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Title	Children story classics: Comparison of versions in the East and West
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**EDUCATION RESEARCH FUNDING PROGRAMME**

Start-Up Grant

**FINAL REPORT**



**Children Story Classics: Comparison of Versions in the  
East and West / SUG 05/15 ZAD**

By

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13 Nov 2017

National Institute of Education  
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## **Part II**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Purpose / Research Question**

It has been observed that there exist certain common, or even “universal” themes across either time, or culture, or both time and culture in the children’s literature. The proposed research project will focus on the selected children literature from chosen cultures. The purposes are three folds:

- 1) To identify and analyze the themes from the children literature, either common or unique themes;
- 2) To discover the commonality and differences of storytelling, literary presentation, rhetoric devices adopting, etc.; and
- 3) To explore the educational implications of the above findings.

#### **Background**

Literature, as a form of arts, has existed a few thousand years throughout the human civilization. Moreover, literature written specifically for children has existed for at least a few hundred years.

During this modern era, many children's books are published annually. These include the newly created novels and stories, as well as re-created classics, such as Cinderella and Snow White from Western origin and Mu Lan from the Orient.

Literary texts, including children literature, exist always in certain socio-cultural contexts for a particular society during a specific period. Generally it has been created in the first place to reflect the socially and culturally sanctioned ideologies, values, morale, and behaviors. Thus, children’s literature becomes a very powerful platform from different cultures to pass on their values and moral from one generation to the next.

This project has started children’s literature from two perspectives: literary study and educational implications.

#### **Research Methodology / Design**

This is a text-based, qualitative, exploratory research. The research process involves:

- 1) The effort will be made to collect and compile the selected children literature from chosen cultures.
  - a. The project will first identify the most popular children classics, e.g., Cinderella.
  - b. The data collection involved library research, field study, focused group discussion, etc.
  - c. ~~Texts from non-English / Chinese sources may be translated into English or Chinese~~
- 2) Identify the common or unique themes of the children literature
- 3) Develop a set of schemes / scales to codify the literary works for analysis

- 4) Compare and contrast the themes and literature devices
- 5) Report the findings

### **Findings / Results**

- 1) Both commonalities and uniqueness were found existing in difference cultures
- 2) As originated from difference cultures and environmental context, the storytelling, literary presentation, and rhetoric devices do varie.
- 3) The stories are educational in itself as literature pieces. In addition, the cross-cultural comparision and contrasting serve well to evoke the cultural awareness which is vital in the era of globalization.

### **Conclusion**

Discussion of conclusions based on the findings:

This study is only a first stage of a larger project. It will build a solid basis and provide a direction for further research development. For example, It may cover more cultures into the framework, and will add more children literary works into the portfolio.

The research results can be applied in classroom teaching as an interest generating and thoughts evoking device. It will serve the course of children literature, and creative writing. It may potentially be useful in teaching of value, culture awareness, and social skills.

### **Keywords**

Keyword 1. Children literature, 2. Comparative literature, 3. Culture & Value

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