



The Impact of Storytelling on Shaping the Young Generation's Concept

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ABSTRACT :

This paper explores the utilitarian values of the Sudanese folktales on rearing the children and fixing their identity. Moreover, it investigates the role of the storyteller in attracting the audience to be attentive listener for the folktales. Although the modern life with its crowded programs of the children in multi-media drive away the children from inheriting arts which are colonized by other programmed project. This paper finds out the substitution of the children's program due to the modernity of the life after investigating the vanishing sounds of the storyteller in the modern life putting the modern media in account. The problem of this study investigates the qualities of the storytellers, the characters, language, and the thematic aspects of a selection of folktales; and to what extent influence on children identity. This study aims to find out the effect of the folktales on the audience (children) in various aspects. It limits itself in four Sudanese folktales, two from the Western Sudan and two from Northern Sudan. two has been taken from Abdalla Eltybe book (Sudanese Folktales), and other tow have been taken from real storyteller. It is intended to form link with the oral narrating traditions and the identity and find out the influence of the geographical location on the language and tradition of the people on their folktales. The study has followed the descriptive and analytic methodology for analyzing the data of the study (folktales) in addition the narrative approach is used. The study has reached the following points:

- 1- Maternal community is intensively involved in the folktales meanwhile the real community is paternal society.
- 2- Folktale represents fertile ground for children to deal with literature later.
- 3- Folktale enlarges the imagination of the children.
- 4- Folktale enhances the social values implicitly and influence on the children indirectly.

This study recommends that the government should adopt the folktales and dramatize them in order to compete the means of programme that means television should replace the place of the storyteller.

Key words: *folktale , oral literature (orality), storyteller*

المستخلص :

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى معرفة اثر الحكاية الشعبية (الاحاجي) في تشكيل الطفل اجتماعيا و قيميا، و الى اى مدى يمكنها ان تلعب دورا في ترسيخ مفهوم الهوية. تناولت الدراسة الحكاية السودانية نموزجا لمعرفة آثار الادب الشعبي على المتلقى (الاطفال) و كذلك تناولت الدراسة دور الراوى فى حضور المتلقى ذهنيا عن طريق اجادة ملكت السرد فى تحريك خياله و فى خلق بيئة جاذبة للاطفال. كما ساهمت الدراسة بالتحرى عن اسباب غياب صوت الراوى فى الوقت الراهن وعلاقة ذلك بظهور الوسائل التقنية الحديثة. لقد تناولت الدراسة اربع حكايات سودانية أموزجا. اثنان من الشمال اثنان من الغرب لكى يتسنى لها استصحاب تباين السحنات الجغرافية لاثار التشكيلى على المتلقى (الاطفال). هذا ولقد اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفى التحليلى فى التعامل معالحكاية السودانية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : *الادب الشفاهية (شفاهية) ، الاحجية ، الراوى*



INTRODUCTION :

The values and traditions in society represent a backbone of oral traditions (oral literature): myth, legend, proverb, aphorism, anecdote and joke. In the main, folktales comprise various kinds of narrative prose literature found in the oral traditions of the world. Due to the researcher's observation Sudanese folktales extremely contribute in forming children's orientation. Moreover, the folktales link between the imaginary life and the real one. This is in addition to other factors which participate in revealing the love of folktales. They can be summarized in: nice atmosphere of the folktales, the amazing gift of the storyteller (which plays an essential role in visualizing the characters and settings of the folktales in the children's minds) as it is mentioned by Sosyal Bilimler (2008: 24), and the attractive characters of the folktales as heroes. All these factors work together in forming children's personalities. Narrative form can be loosely defined as a sequence of events, experiences, or actions with a plot that ties together different parts into a meaningful whole as is mentioned by (Czarniawska 1998; Franzosi 1998). Through the events the narrative includes, excludes, and emphasizes the storyteller not only illustrates his or her version of the action but also provides an interpretation or evaluative commentary on the subject. In addition, the sequencing of narrative form is important because its structure reveals what is significant to people about various practices, ideas, places, and symbols (Young 1996). Generally, (Riessman 1993) claims that the job of the narrative researcher is to interpret the stories people tell. As the narrative analysis has to do with "how protagonists interpret things" (Bruner 1990, 51), narrative analysts tend to ask

why the story was told that way and what the storyteller means. How does the narrator tell the story? What does he or she include or exclude?. In addition, the channel of transferring the folktales (storyteller) to the offspring will be under focusing, particularly the Sudanese storyteller. The Sudanese storyteller (grandmother) has magic influence on the children as is mentioned by Alsh-ahi (1997: 54) during the night children group around a grandmother and listens attentively to her and this represent the nectar of the folktale. This atmosphere of Sudanese folktales encourages the audience (children) to acquire the folktale with its all dimensions. This pervious speech in general qualifies literature is a mirror of people life; in particular the oral literature; it is a field that embodied the norms of the society and stretch out the features of the target people through the mouth of the storyteller during the narration due to the target community. In addition the objectives of this study are the various aspects: social, pedagogical and psychological concept, of the folktales will be investigated and taken in account.

Study hypothesizes the following:

- a- Folktales rear inside the audience (children) the value of the beauty and charity by relating the beauty to goodness and bravery. Moreover, it rouses in them the value of the goodness.
- b- Oral traditions represent the identity of the people, by linking offspring's awareness to the history of their ancestor.
- c- The influence of the ethical and geographical locations on the folktales lays its shadow on the nectar of the folktales.
- d- Sudanese folktales are basely built on African and Arabian culture in all Sudanese sectors.



This study is classified as qualitative research for it associate with the social constructivist paradigm which emphasizes the socially constructed nature of reality.

Materials and Methods

The descriptive and analytical method has been adopted plus gathering data from primary and secondary references through different steps. Therefore, three approaches are used in this study in analyzing and discussion: functional, descriptive and structural approach. The researcher mainly focuses on language, themes, characters and storyteller.

Analysis

Orality in general and folktales in particular reflex the traditions of the spot which the orality is narrated in, because folktales have come to life spontaneously. Since there are considerable variations in the different parts of Sudan, there are different traditions and different features for the culture of the country. The geographical locations and the various races of people in Sudan obviously have their own influence on the Sudanese folktales. Northern Sudan and Western Sudan are significant account as common ground or a target field of this study. These four folktales were analysed as oral literature and it is found that the geographical locations lay their shadow upon the folktale. Therefore, the audience (the children) should be aware about the inheriting culture, values, and traditions through the folktales and make their ancestors' life existence.

In the folktale of Fatima **Alsmha**, the folktale represents Fatima with a unique character; she has high qualities which make her a perfect girl physically and mentally "Fatima was a comely girl; her face was white as a moon, and her hair was long, and reaches down to her legs". These qualities qualify Fatima to be the heroine of the story. The name of the heroine (Fatima) itself

has religious indication and it consider as a holily name in the society of Muslim: the daughter of prophet peace be upon him. Moreover the folktale is full of contradictory events. The acceptance of Fatima parents to marry her to her brother shows the position of the male among society towards the woman; at the same time it point out for the value of beauty. Then the wisdom of the Fatima makes her release and companions with her all the girls of the area.

Fatima grasped the situation, and was dumbfounded. She through down the bowl, and ran away from the house. She collected together all the girls from the settlement, and she told them that the men of the village had decide to marry each one of them to her brother, and asked them to run away with her, and run considerable distance from the village. In the evening, they saw a big fire, and they walked towards it.

When Fatima and her companions ran away and met the gigantic ugly woman, they asked her to protect them. But Fatima realizes that the woman is ogress and she eats people. This ability of observing is given only to Fatima beside her distinguished physical body to link between the beauty and the wisdom. The narrator presents the ogress in a bad way because it embodies the evil. Fatima by her wisdom is able to overcome all the obstacles and lures which are put by the ogress. With her wisdom Fatima can save her mates and herself from the danger when they find a river as barrier 'Fatima thought for a while, and suddenly huge crocodile appeared. Fatima called to him, and asked him to take them to the other side of the river, where she would give him one of the girls to eat.' This shows the bravery of Fatima and



her wisdom in planning a clever trap for the ogress by the crocodile.

When Wad Amin discovers the beauty of Fatima he hid her because he feels jealous and this illustrates the value of the beauty and rears its value in the children. Wad Amin is not a normal man he is best one in his area financially and socially he is considered as a chief of his people that why he is rewarded by marrying of Fatima. The summing up of the folktale beauty deserves uniqueness.

Red Cane (Gasb Ahmer)

The brilliant descriptive introductory words of the heroine of the folktale capture the attention of the audience (children). *“Once upon time there was a marvelous woman with big eyes and long hair is called gasb Ahmer”* the above qualities of the woman qualify the listener to be sympathy with her and fix the idea the beauty related to the goodness. All the description of the girl completely matches with Arabian lady not African meanwhile the environment completely relates to the African environment: the forest, ogre and. Ogre embodied a shape of the man and offers her his assistance when she was alone and unable to lift her sticks in case she accepts his request. Such point leads the children to predict the second phase (the condition and its consequences) and this develops his/her imagination; after bargaining they reach to the point that Gasp Ahmer should take the oil from the man (ogre) and rub the baby’s mouth. This point also moves the imagination of the children and let them think about the result of the oil. The appearance of the ogre has given the folktale the flavor of adventure. The new born child (girl) is well distinguished than other, and her beauty made her wanted by all people round her. On other hand ogress represent the evil and he has bad qualities: gigantic, ugly red eyes elusive all over. The odd thing in the heroine the whiteness

of her teeth such quality refers to the rainy areas because the light there is almost familiar and catches the sight of the people. She is named (Hjljil) and it is unique. Then the girl (Hjljil) was wise and she was able to escape from the fist of the Ogre by the assistance of the old woman. Here old woman represents the wisdom and this point drives the child to respect the old people and put them in high position and particularly the old woman. Suddenly Ogre appeared and asked the old women to give him Hijeljel or he will swallow her. *The old women said to him wait a moment she went back to her house and took pepper, salt, and knife and came back and ask him to swallow her and he did. When she is in her stomach she began to cut his stomach until she reached his heart, then he fell dead.* Finally Hjljil marries the knight and the ogre is killed. So the story arouse the value of beauty and shows that evil has bad end and beauty will be rewarded by knight or by the noble. *“kept in doing this and hit the old woman and her daughters and no one was able to do any things. Suddenly appeared and smart knight cut the plant from its root. And married Hijeljel and make a happy family”.*

King and his sons:

This folktale carries different concepts with various indicators; the term king has Arabian indication and the Arab culture is present in the most of the events and objects are accumulation of Arab inheritance culture such as apple, king. Also ogre is present, and the third boy who is the youngest one is the winner after a hard adventure with the ogre who eats the apple and runs down well. All the previous narrative events fasten the qualities of the goodness. The two older sons fail in defeating the ogre, but the youngest does. In the well he fights against crocodile and save many people from the danger of crocodile. Such kind of heroic features



enhance the concept of children towards the perfect man and store this in his subconscious and spontaneously feel sympathy with the youngest man and draw the picture of the youngest boy in their imagination as well as his future character. Beside this adventure is one of the crucial behaviours that must be linked with the hero and he must be rewarded by the beautiful girl.

There was a very beautiful balance then the youngest son crept slowly inside the balance there was comely and marvelous lady there and she was crying. He was able to climb in until he reached the room of the girl and asked her about the reason behind her existing here.

On other hand the femininity is built on beauty and smoothness and these qualities attract men and he may do anything for gaining this beauty: *when the youngest son shakes the rope his brother pulls it up but instead their brother they found brilliant and comely women then they forget their brother.* Here there is extremely indicator for beauty as dominion on the feeling of people (particularly men) and makes them forget everything; in case this girl is normal they will never put her in account. The brothers have forgotten their brotherhood for sake of beauty. The youngest boy is left as victim in the well to follow his new journey full of suffer and adventure at the end at the end the youngest boy is classified like a knight after his heroic events. Therefore, he is rewarded by marrying the beautiful girl. This folktale arouses the side of the bravery and edifies the young generation to have positive behaviors' and any nice qualities will be well rewarded. And also it arouses the love of the beauty.

Starvation

This folktale takes place in starvation time. The phenomenon has not limited with specific date and place and this is one of the folktale

characteristic. This folktale marginalizes the role of the husband "*Once there was a woman who has seven children and lazy husband*" this folktale represents a woman as wise and responsible she always does her best and comes back with food to her children meanwhile her husband never help or find any food for the children even "*And the husband always takes the food from the children's hand even from their mouths*". Here there is an inner message from grandmother and mother by the tongue of the storyteller showing that mother is the key of life settlement. In this folktale storyteller never focuses on the side of the beauty of the heroine, but gives her all the management of the folktale and even gives her superpower to deal with the environment round her. She made miracle when she adapt herself with wild animal. On other hand the husband is a terrible maker for his wife "*... suddenly he saw his wife among groups of wild hens, then he picked up some stones and run to them and shouts for his wife to catch the hens*". On other side always her husband spoils her plan and makes trouble to her wife and children; it can be said he always terrible maker, but she rescues him always at the end of the folktale the woman win the bet and get rid of the evil in all over the area.

Storyteller

Storyteller is one of the main pillars of folktale and it is the most effective motivation for the listeners than the folktale itself. It is well known in Sudanese culture storyteller is always grandmother and always embodies the characters of the folktale and imitates them: changing her voice due to the characters such as animals, ogre, young or old people. Storyteller sings if the folktale needs this and draws the attention of the audience. Folktales have especial atmosphere which is at night especially the moon night beside this the children of many



families relative and neighbors gather in one place round the grandmother.

Discussion

Sudanese folktales embody different concepts and carry multi-messages in their plots. These concepts have their own justifications whether from the social norms or accumulation of positive or negative social inheritance. The below lines which are taken from different folktales: the four samples, prove that the storyteller (grandmother) focuses on girls in particular and women in general as main characters (heroines) that have superpower. This superpower is pictured in folktales in marvelous beauty, the genius mind or both of them. That is why all heroines in these folktales are females. On other hand always girls are distinguished not only by beauty, but also by wisdom too. Always the old woman represent the apex of the wisdom in all the pervious folktale, the quality of the wisdom is related to the women the role of the men is marginalized.

Fatima was a comely girl; her face was white as a moon, and her hair was long, and reaches down to her legs She collected together all the girls from the settlement, and she told them that the men of the village had decide to marry each one of them to her brother, and asked them to run away with her, and run considerable distance from the village ... said "please to God, Fatima and your friends, may you find heaps and heaps of gold which will keep you busy, and then I will reach you."... Fatima thought for a while, and suddenly huge crocodile appeared. Fatima called to him, and asked him to take them to the other side of the river, where she would give him one of the girls to eat ... Once upon time there was a beautiful brilliant woman is called Red Cane (gasb Ahmer) Once upon time there was a great starvation and drought all people suffer. There was a woman

had seven children and lazy husband. Next day the mother went to search for food and she found treasure (an ogre's house full of the various types of food). Every day the mother hides herself until the ogre go out and seeing him passing away Then the ogre took him out and asked him how did you come here? The man informed him by the whole story of his wife. The ogre said that I will set you free if you bring all the family here. The man agreed and went off and come back with his wife and seven children. Then the ogre ordered the wife to cook him one of her sons every day. The wife made a big hole and covered it in a way that cannot be noticed, every day she took one of the dead people and cook it and send her child in the hole after seven all her children are under the grounds.

Ogre and crocodile are frightening creatures and always represent the evil and embodied the ugliness. In these bellow quotations of the sample of the folktales prove that sympathy should be attached to beauty, goodness, and feminine in general. These qualities represent the solid ground in children subconscious to evaluate the things during his/her life.

. A man appeared (he was an ogre) and offered her his assistance and asked her what will you reword me for the assistance? She said I will give you this bracelet. He asked her again what you will give me if I hold it to your shoulders.. . Suddenly appeared and smart knight on a back of the nice horse with sharp sword and cut the plant from its root. And married Hijeljel and make a happy family for ever after...

... She told him the Ogre has kidnapped her and now he is at the end of the balance and she asked him to escape before the Ogre wake up and see him, but he said I will kill him. She told him if his eyes are open that means he is a sleep, if his eyes were shut that means he is a wake. He went to the Ogre and he found his eyes were



open as quick as a flash he took off his head with his sword. The Ogre said my head is not one he said my sword is not one; they carried on this way together until he cut his seven heads then he took the girl and tied her with the rope that he came with it

The end of nearly all the folktales reword of the beauty: the heroine of the story who is the most beautiful girl, marry the knight, prince, or the richest person. This generates elite concept of the value of the beauty and support the child experience and influence on him/ her in the future in evaluating things.

The findings of the study:

- Maternal community is intensively involved in the folktales which is contradictory to the real situation; meanwhile in reality the society is paternal society. Thus the oppression that lies on women from men due to the customs and traditions makes women loaded the folktale with superpower of the women upon the man as a matter of revenge. This appears in woman's role as a wise, she has more patient than man and so on as it happens in starving folktale .

- Since folktales represent the identity of people, the absence of folktales effect negative of on Sudanese identity. Now the modern mass media have caught the sight of the offspring and the life style has change so the folktale almost vanished. Thus the identity of offspring started to disappear and the

Children ignore the Sudanese customs and traditions, in other words they do not know their identity.

- Folktales with the marvelous narration help the children to interpret literature simply. So the storyteller represent the backbone of the folktales, because the storyteller sculpture the images of the folktale characters insight the offspring's minds by acting, and embodies the whole characters in the folktale beside this

storyteller describe the setting of the folktale in proper way .

- Grandmothers and sometime mothers always act the role of the storytellers for their close relationship with offspring therefore they put their breath in them. That is why most of the folktales attitudes are womanish.

- The different location and the ethnic background have obvious influence on the folktales. The themes of the folktales almost the same between the different geographical locations of folktales, but at the same time the nature of every part put its flavor on it. Otherwise the ethnic feature leaves its spices on it.

Oral traditions represent the identity of the people; they rise and falls due to the literacy of the society. Therefore, this study has surveyed in orality in general then limits itself in Sudanese orality and particularly on folktales. It aims to find out the influence of the folktales on offspring attitudes and discipline within geographical locations and ethnical variety. Northern and Western Sudanese folktales are considered to be the actual field of the study. The international folktales beside Arabic and African folktale are put in consideration to build the common ground upon which Sudanese folktales are measured and classified. The thesis is analytic and qualitative aims to reach the vanish voices of Sudanese folktales and to what extent it may affect positively or negative on offspring. Then the researcher has discussed the target samples and reached at the following findings..

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