

Folktale from England to Toraja

Waode Surya¹, Fathu Rahman² & Mustafa Makka³

¹Post Graduate Students of ELS, Faculty of Cultural Science, Hasanuddin University

^{2,3}Teaching staff of ELS, Faculty of Cultural Science, Hasanuddin University

Abstract: Every country has its own folktale which is very significant in linking past generation to the present. This research aimed to answer several different opinions that have been developed about the similarities between well known folktale and local folktale. The researcher had picked up English folktale and Torajanese folktale to outline the form of actantial structure and functional model in these folktales. The researcher used Greimas structural narratology approach and descriptive method. This research is a descriptive qualitative research. In the analysis, the actant structure and functional model in these folktales had been analyzed through the actions of the characters in the story to figure out the similarity of English and Torajanese folktales. The research results showed that there are similarities between two folktales which are from different cultural and geographical background in particularly in plot, character, and event. Therefore, it proves that folktales from across the globe bring universal values, particularly the moral aspects.

Keywords: structure of events, English, Torajanese, moral aspects, actantial structure, functional model, folktales

1. Introduction

In folklore, folktales are mutual borrowings of humanity adapted to local contexts. They are the means of passing on stories of humanity as well as the means of passing on people's experience and knowledge about nature, traditions, and beliefs across borders to convey universal themes particularly the moral aspects. Folktales are important in establishing social and cultural unity while also uniting humanity under universally accepted norms of truth, peace, democracy, equality, and beauty. Folktales create awareness in the listener about their native cultural heritage while also teaching them to learn appreciate and tolerate other cultures and people.

According to Thompson, all cultures in the world have their folktales [1]. There is no known culture in the world where there is no folktale because folktales are found everywhere. Those folktales that are spread

across many countries are unique. Some of the folktales have similarities in every country.

Unlike the other narratives, folktales are easily transmissible. Rahman states that as part of oral tradition, folktale has been the main media for societal and cultural communication. The practice of oral traditions has long been a convention, and that convention is a cultural absolute [2]. Burne pinpoints that people who do not assimilate each others' customs may assimilate each others' tales leading to similar tales being found in two different countries which differ in their natural settings [3]. In the tales of foreign origin, one finds various unfamiliar object and incidents. On the other hand the folktales found in a specific tradition include descriptions of familiar natural settings.

England and Indonesia enjoy folktales which reflect the people's culture, values, and beliefs. The influences of these folktales are still alive today through written text. Jacobs was prolific in collecting stories, improving recording and publishing technologies, a notable collector and publisher of English Folklore.

In 1890, with *English Fairy Tales*, he began a series of book which was to include *Celtic Fairy Tales (1892)*, *Indian Fairy Tales (1892)*, *More English Fairy Tales (1893)*, and *More Celtic Fairy Tales (1894)*. Jacobs was honorary secretary of the International Folklore Council and editor of *Folklore Magazine*. His work appealed to all ages; as Zangwill said his 'books delighted equally the nursery and the drawing room as mentioned in Stokes [4].

English Fairy Tales and More English Fairy Tales became the foremost collection from the golden age of folktale collecting, and they have been both criticized and celebrated for the way Jacobs preserved the classic corpus of traditional English folktales. This volume provides readers with a new resource for understanding the development of the classic fairy tale in late Victorian England and for reassessing the relationship of Jacobs's canonical tales to the traditional English folktales that they sought to preserve [5]. Moreover, all errors affecting

the meaning and other errors affecting the sense of sentences have been corrected in both collections. Jacob provides 87 texts that he intended to initiate a recovery of traditional English storytelling and to present his readers with the core of the English folktale offered as the next

As in England, Indonesia has folktales known as *dongeng* reflecting the diverse cultures and ethnic groups of Indonesia. Many ethnic groups have passed on their collection of tales and folklores from generation to generation. The Toraja ethnic group has rich folktales known as *ulelean pare* or *puama*. The Torajanese parents use, *puama* or *ulelean pare* as media to educate their children. Besides, *ulelean pare* has significant roles for Torajanese in identifying their ancestors, knowing and understanding their cultures and histories, learning past lessons, and entertaining.

Furthermore, *ulelean pare* is the communication tool from generations to other generations, between parents and children, grandchildren and grandparents and vice versa. According to Hutabarat, as cited in Lebang, there are approximately hundreds of stories retold in Torajanese society, many of them which have almost disappeared due to the modern era [6]. Those issues prompted Lebang to collect and rewrite the stories in his book *Ulelean Parena Toraya* that consists of 52 stories.

Both Jacobs and Lebang recorded oral stories spoken by story tellers. There are many similarities found by the researcher after reading their books particularly in themes, plot, and characters. These similarities can be found in English folktale *Binnorie* and Torajanese folktale *Datukalindidi' sola Pudukbalengkare*. Those stories describe two siblings who are jealous each other.

Comparing the structural elements of these stories from differing cultures is very challenging. Although these stories bring different ideas, culture, environment, and beliefs, they also share universal aspects. Lee & Stevenson mentions that in an urban area in China, children share some common values with American children [7]. Therefore, the researcher proposes to study the moral aspects found in English folktales that represents Western values Torajanese that represent Asian values by using structural analysis of folktales. The researcher has not found any studies that have compared English folktales and folktales from Toraja.

The researcher will attempt to analyze folktales by using Greimas actantial model. During the sixties, Greimas proposed the actantial model, based on Propp's theories [8] [9]. This model is a device that can theoretically be used to analyze any real or

thematized action. The actantial model, allows the researcher to break an action down into six facets, or actants which are: subject, object, the sender, the receiver, a helper, and an opponent. Furthermore, Greimas also introduced the functional model in which a story's narrative depends on the actants. The functional model consists of beginning situation, transformation (qualifying test, Main test, disequilibrium, glorifying test) and denouement.

Thus, the researcher has to look at the whole story first, to be able to better grasp all that is involved in the actantial structure. With this purpose in mind, the first subchapter attempts to offer a general overview of Greimas and his theory.

The researcher will focus on finding the similarities in selected folktales of Jacobs's book, *English Fairy Tales and More English Fairy Tales* and Lebang's books, *Ulelean Parena Toraya*. Therefore, the researcher is challenged to take the subject matter of this thesis under the title **Folktales from England to Toraja**.

2. Objectives of the Study

To reveal the actantial structure and the functional model that illustrates the common similarities of these two works.

3. Method

The researcher used descriptive qualitative method in conducting this research..

4. Source of Data

The data of this research are derived from Jacob's book, *English fairy tales* being the Two Collections of *English Fairy Tales & More English Fairy Tales* and *Ulelean Parena Toraya* by Bunga Junus Lebang. The writer will select each story from two books that have similarity especially in their intrinsic elements. The samples are *Binnorie* which are from Joseph Jacobs's English folktales and *Datukalindidi' sola Pudukbalengkare* are taken from Junus Bunga's book.

5. Data Analysis

The researcher used some techniques of analyzing data as follows:

1. Close reading through English folktale *Binnorie* and Torajanese folktale *Datukalindi' sola Pudukbalengkare*. It will help the researcher to comprehend deeply and identify the actantial structure and functional model.
2. The researcher determined the actantial structure by analyzing the intrinsic elements such as event

or plot and characters on both the English folktale *Binnorie* and Torajanese folktale *Datukalindi' sola Pudukbalengkare* from several points of views.

3. Then, the researcher will construct the functional model by analyzing the stories' movement based on the actantial structures.
4. The researcher will compare the actantial structure and functional model between the English folktale *Binnorie* and Torajanese folktale *Datukalindi' sola Pudukbalengkare*.

6. Result and Discussion

The events in *Binnorie*

After reading *Binnorie*, the researcher finds some events that happen in it. The events are shown in *Binnorie* are divided into three stages, they are the early stage, the middle stage, and the final stage.

The early stage begins with the event when the narrator opened and introduced the characters. Furthermore, he also reveals the setting near the bonny mill – dams of *Binnorie*

“But after a time he looked upon the youngest, with her cherry cheeks and golden hair, and his love grew towards her till he cared no longer for the eldest one” (Jacob, 2002 : 43)

The middle stage is the core story marked by various conflicts. This happened when the eldest one hated her sister for taking away Sir William's love and day by day her hate grew upon her. Therefore, the eldest planned to kill her.

“One day the eldest invite her sister to see the father boat come in at the bony mill – stream of *Binnorie*. Then, they went there hand in hand. When they got to that place, the youngest got upon stone to watch for the coming of the boats. And her sister, coming behind her, caught her round the waist and dashed her into the rushing mill – stream of *Binnorie*” (Jacob, 2002 : 43)

The Final stage shows when the famous harper went to the castle. While he was preparing to play the harp, suddenly the harp is singing by itself. It was amazed all the castle member. This harp was starting to tell the truth that the eldest had killed her youngest sister.

“Then, they all wondered, and the harper told them how he had seen the Princess lying drowned on the bank near the bonny mill – dams o' *Binnorie*, and how he had afterwards made this harp of her hair and breastbone....” (Jacob, 2002: 44)

(Jacob, 2002: 44)

“And there sits my sister who drowned me by the bonny mill – dams o' *Binnorie*”

(Jacob, 2002 : 44)

The events in *Datukalindidi' sola Pudukbalengkare*

The story of *Datukalindidi' sola Pudukbalengkare* consist of three stages, the early, middle, and the final stage.

The narrator opens the story by showing the characters that consists of the rich and young man, and two daughters. Moreover, he also introduced where the setting takes place.

“One day there was rich and handsome young boy who is from rich family walk through the forest. He reached a house where there were two siblings stay there. They are *Datukalindidi'* who has a white skin, beautiful soul, and looks. The other, was *Pudukbalengkare*, who has dark skin and bad behavior” (Lebang, 2010 :169)

After meeting, this young man felt in love to *Datukalindidi'*. He intends to propose her. When this news spread to *Pudukbalengkare*, she tried to find the opportunity in order to get rid of her sister.

The middle stage is the core of the story. It is marked various conflicts. It can be seen when the *Pudukbalengkare* threw her the rest of pot dishes water so that all her body turns black.

“Then, *Pudukbalengkare* come into the house where in the same time *Datukalindidi'* went down to find her needle. When she was looking for her needle, *Pudukbalengkare* threw the rest of water toward her so that *Datukalindidi'* s skin turn dark” (Lebang, 2010 : 169)

The final stage of this story arise when *Datukalindidi'* went to the well. When arriving there, she was instructed by the crow to follow his instructions in order to let the dark skin disappear.

“No...no... come in to the well and then do worship three times to the Northern and three times to the Southern as well.”

The rich and young man was amazed because he just realized that the lady who is in front of her is *Datukalindidi'*. He brought her to his house and married her. Then, *Pudukbalengkare* was killed and her body turns to *cendawa* which is kind of sweet potato leaves that cooked in the black pot for feeding the pig.

The form of actantial structure and functional model of *Binnorie* and *Datukalindidi' sola Pudukbalengkare*

The first is the form of actant and functional model in *Binnorie*. The form of actant shows that Sir William and the famous harper as the subject. The form of actant and functional model in *Datukalindidi' sola Pudukbalengkare* shows that the young man and *datukalindidi'* as the subject in the story. The entire subject is assigned by the sender to obtain the desired object.

This research shows that in the story of *Binnorie*, the desire of Sir William (sender) to marry the youngest (object) because her cherry cheek and golden hair (helper) that send himself (receiver) to

the castle where the youngest stay. Unfortunately, the eldest (opponent) does not like this news. She hates her sister for snatching away Sir William's love. Her hate to her youngest sister grows upon her. She plots and plans to get rid of her. When the famous harper (receiver) could not forget the beauty of the youngest (sender), he goes back to the place where the first time he finds this beauty woman. Regrettably, he only finds her bones and her golden hair. Then, with his desire (helper) he makes a harp out of her breast – bone and her hair. After arriving in the castle, the harp is playing by him and tells the truth about what happen to the youngest.

Based on the structure of actant, it can be outlined the functional form of this story. The beginning situation starts when Sir William came to propose the eldest king's daughter. Unfortunately, he falls in love to the youngest. Qualifying test (Force1st) stage starts when Sir William did not care longer for the eldest anymore. Therefore, the eldest hated her sister for taking away her lover, Sir William. Main test (disequilibrium) is signed when the eldest plotted and planned how to get rid of her. She invited her sister to go to their father's boat. She came behind her youngest sister and dashed her into the rushing mill – stream of Binnorie. Then, glorifying test happens when the famous harper found the youngest body. He decided to make a harp from her breast bone and her hair. He travelled the mill – dam of Binnorie, till he came to the castle of the king her father. When the harp began to sing by itself and mention that her oldest sister had killed her, it is the ending situation (equilibrium).

In the story of *Datukalindidi' and Pudukbalingkare*, the curiosity of the rich young man (sender) brings him (receiver) (subject) come to the house (object) of two siblings, *Pudukbalingkare* and *Datukalindidi'* for resting . Coming from the rich family (helper) make him easier to go adventuring without any struggling (no opponent). The willingness to marry *Datukalindidi'* (sender) make him (receiver) sending his family representative (subject) to propose *Datukalindidi'*. Unfortunately, *Pudukbalingkare* (opponent) dislike this news. She plans to remove her sister from The Young Man. The helping of *craw* (helper) saves *Datukalindidi'* from her sister planning.

It can be outlined the functional form of this story according to the actantial structure above. The beginning is marked when the rich and young man come to the house of these siblings and falls in love to one of them, *Datukalindidi'* which has both beautiful face and personality which is different from her sister, *Pudukbalingkare*.

Qualifying test (force 1st) stage starts when the young man sends his family relative to propose *Datukalindidi'*. This situation forces *Pudukbalingkare*

to find the ways to cancel the wedding. Main test (disequilibrium) is signed when *Pudukbalingkare* took the rest of pot dishes water and spill to her sister. Therefore, her sister turned to dark skin. Then, glorifying test happens when the *craw* instructs *Datukalindidi'* to do worship three times to the northern and in the southern. Therefore, the black spot in her face will disappear. The prince suddenly amazed because she just realized that the lady who in front of her is *Datukalindidi'*. He brought her to his house and marries her. Apparently, *Pudukbalingkare* is a cheater. She is imprisoned and her body stubbed until dying. When she was buried, her body turns to *cendawan* which is pig's food. This food boiled in the pot. There is voice sounds that *I am Pudukbalingkare, I am cooked for Pig's food*" it is the ending situation (equilibrium).

7. Conclusion

After analyzing the data and comes up into conclusion that understanding folktales are important in establishing social and cultural unity while also uniting humanity under universally accepted norms of truth, peace, democracy, equality, and beauty. The folktales of *Binnorie* and *Datukalindidi' sola Pudu' balingkare* had shown it. Two folktales from different countries, cultures, and languages have similarities in their actantial structure and functional form. Both of the stories convey Sir William in *Binnorie* and the Young man in *Datukalindidi' sola Pudukbalingkare* are standing in the same position in actantial structure as subject. Moreover, these stories shows the readers that both of these culture show that there always jealousy in relationship. The person who does cheating will be given punishment by the society.

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