

GENERIC STRUCTURE POTENTIAL OF SOME NIGERIAN FOLKTALES

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ABSTRACT: *The structure of folktales has been largely considered within literary tradition. Though a few studies have examined folktales from a linguistic perspective, little or none has studied the Generic Structure Potential of Nigerian folktales. In this study, we purposively studied twenty folktales narratives selected from a corpus of one hundred Nigerian folktales, downloaded online. The texts were closely examined for uniformity and representativeness of both the Nigerian folktales and folktales in general and on that basis a GSP catalogue for Nigerian folktales, [TT^{OR}]^{CA}^I²^{RS}^I²^[F]^(MR) was generated. The elements generated in the catalogue include: Title **TT**, Orientation **OR**, Conflicting Action **CA**, Resolution **RS**, Finis **F** and Moral **MR**. while **MR** is an optional element, the remaining elements are obligatory. The paper concludes that the elements of **GSP** catalogued here are typical of Nigerian folk narratives and suggests that the model could be applied to other forms of narratives that have not so far been studied.*

KEYWORDS: Corpus, Folktale Narrative, Generic Structure Potential, Nigerian Folktales, Representativeness

INTRODUCTION

Folktale is a form of folklore which includes myth, legend, proverb, aphorism, reminiscence, anecdote and joke. In general, folktales comprise various kinds of narrative prose literature found in the oral traditions of the world. They are heard, remembered and are subject to various alterations in the course of retelling (Kehinde, 2010). They have been given several definitions by scholars of different orientations. For instance, to Akporobaro (2001, p. 51), the folktale is a purely imaginative story that could have a basis in real life but intended essentially to entertain rather than to record history or social experience and are not believed to be true.

To Abrams (1981, p. 66), the folktale, is a short orally transmitted narrative of unknown authorship. Quinn (2006, p. 169) also maintains the folktale's orality as he describes it as an orally handed down story from generation to generation and has become a part of a people's tradition.

From the Nigerian context, folktales perform a host of functions which include: entertainment, keeping of records, inculcating and instructing younger generations in the society's philosophy, world-view, cosmology, sense of community, knowledge and skills required to handle problems and riddles in life and powers of rhetoric and repertoire. Speaking further of these functions, Akujobi (2009), reiterating Ogunjimi et al. (2004) states that the functions of folktales include the introduction of cultural practices to children and other accounts point the way to the customs, institutions, mores and beliefs of their community. These oral traditions help people to develop meaningful psychological traits, expose them to concepts of meta/physical phenomena, inculcate a sense of social organization and collective

responsibility, and serve as meaningful forms of intellectual engagement and a sense of belonging.

Due to the popularity of folktales in literary, cultural and anthropological studies, the forms and functions have been variously categorised. For instance, Hagan (1988, p.19) presents a comprehensive and critical list of the technical features of a folktale as he claims it has:

a literary convention expressed in the scheme of formal features: the introductory statements; the body of the tale interspersed with songs; the moral or etiological conclusion; the narrator-audience interaction; the use of language characterised chiefly by repetition and resort to ideophones; the role of songs to punctuate sections of the story and to advance the plot in some cases.

These features have been analysed from a literary perspective which give a little insight into the idea of genre in literary traditions. While so much has been done in this regard, only a few works in linguistics on the structural features of narratives and fairy tales exist. Among these are the works of Propp (1968), Lévi-Strauss (1967) and Hasan (1984). The present study is concerned with a linguistic exploration of some selected Nigerian folktales drawing on Systemic Functional Linguistics to investigate the discourse structure of the folktales with a consideration to the communicative purpose of their structural elements.

The study examined twenty purposively sampled Nigerian folktales from six online resources on folktales and African literature with the objective to generating GSP catalogue for Nigerian folktales.

Significance of the Study

Folktale as a genre has been viewed from different countries and cultures: Slovenian (Gradišnik, 2010), Thai (Patpong, 2013), Mali (Leguy, Dembele, Diarra, & Diarra, 2016) among others. This study is important as it help puts Nigerian folktales on the world map among studies that have been done in that aspect. At the same time, it will help showcase Nigerian rich folktale culture and help characterise the Nigerian folktales. This study will be of great importance to academics in general and those studying narrative, cultural studies and generic structure potential model, in particular.

Previous Studies

Many studies have been carried out on the structure of narratives. The earliest came from the field of *narratology* in the 1960s. Narratologists study the *internal structure of stories*, aiming to define their component parts, distinguish between their different categories, as well as make distinctions between narrative and non-narrative discourse. They also study and identify *different types* of story genres. Despite all they have done, there is a limitation to their work because of its focus on the abstract identification of universal elements of a narrative rather than on actual storytelling in everyday life (Brockmeier & Carbaugh, 2001). For instance, Frye (1957) produced a grammar of *narrative genres*, maintaining that four basic categories capture all the plot lines of literature (comedy, tragedy, romance and satire).

Propp and Lévi-Strauss are regarded as pioneering figures on narrative structure as their theories have cast great light on genre analysis of this particular genre type. Propp (1968)'s classic study of 100 Russian folktales is generally acknowledged to be one of the most important studies of the nature of narratives. Propp holds that there are 31 (and no more than

31) “functions” – all such stories have the same structure – and that the sequence of functions found in folktales and fairy tales is always identical. Lévi-Strauss (1967) offers “paradigmatic analysis” of texts to the study of stories and suggests that in contrast to a syntagmatic analysis which is concerned with what happens in a text, a paradigmatic analysis reveals what the text means to people.

Other studies follow suit in identifying features that define narrative. Bruner (1990, p. 272 cited in Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p.131), suggests five features: action, scene, actor, instrument and goal, plus trouble which is defined as “[S]ome kind of imbalance or conflict between the five elements [which] gives rise to the subsequent actions, events, and resolutions that make-up a coherent, bounded narrative”. Another study is that of Labov (1972) who takes research on oral narratives structure to another level. In his study of oral narratives conventional organization, he stresses: “A complete narrative begins with an orientation, proceeds to the complicating action, is suspended at the focus of evaluation before the resolution, concludes with the resolution, and returns the listener to the present time with the coda” (p. 369).

Of much relevance to the present study is Hasan (1984), which focuses on the generic structure of fairy tales with both regard to paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations of Propp (1968) and Lévi-Strauss (1967). She analysed some classic English fairy tales, and came up with her famous Generic Structural Potential that sees the structural elements of fairy tales as six, which are placement, initiating event, sequent event, final event, finale and moral. These will be elaborated upon under the theoretical framework.

Taken together, the various lists of narrative components share several features. First, narratives have a teller and a trajectory: they are expected to ‘go’ somewhere with a point and resolution. They have beginnings, middles and ends, and include the recounting of events that are displaced spatially and, crucially, *temporally*. For a stretch of talk or text to be categorised as a ‘narrative’, it has to incorporate basic structural features including a narrator, characters, settings, a plot, events that evolve over time, crises and resolutions. These features are central to our ability to characterise a stretch of discourse *as* narrative.

Theoretical Framework

This paper draws theoretical insights from the Generic Structure Potential model (henceforth, GSP) proposed by Michael Halliday and Ruquiya Hasan (cf. Halliday/Hasan 1985 and Hasan, 1996). The model is built on the assumption that Contextual Configuration (CC) – a specific set of the values that realises the field, tenor and mode, “permits statements about the texts structures” to be made (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p. 56). Contextual Configuration plays a pivotal role in the structural unity of texts and reveals the relationship between a text and its context. Specifically, a CC can predict the following about text structure:

1. Obligatory elements – What elements must occur?
2. Optional elements – What elements may occur?
3. Sequencing of elements – What arrangements of elements are obligatory and optional?
4. Iteration – How often may what elements occur?

Given a particular CC, Halliday & Hasan (1985) state that it is possible to express the total range of optional and obligatory elements and their order in such a way that we exhaust the

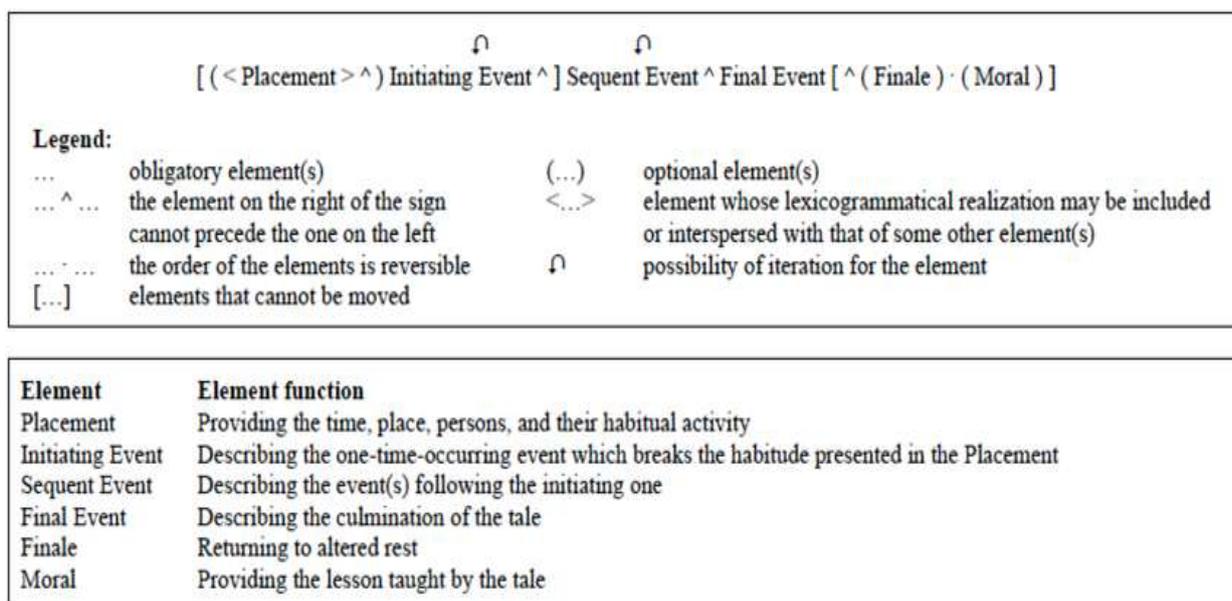


Figure 2: GSP model for fairy tales (Hasan, 1984, p. 54)

According to Hasan (1984), the GSP model for fairy tales includes six elements, namely, Placement, Initiating Event, Sequent Event, Final Event, Finale and Moral. While Initiating Event, Sequent Event and Final Event are obligatory elements and define the fairy tale genre, Placement, Finale and Moral are optional as their occurrence is not critical and essential. The current study, differs from the foregoing largely in terms of choice of data, examines some folktales from Nigeria.

DATA AND METHOD

The data for this study consist of twenty Nigerian folktales that were taken from six online materials on folktales and African literature: <http://eyemags.com/em/prev/story.jsp?s=9&id=14346&mwidth=320> (n.d.); Ogumefu, 2009 - <http://www.sacred-texts.com/afr/yl/yl20.htm>; Akinwale, 2011 - <http://clapg2011.blogspot.com.ng/2011/06/how-aaye-and-aigboran-became-enemies-by.html>; Oduntan, 2011 - <http://clapg2011.blogspot.com.ng/2011/04/>; Oladejo, 2011 - <http://clapg2011.blogspot.com.ng/2011/05/how-tortoises-shell-became-rough-by.html>; and Tutuola, 2014 - <https://destee.com/threads/nigerian-story-dont-pay-bad-for-bad.65967/>. The twenty folktales were purposively selected from the pool of about one hundred Nigerian folktales that cut across the southern and northern parts of Nigeria. The online edition of the Nigerian folktales was chosen as the genre covers diverse themes and subjects as well as "the uniformity of the folktale's form of presentation and above all availability of the folktales (Ewata, 2017, p. 41). The tales are subjected to the method of content analysis using the Halliday and Hasan's Generic Structure Potential (GSP). The schema below presents the GSP of the selected folktales.

$$[TT^{\cap}OR]^{\cap}CA^{\cap}1^{\cap}2^{\cap}RS^{\cap}1^{\cap}2^{\cap}[F]^{\cap}(MR)$$

Data Analysis and Findings

The elements that constitute the GSP of Nigerian folktales include: Title **TT**, Orientation **OR**, Conflicting Action **CA**, Resolution **RS**, Finis **F** and Moral **MR**. The round brackets in the catalogue above signifies optionality, which makes (**MR**) the only optional element discovered in the data. This is consistent with Hasan (1996). **TT**, **OR**, **CA**, **RS**, and **F** are obligatory elements that characterize Nigerian folktales. **CA** and **RS** are recursive and therefore have the curved arrow (↷) on them. In other words, in some of the texts examined, there are multiple instances of CA and RE, which are represented as: **CA1^CA2^RS2^RS3**. The square brackets are used to limit the mobility of elements within them as such [**TT^OR**] can only occur at the beginning of a folktale and nowhere. The same understanding applies to [**F**]. Finally, the caret sign (^) stands for sequence and relative fixity, that is, it indicates the progression of the narrative texts from the **TT** to the **MR**, on the one hand, and suggests that the elements preceding the caret can only occur there and not after the caret. The following is a detailed description of each element with excerpts from the texts to illustrate this.

Title (TT) refers to the title of the folktale which usually reflects the moral and at times the purpose of the story. Aside this, the title may also contain the name(s) of characters in the story. In the data, some titles are phrases while others are sentences.

Ex. 1: Don't pay bad for bad

The title in **Ex. 1** is a simple sentence and it occurs in the imperative mood. This imperative clause indicates the moral of the story. This is a common feature of **TT** in the Nigerian folktales. Since one of their functions is to teach morals, this is foregrounded most times in the **TT**.

Ex. 2: The Twin Brothers

This **TT** is a phrase and it simply contains the subjects or the main characters of the story who are twin brothers. This is another feature of the Nigerian folktale. This kind of title tells the reader or hearer the main characters that the story revolves around and from the beginning gives the audience a hint of the possible direction of the story.

Ex. 3: Rere, the Disobedient Son

Ex. 4: Akanke and the Jealous Pawnbroker

The examples above are quite different from 2, though they have the same syntactic structure. **Ex. 3** and **4** contain the names of the main characters of the story and provide the audience with some information about the character/attitudes of the main characters that are relevant to the plot of the story. For instance, in example 3, the audience gets the idea that the disobedient attitude of the main character, Rere, would lead to his downfall.

Ex. 5: How the tortoise's shell became rough

Like myth-making, folktales are also a means for providing non-scientific reasons/interpretations for certain physical/natural phenomena. Titles like **Ex. 5** are very common in Nigerian folktales and are found in stories about animals, creation of the world and how some sayings came to be used by a group of people. This type of title, most often, occurs with the adverbial particle 'how.' The foregoing clearly indicates that titles of folktales reflect the overall thematic preoccupations of the folklorists, the object lessons as well as the main

characters of the tale etc. Furthermore, the title naturally dove-tales into the orientation of the narrative and this is the next element in our GSP of Nigerian folktales.

Orientation (OR): this element indicates time, place, persons and the activity of the narrative: the *who*, *when*, *what*, and *where*. Orientation as espoused in this paper is informed by Labov and Waletzky's (1967) conceptualisation. According to them, the orientation introduces and identifies the participants in the action: the time, the place, and the initial behavior (Labov, 2010). This stage is typically presented by presenting reference and expressions of habitual action. The Orientation (**OR**) could be a sentence or a paragraph comprising five to fifteen sentences. Let us see some examples to buttress this:

Ex. 6:

Once upon a time, a feast was organized for birds in the sky. Tortoise persuaded birds that he would love to go with them. Birds refused to allow Tortoise go with them because Tortoise is not a bird and he is known to be very greedy and cunning too. After much appeal from Tortoise, Birds agreed to allow him go with them (Oladejo, 2011).

In the excerpt above, the **OR** identifies the *who*: tortoise and birds, the *when*: once upon a time, the *what*: a feast organised for birds, and the *where*: in the sky. The orientation sets the setting for the story in terms of subject matter, time of occurrence, characters involved and the place of occurrence. This is a typical orientation.

In the next example, the **OR** does not only provide the setting for the narrative it presents a non-conflictual/pre-conflictual state of affair:

Ex. 7:

Dola and Babi were good friends in their days. Both were young ladies, and they had loved each other heartily from when they were children. They always wore the same kind of dress, and they went together everywhere in their village, and to other villages as well. They did everything together, so much so that anyone who did not know their parents believed they were twins. So Dola and Babi went about together until when they grew to be the age for marriage. Because they loved each other so much, they decided within themselves to marry two men who were born of the same mother and father, and who lived together in the same house, so that they might be with each other always.

Luckily, a few days after Dola and Babi decided to do so, they heard of two young men who were born of the same mother and father, and who lived together in the same house. So Babi married one of the young men while Dola married the second one, who was older than the first one. So Dola and Babi were very happy now, living together as they had before they had been married in their husbands' house (Tutuola, 2014).

EX. 7 furnishes the reader with information on the names of the characters, their actions, decisions and of their village and some other villages they had been, which are not definite. In the **OR**, Dola and Babi are bosom friends, who are very fond of each other. In order to remain friends they decide to marry men who are brothers and live together. They are able to achieve this and are very happy. This peaceful, non-conflictual, amicable existence is typical of **ORs** in the data. The harmonious atmosphere is usually upset by conflict, which the next element of the GSP.

Conflicting Action (CA): this part of the folktale tells the audience what actually happened that makes the story worth telling. It deals with opposition, tension or disagreement among the characters of the story. This is actually the crux of most stories. In fact, there will be no point for telling stories if there is no conflict. This element is an obligatory element found in most Nigerian folktales. It occurs in variations and is recursive. In many of these folktales, conflicting actions tend to be multiple and we also found that a resolution of a conflicting action can lead to another conflicting action that will also result into another conflicting action before the end of a story. They occur in simple sentences and the CA could also take a whole paragraph. Examples are provided below.

Ex. 8:

A few days after their marriage, Dola cleared a part of the front of the house very neatly. She sowed one kola-nut on the spot. After some weeks the kola-nut shot up...After some months, the kola-nut tree grew to the height of about one metre. But now the domestic animals of the village began to eat the leaves of the tree and this hindered its growth... When Babi noticed that the animals of the village had eaten nearly all the leaves of the tree, she went back to her room. She took the top part of her large water pot, the bottom of which had broken away. She gave it to Dola, and she told her to shield her kola-nut tree with it so that the animals wouldn't be able to eat its leaves again. Dola took the large pot from her and thanked her fervently. Then she shielded her tree with it, and as from that morning the animals were unable to eat the leaves of the tree. And so it was growing steadily in the centre of the large pot. A few years later, the tree yielded the first kola-nuts. The first kola-nuts that the tree yielded were of the best quality in the village, and because the nuts were the best quality, the kola-nut buyers hastily bought all the nuts, paying a considerable amount of money. Similarly, when the tree yielded the second and third kola-nuts, the buyers bought them with large amounts of money as before. In selling the kola-nuts, Dola became a wealthy woman within a short period. Having seen this, Babi became jealous of Dola's wealth. Jealously, Babi demanded back the water pot... 'You must not break it or split the head of my water pot before you return it to me!' Babi shouted angrily. 'I say it cannot be taken away from the tree without breaking it or cutting the tree down,' Dola explained angrily. Babi boomed on Dola: 'Yes, you may cut your tree down if you wish to do so. But all I want from you is my water pot!' Dola reminded Babi with a calm voice, 'Please, Babi, I remind you now that both of us started our friendship when we were children. Because of that, don't try to take your water pot back at his time.' 'Yes, of course, I don't forget at any time that we are friends. But at all costs, I want the water pot now,' Babi insisted with a great noise (Tutuola, 2014).

This rather long excerpt is an instance of CA. In the example above, the CA takes several paragraphs and we see that it comprises not just one action, but series of actions. While the point of conflict is actually when Babi requested for her pot, the CA starts with the various things that Dola did that made Babi come to her rescue, which later generated the latter's jealousy. Here, we can rightly say that folktales do not just comprise conflict, but conflicting actions. The actions that lead to the point of conflict and the ensuing happenings after the point of conflict are all taken as conflicting action(s). This element makes such folktales believable, realistic and persistent in the people's common narrative culture.

Ex. 9: Yet Rere rejected his father's advice. He insisted he would go and hunt in the bush and jungle instead. So Oluwu left him to himself (Tutuola, 2014).

There are three sentences in the example above and we can see that the conflicting action stated is quite different in structure from the first example given on CA. Here, we see the CA emanating from the character's own attitude of disobedience, while for the first example; it was not the fault of Dola. In many Nigerian folktales, we have this kind of conflicting action. In this tale, Rere's attitude of disobedience was so much that his father's efforts to get him to change his mind became futile and so the man got tired and left him. This confirms a saying among Yoruba people about disobedient children: "omo mapami, tobaya adi omo mapara re" (don't kill me child, soon enough it becomes don't kill yourself child).

Ex.10:

One day, one of the closest friends to *Aigboran* was playing *aayo olopon* among other groups of men as *Aaye* was passing with her calabash of beans, he called "*Aaye, ewa re nda mi loran...wa ta ewa fun mi, ewa re ni mo f'era, se wa taa fun mi?* (Aaye, your beauty is dazzles me, don't sell beans for me, it's your beauty I want to buy, will you sell it to me? Other men in the group joined in the jest and refused to pay *Aaye*, everyone insisted that such beauty was not meant for one man but the woman just carried her calabash and left in tears. The rumour of what transpired between the men and his wife got to *Aigboran*. Then he decided to be more watchful. He consulted an herbalist and asked him to put "*magun*" (thunderbolt) on his wife. The herbalist advised him against such wicked acts, but he refused. *Aigboran* went ahead to *Orunmila*. *Orunmila* said he could never assist *Aigboran* in such bad acts, *Orunmila* however consulted *Ifa* and ensured *Aigboran* that his wife was not having any extra-marital affair. *Aigboran* did not believe *Orunmila*; he wanted to be very sure nobody in the village was sleeping with his wife. All the warnings of *Orunmila* fell on the deaf ears of *Aigboran*. He went to *Esu*, who gave him a solution to his problem. *Esu* taught *Aigboran* how to remove his eyes and pasted it on the calabash of *Aaye* whenever she was going to sell beans. That was how *Aigboran* made sure his eyes went with his wife whenever she was not in the house. When she returns, he would remove his eyes from the calabash and put it in his eye balls again. That meant that *Aigboran* would be blind until his wife return from her trading.

One fateful day, *Aaye* sold her beans together with the calabash to a man who wanted to do a ritual. She was glad to sell because the man gave her a huge sum of money. She got home and started counting her money when her husband asked from inside the room. "*Aaye mi, ni bo ni igba ewa re wa? Mo n wa oju mi o?* (Aaye dear, where is your calabash of beans, am searching for my eyes?)" *Aaye* gladly and innocently informed the husband that she had sold the calabash together with her beans for large sum. *Aigboran* screamed on top of his voice and started weeping profusely. He narrated to his wife how he used to remove his eyes to monitor *Aaye* whenever she was going out to sell (Akinwale, 2011).

In this example, we see how one CA leads to another without a break in the plot of the story. This is an example of a recursive CA. Here, we see a conflicting action caused by third parties affecting the two main characters and resulting in another conflicting action coming from one of the main characters, *Aigboran*, against his wife who he did not trust. This made him to commit another conflicting action of putting his eyes on his wife's calabash of beans. As a consequence of his wrong action, his wife unknowingly committed another conflicting action that led to his loss of eyes and abandonment by his wife. This kind of CA is very common to Nigerian folktales.

RESOLUTION (RS): this is a point where the conflict created by the conflicting action(s) in a story is resolved. This is an obligatory element in most Nigerian folktales and is also recursive. The resolution of the plot of a story could range from a sentence to a whole paragraph or more. Here are examples.

Ex. 11: To settle this point they decided to cast stones, and the one who made the longer throw should claim the throne, and afterwards send for his brother to share in his splendour (Ogumefu, 2009)).

This is a type of resolution that leads to another conflict as this occurs as the first resolution to the first conflicting action that occurs in the story. In the story, a conflict is caused by the death of the king who is the father of the twin brothers who are the main characters. His death has resulted in an empty stool and to be able to resolve it, the main characters would have to compete. The decision to compete makes the first resolution in the story, which still results in another conflicting action. This is very common to many Nigerian folktales of this nature.

Ex. 12:

As soon as he had given Tortoise a seat, he started to serve him and flatter him continuously. And as Tortoise was greedy in everything, he drank so much that he became unconscious within a few minutes. As soon as he fell down from the seat and fell asleep, Oluwo went and loosened the leather of the drum and then pulled out his son, Rere, who was nearly suffocated by the heat. Then Oluwo sealed the drum back with the same leather that he had removed from it. He did the seal so carefully that the drum seemed as if its leather had not been removed at all. Then he replaced the drum behind Tortoise. Then he rushed his son, Rere, to an open place where there was fresh air to breathe in. All Oluwo's guests had gone away before Tortoise woke up in the mid-night. As soon as Tortoise, the Jungle Drummer, lifted up his drum and felt that it was lighter than when Rere was inside it, he knew that Rere had come out of it. 'Who has tampered with my drum?' Tortoise started to shout angrily. But when Rere's father heard the noise, he beat Tortoise with a club mercilessly, and then drove him away from the house (Tutuola, 2014).

This is another type of resolution in which the character that is in harm's way is rescued and the character involved in committing the bad act against the hero punished. It is a kind of resolution that we can call a final resolution as it resolves the overall conflict of the story. It is a common type of resolution in many Nigerian folktales.

Ex. 13:

Then as the chief closed his eyes with grief, he gave the order to the swordsman to behead Babi's daughter. But, just as the swordsman raised his sword up to cut the head off, Dola hastily stopped him by pulling his arm down, and then she announced loudly, 'It will be a great pity if this daughter of mine is killed, because she has not offended me. No! It was her jealous mother (Tutuola, 2014).

This is another type of final resolution to an overall conflict of a story that answers the question 'what now happens after all these recursive conflicts and resolution?' This is just like the one above but it does not mete out punishment against the bad person, but rather stops the process. This is also a common type of resolution in many Nigerian folktales, especially the ones that involve seeking revenge.

Ex. 14:

A good Samaritan helped Aigboran to Orunmila's house but Orunmila told Aigboran in simple terms: *Ti aba ri Aaye, o leri oju re o". Airi oju re, lowo Aaye lowa"* (if we cannot find Aaye, you can never get your eyes. You can't get your eyes, because it's in the power of Aaye) (Akinwale, 2011).

The example above is a kind of resolution in which the character who is at fault in the story does not get solution to the problem he has caused for himself/herself. In this instance, Aigboran's blindness cannot be cured because the only way out is for him to find his wife Aaye and since the latter cannot be found, he will have to live with his blindness. This is another kind of resolution that is common to many Nigerian folktales. While Aigboran here goes with blindness, in other stories, it is either death or loss of fortune or some other types of scar that will teach others people lessons of not indulging in bad acts.

FINIS (F): this element signifies that the story has come to a close and states, at times, the final state or condition or what eventually happens to a character or characters after the conflict in the story has been resolved. This section in this type of narrative text can be optional, as many stories may just end with the resolution. It can also be abrupt and elaborate. The examples below serve to illustrate these points.

Ex. 15: Of course, Aigboran remained blind till death because Aaye could not be found in the village or anywhere around (Akinwale, 2011).

This is a type of FINIS that is abrupt and short. In the plot of the story, one expects to still see some actions being performed by the characters, but the narrator cuts off the flow by giving us the final state of Aigboran and also providing his own evaluation, which comes before and after the end of the story. This kind of ending is common in many Nigerian folktales, especially the ones that have to do with the origin of a people, of some sayings, names or actions.

Ex. 17:

After this, a signal was sent to tortoise to jump down. Tortoise jumped, landed on the sharp objects, sustained serious injury and had his shell broken in the process. The injury left his shell with scars till today (Oladejo, 2011).

The example above is an instance of FINIS that involves the last actions taken by the hero of the story, whether the ones that land him/her/it in trouble or fortune. It is also a common type of ending for many Nigerian folktales, whether the ones that involve animals or human beings. This can be seen in the examples below which have to do with human characters.

Ex. 18:

The chief and the rest of the people clapped and shouted loudly with happiness when they heard this announcement from Dola. Then everyone went back to his or her house. And Dola and Babi were still good friends throughout the rest of their lives (Tutuola, 2014).

Ex. 19: Thus the jealous pawnbroker lost both her son and money as a result of her greediness and jealousy (<http://eyemags.com/em/prev/story.jsp?s=9&id=14346&mwidth=320>).

Ex. 20:

After Rere had become conscious and had eaten, his father asked, 'Rere, will you go and hunt in the jungle again?' 'Never shall I go and hunt in any jungle any more, not until I am old enough!' Rere replied with regret. 'Never shall I go and hunt in any jungle any more, not until I am old enough!' Rere replied with regret (Tutuola, 2014).

Ex. 21: On getting to Orunmila, he told them that the earth is the oldest. He said that it was after the earth was created that every other thing began to come to be. He added that at the end of time, it is the land that will consume everything (Oduntan, 2011).

In the examples above, example 18 is an instance of FINIS that does not just provide us with what happens to the character/characters eventually, but also provides an evaluation of the character's actions and we see that the moral of the story has been embedded here. This is also a type of ending or FINIS that we can find in many Nigerian folktales. The intrusion of the narrator in the plot to provide an evaluation is an element that shows the nature of folktales as stories that are told or supposed to be told: orality. In example 19, we see the story ending with a dialogue between Rere and his father and Rere's final decision to be an obedient child after showing so much penitence. This is another type of FINIS for many Nigerian folktales, especially the ones that involve a character flaw in the life and actions of the hero. The hero suffers because of his/her actions and character and later makes up his/her mind to be good after so much regret. Finally, example 20 is a type of FINIS that involves a kind of subtle resolution to the issue at stake (conflict) in the plot of the story. This kind of ending is typical of many Nigerian folktales that have to do with historical origins of communities, the world and even sayings and proverbs of a particular set of people.

Moral (MR): this element has to do with a conclusion about how to behave drawn from the folktales. It could be a sentence or more but it usually comes as the final part of a story even after the FINIS and it is meant to give advice, and to teach good values drawn from the theme(s) of the story. This could be optional, implicit and explicit and we found that it is not necessary for it to occur at the end of a story as it could occur in the middle of a story. We also found that the moral of a story could be in layers. Another fact about the moral section of folktales is that it serves as the narrator's comment or evaluation of the theme(s) of a story.

Ex.22: The moral of the story... do not cast your pearls before swine, an animal will always be an animal.

This is an example of moral that comes immediately after the end of the story and it states explicitly the lesson the audience should learn from the story. This is a very common kind of moral in many Nigerian folktales. These kinds of tales are told to children in order to inculcate in them good character and the values of the community in which they are members.

Ex. 23:

And in the judgement, the chief added that the head of Babi's daughter would be cut off on the assembly ground which was in front of his palace, and, also in the presence of

all the people of the village, so that everyone might learn that jealousy was bad (Tutuola, 2014).

This is another type of moral ~~and it can be~~ found in a few Nigerian folktales unlike the first type. Here, the moral is not stated by the narrator but by a character in the story. Another thing about this section is that it occurs in the plot of the story immediately after the resolution of a conflicting action. We also discovered that this kind of moral is found in stories in which there are more than one moral lessons to be learnt by the audience. For instance, this particular story states another moral that is also given by a character in the story. We have this below.

Ex. 24:

'And I believe, if we continue to pay "bad" for "bad", bad will never finish on earth. Therefore, I forgive Babi all that she has done to my kola-nut tree of which she was jealous!' (Tutuola, 2014).

In this example, we see that the overall theme of the story is reinstated in the moral section. This proves that there can be layers of moral lessons to be learnt from a story and that the moral does not necessarily have to be said by the narrator.

Ex. 25: Thus the jealous pawnbroker lost both her son and money as a result of her greediness and jealousy (<http://eyemags.com/em/prev/story.jsp?s=9&id=14346&mwidth=320>).

In the example above, the moral is stated implicitly as part of the FINIS. This is another way of stating the moral of a story, in many Nigerian folktales.

Implications of the Study

Folktales are drawn from the basic simple human existence and to understand them, we need to look at them from the basic human life and not from the more complex products of literary and oral traditions, according to Labov and Waletzky (1967). The implication of this is that this study takes a look at the basic form of storytelling in the Nigerian culture without the subtlety of literary tradition to examine the human society and interaction form.

In addition, sociologists and psychologists have stress the combination of the environment and the psychological factor on the human being which they classify as the psychosocial factor. Narratives from other cultures of the world have helped in throwing light on this. The implication of this is that humanity is one as the narrative technique used to argue this which exists in the other cultures is also present in the Nigerian context.

Another implication of this study is that Nigerian cultural view portrayed through the language which is exhibited through the narratives is apt to portray the people's worldviews and beliefs and are not inadequate in anyway. The fact the folktales in Nigeria have a structure that can be determined and is not an assortment of different unorganised things means that every language in the world is used to perform basically the same function.

More so, the study help argue the anthropologists assertion that storytelling entails negotiated symbiotic exchange between tellers and listeners and that this negotiation is mastered from infancy. The implication of this is that humans do not only interact in the society but that there is always a negotiated interplay of things in the society.

CONCLUSION

The study examines the GSP of Nigerian folktales, and argues that the elements of the GSP model work together to achieve the social/communicative purpose of the discourse, which is to narrate stories that are meant to entertain, teach moral lessons and provide historical reasons and origins for the reality of today's Nigerian society. In the literature, genre categorization is determined by the communicative purpose of the discourse. Since folktales are meant to narrate past events, occurrences and experiences of a people or community, it belongs to the narrative genre. For example, the ideal textual organisation of any folktale has to have **OR**, **CA** and **RS** as obligatory elements to be regarded as folk narrative. One thing to note about this is that folktales share these obligatory elements with many other narrative genres and that is why we can call them stories. Finally, the model generated proves to have high educational and pedagogical value, as it can enable the audience of this type of narrative genre to learn the basic features of this type of narrative and be able to differentiate it from other types they are exposed to at some other time. Future research could apply this model to other forms of narrative discourses such as stories in jokes and riddles, Christian oral testimonies and newspaper and television news on events etc. to further test its validity.

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