa ig so laya', na giyander o bowaya so a'i i Pilandok. Gomiyora'ok si Pilandok na tig iyan a, “Ilaya ngka so laya' aken!” Na inolog iyan so laya' iyan. So bowaya na biyokaan iyan so a'i i Pilandok ka saeloon iyan so laya' na miyalagoy si Pilandok.

Miyakaisa alongan na miiga si Pilandok ka papaemimikiranen iyan so kapaginetaw niyan ka da' a kaekan iyan. Na somiyong sa ragat ka paengowa sa odang. Somiyosaw ko mala' a ator na miyontod on na tig iyan a, “Odang! Odang! Ba kano di kaen sa soso”. Ogaid na so manga odang na miyonot ko reges. Inotegan si Pilandok na tig iyan a, “O di ngka talowi so odang na pekaeden sa obay a kilid.”

Kagiya maneg o bowaya a si Pilandok na sisii sa ig na somiyong on na siyakab iyan. Kagiya ko sisii sa tiyan a ngkoto a bowaya na tig i Pilandok a, “Bowaya di' ako paetay o ba ko ngka pagitogen sii ko madilim, ogaid na o somiyong ka sa kilid na riyopet ako ngka ko ator na paetay ako.” Tig o Bowaya,

Ba'anda benar i Pilandok, ka pekaneg aken a pepaegidaida' sa tiyan aken.” So bowaya na tomiyalikod na somiyangor sa kilid na inota' iyaon si Pilandok. Na miyalagoy ngagaan si Pilandok.

Tutulan poon ki: Ba'i sa Bayabao Pokil Mamarinta. Buadi Sakayo, Marawi City
Poonan: Tales from Buadi Sakayo. Mindanao Art and Culture (Number Ten)

I. Sabutan

Katawan ka? Kiyaupakatan ko mga lokes a si Pilandok i titu a bara'akal a mama ago kalalagan i pamikiran. Madakel a tutulan rekaniyan. Sekaniyan na madakel i karuma.

II. Kapamatiya ago Katukawi

Mga wata miyaneg iyu so tutulan ki Si Pilandok ago Lomesaed a Manok? Pamakineg kanu ka imantu na mbatiya'an tanu giyangka'i a tutul. Na o aden a basa a di ngka katawan na tiburun ingka.

III. Kapangingisa

Tiburun ingka so sembag o pakaisa.

1. Antawa a i mga taw ku tutul a biyatiya tanu?

a. Pilandok, tigri agu so manok b. Pilandok, manok agu bedung c. Pilandok, lomesad agu buwaya

2. Anda miyanggula'ola su tutul?

a. kilid a ig b. sa walay c. sa iskwila'an

3. Antuna-a miyakuwa a guna ko tutul?

a. kala a akal b. maka o'gopa c. kapakatipo

| Part 2: GLOSSARY | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Meranaw Vocabulary Items | English Translation | Meanings |
| A. Nouns | | |
| <i>Adapan</i> (<i>adap</i>) | n. in front of | A position ahead of a person or congruent with the foremost part of a thing |
| <i>Adat</i> | n. code of etiquette; habit custom; conduct n. dowry or bride wealth | A local customary law of the Meranaw Muslim tradition in Lanao The cash component of <i>betang</i> is shared by the bride's group among relatives, friends, the people attending the wedding ceremony, and the traditional title holders in the community. This share is called <i>adat</i> . |
| <i>Adimat</i> | n. amulet; talisman; charm | A piece of jewelry that some people wear because they think it protects them from bad luck, illness, etc., or a charm (as an ornament, gem, or relic) often inscribed with a spell, magic incantation, or symbol and believed to protect the wearer against evil or to aid him to succeed |

Figure 1. Sample Instructional Materials

This material aims to help the learners learn their mother tongue and appreciate their literature, language, and culture through Meranaw stories. This reading material consists of two parts: Part one contains forty (40) folklore Meranaw folktales (*tutul*) from several secondary sources in which the author and reference are written after the story's title. The stories are categorized by grade level and provided with colorful illustrations to attract learners' interest and understanding. Moreover, each *tutul* is provided with learning exercises, such as *Sabutan* (trivia word that has cultural significance), *Kapamatiya a go Katukawi* (reading and conceptualization), *Kapangingisa/Pakaisa* (comprehension questions) and *Kapema'ana* (vocabulary meaning).

Part two is a glossary of more than one thousand Meranaw vocabulary items with the corresponding English translations and denotative meanings. The Meranaw vocabulary entries are written as base words, their derivatives, or words amplified by inflections. Thus, the base or root word is enclosed with parenthesis after the inflected word entries to understand the vocabulary entry further. The vocabulary items are arranged alphabetically, labeled, and categorized according to their part of speech. The Meranaw vocabulary items are generally glossed by two to four English words or phrases and then followed by the denotative meanings of the words. These reading materials stimulate learners' imagination and expand their vocabulary skills. Thus, these Meranaw *tutul* are used as supplemental references for Mother Tongue and Literature subjects to enhance learning of the Meranaw language and culture.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study serve as an eye-opener for all stakeholders, particularly MTB-MLE teachers, and advocates of multicultural education, pluralism, and diversity. They emphasize the need for a dedicated and concerted effort to collect Meranaw folktales and other native verbal art forms. These authentic works can be used to develop instructional materials for Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) precisely and for multicultural education in general. It is believed that more of these can be begun, as the number of elderly culture bearers is rapidly declining.

As an eye-opener that sounds alarms that cannot be ignored, this study, like others with the same intent, should galvanize all stakeholders—including teachers as Mother Tongue advocates, researchers, instructional material developers/designers, folklorists, and other scholars—to take action. More Meranaw oral traditions need to be collected from the field. Significantly, this effort should not be limited to collection and documentation alone, only to have the materials gathered consigned to library shelves or, worse, to archives where they would merely gather dust and grow mold. As part of the Meranaw cultural heritage, these materials must be actively utilized, ideally as instructional resources in Mother Tongue or language arts, literature/reading, and other related subject areas. Teachers should shift from reliance on the Department of Education's produced and supplied materials. Those people who are native to the culture and work locally are better positioned to create community-based and culturally relevant instructional materials. Their greater familiarity with the local context gives them an advantage over experts in higher offices.

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