The Analysis of Japanese Fairy Tales Using Propp's Structural-typological Narratives by Japanese Language Learners

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ABSTRACT

Fairy tales reflect the great social values of certain cultures. Individual genres and works of fairy tales represent projections of the worldview of people in the respective society. However, reading and understanding fairy tales from other countries are not enough to identify structural and typological differences between tales of the same genre that differ in origin. In literature classes, students often focus on the narrative while missing the structural features of fairy tales. In this study, the structural-typological functions of narrative proposed by Propp (1986) were used as a methodological approach to draw students' attention to the distinctive cultural features of some Japanese fairy tales. The results show that students classified Japanese tales as differing greatly in structural and typological variation compared to European tales. Students realized that in Japanese fairy tales, the ending does not always lead the hero to the typical victory of good over evil, but sometimes leaves a certain bitterness of reality where the ending is guessed by the reader, which gives the tale a debatable narrative character that is unique. This methodological approach helps students analyse fairy tales in greater depth, identify the uniqueness of the narratives, and delve into the essence of structural and functional analysis, which gives students a deep understanding of the tales and its culture. The findings of this study can be applied to the identification of the functions and roles of the characters in fairy tales, and the analysis of structured storylines.

Keywords: methodological approach; Japanese fairy tale; structural-typological narrative; Japanese learners; cultural features

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INTRODUCTION

Until recently, literature as a field of study has been effective in introducing the readers to the world as imagined by the authors. As authors do not exist in a vacuum, literary texts are loaded with cultural motives and symbols that can enrich the readers of that culture. Corollary to that is the use of literature in the teaching and learning of both local and foreign languages. Despite the benefits offered by literature, according to recent studies (Kasáčová and Babiakova, 2019), interest in literature among the younger generation has been declining. At the same time, interest in visual mediums is increasing such as anime, comics, and popular television series (Norris, 2016). This shows that the traditional idea of literature that is often defined based on genres is changing and the idea of the medium has taken centre stage. Moreover, with the development of digital technologies, the younger generation's attention is drawn to an attempt to express themselves through the creation of various video contents posted on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube and other social media platforms (Vițelar, 2019; Appel et al., 2020). This shows that literature has to be redefined and re-conceptualised.

There is no denying that humans' need for stories told orally or in writing is not deemed obsolete simply due to the biological reasons for the development of human's brain (Holland, 2009). Our brains are simply tuned to enjoy and experience the fascinating, surprising, comical, and other content of the text, compiled by a talented storyteller. This means, despite the development in media and communication technology, the need for stories is existential in the way humans interact with each other and their own culture in order to make sense of their lives. Indeed, one learns about one's culture via stories such as children literature and folk tales, and only recently the medium has changed. With globalization, stories transcend geographical boundaries and become a way for different societies to learn about and from each other. Film adaptations of such stories are a good example of how literary products travel across physical boundaries and create global access. In language education, learning literary texts benefits students sociolinguistically, or language as it appears in cultural context. The world of Internet Access is capable of facilitating access to literary materials and digital forms of texts. In the context of fairy tales education, Donald Haase points out that "From the start, fairy-tale research and teaching were interrelated and part of a project to reach and teach beyond the academe" (in Jones & Schwabe, 2016, p. 15). We hope our work that combines pedagogy and fairy tales can invigorate the interest in fairy tales research in education.

As established earlier of the relationship between teaching and learning of literature with language learning and acquisition, it is apparent that studying literature in the original language can be a motivating factor in mastering a foreign language (Daskalovska and Dimova, 2012). This is due to the fact that literature uses both speech and grammatical items in their natural presentation, and this contributes to the effectiveness of perception of information. Also important is the factor of understanding the cultural aspect, which is well conveyed through the prism of language learning. When students learn fairy tales and myths, it is noticeable that the basis of the fairy tale, which is the narrative, helps students to better understand the cultural values of the target society. However, this is insufficient to give an idea of the functionality of a fairy tale as a reflection of the world imagined by a person's fantasy and in highlighting the cultural aspects regarding various communities. It is more expedient to interpret fairy tales as a story that requires a critical reading (Vučković, 2018), studying them from the standpoint of functional and morphological analyses will give students a more meaningful understanding of the structure of these texts. In short, we identify this as the problem of the study and therefore propose an approach

and methodology for applying the analysis of the morphological structure of fairy tales for a better understanding of the cultural characteristics of Japanese fairy tales. This is because Japan's oral art has a number of differences compared to the folklore of other countries. For example, readers can find several fairy tale-mythical features, such as Japanese seasons, ancient Japan based on Shintoism or Buddhism, as well as Bushido. All this imposes certain cultural problems in understanding the texts themselves, which is interesting in its own way.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generally speaking, literary texts serve many functions. One would argue that literature is a way of influencing our psyche, which presents a certain "invention" to alleviate grief, and arouse sympathy, or joy in the readers. In addition, each genre of literature has a unique purpose, designed using its complex scheme, to affect our psyche of perception of the content in different ways (Caracciolo and Van Duuren, 2015). When faced with teaching in the field of literature, educators become concerned about how students will perceive the literary text itself (Mustakim et. al, 2014). With the idea that because literature directly affects consciousness that is the very perception of the world (Vasquez, 2006), the fear is that it can affect the students perception of the world itself, either consciously or subconsciously. Consequently, literature makes a person seek an understanding of himself through spiritual experiences by questioning, such as: Who am I? Why am I here? Therefore, it is apparent that literature serves many functions.

There have been studies that focus on literature's effect on the human brain to help humans solve their real life problems. According to Benu (2011), it was fairy tales, which have an ancient nature, that developed the human capacity to contrast the surrounding reality with the imagined world. Literature is an area of activity of the human brain and consciousness based on the patterns of constructing a system of presentation (Berns et al, 2013). Moreover, according to Fletcher (2021), literature is the source of the modern scientific method because humans have developed literature based on technology. Literature as technology solves another side of human needs: the formation of people's attitude toward literature as a system that embodies the cultural values of the people, as a special way of human self-knowledge and self-expression. By the same token, fairy tales have also been used for therapeutic treatment (Jones and Pimenta, 2021). Literature softens the psychological problems within us such as grief, lack of meaning, and loneliness.

Fairy tales play a role in providing cultural input. Tihomirova (2019) argues that being one of the oldest genres for the transmission of figurative information, fairy tales are an accumulating link in the cultural aspect. It is in fairy tales that the basic cultural, behavioral, moral and ethical aspects of societies can be concluded. If one delves deeper into the essence of fairy tale texts, then this will enrich one's lives emotionally, intellectually, and creatively. This will allow them to think more dynamically. In his study of fairy tales of London, Elber-Aviram argues that many fairy tales writers of London "cleaved to their belief in progress, liberalism and the ineluctability of urban life, together with their commitment to fantasy as an idiom for the social transformation of the city" (2021, p.2). Elber-Aviram's work evinces how fairy tales can function thereby investigating the social, cultural and economic impacts of urbanization. This, in our opinion, shows that fairy tales are useful in providing cultural input as a palimpsest. Nonetheless, as a palimpsest, simple reading of fairy tales will not lead to a meaningful conclusion as there are subtle peelable layers. In order to delve into the depths of folk wisdom contained in the texts of fairy tales, analysis tools are needed.

As for the pedagogical aspect of fairy tales, according to Jones and Schwabe, "pedagogy remains a much overlooked aspect of fairy-tale studies" (2016, p. 24) and they promote cross disciplinary studies of fairy tales in higher education. They highlight the adaptablity of fairy tales in teaching either in traditional or online settings. The significance of thinking about pedagogy lies in the fact that fairy tales are cultural texts that can be quite specific to the culture it belongs to. The translation of fairy tales in the second language teaching context, for example, poses a conflict if not addressed pedagogically. The present research identifies this as one of the problems that needs to be addressed.

The other dimension identified is the involvement of critical paradigm into the studies of fairy tales. This includes feminist studies on fairy tales. For example, Koehler, Wagner, Duggan and Dula in their studies on fairy tales written by women argue that "In order to provide a framework to better understand what is at stake when women write wonder and subvert tradition, it is important to consider their engagement with the history of fairy tales, as well as social, historical, and political contexts in which they wrote." (2021, p.18). Critical paradigm as exemplified by feminist approach to fairy tales challenges the way fairy tales prioritize certain group, while marginalising the other.

The most important point in folk tales is the severity of mental attitudes (Shagalieva, 2009). According to this researcher, in Russian fairy tales, the dichotomy of human character is clearly expressed, in humanity and harsh despotism. Another example, in the Japanese value system there is a constant influence of the concept of *wabi-sabi* (Cooper, 2013). *Wabi-sabi* is the concept of the elusive beauty of imperfection. The spirit of *sabi* in particular is characterized by the presence of emotional polarity in which on one pole there is pathetic sorrow, and on the other is enlightened reconciliation with one's sorrows. In other words, this is the aesthetic exploration of the world in all its harsh truth, *sabi*, which goes back to the feeling of "horror" in front of the world, then turns into "beauty", "reconciliation" (Shelestova, 1985). This state of affairs dictates a clear understanding by the students themselves, who, using some tools, can see for themselves that some of the structural elements of fairy tales can outline the presence of culturally specific models that are different from their cultural generalizations. For example, the identification of characters through the projection of animal archetypes specific to the area can reveal methods of conveying resistance to injustice and the manifestation of moral lessons, emphasizing either cultural determinism or conformity to common archetypal elements (Quah et. al, 2019). And in cultural and ideological terms, the manifestation of gender relations of characters in fairy tales can reveal an instrumental difference in the categorization of relationships. For example, the way fairy tales describe a woman or a man, their speech patterns may reflect the cultural and ideological foundations of society or their changes over time (Stephens and McCallum, 1998; Levorato, 2003).

In the previous literature, much attention was paid to how the fairy tales are structured and analysis was on the functional aspects of the narratives of tales (Propp, 1986), as well as the application of the techniques of the comparative method (Antti, 1987; Uther, 2004) in the teaching of fairy tales. In practical terms, there have been works on the use of fairy tales as resources in the study of a foreign language or the language in which the fairy tale itself was written (Yavuz and Celik, 2017; Skidanova, 2019). In addition, there have been many works on the role of fairy tales in the upbringing and education of young people (Koban, 2014; VisikoKnox-Johnson, 2016). There are works that have examined the gendered manifestations of certain fairy tales and their ideological underpinnings (Collingwood, 2005; Zamzuri, 2017). On the other hand, there is a tendency for authors to immerse authentic fairy tale plots and motifs, in the realities of today, such as in games or in the fantasy literary genre (Zolotova et. al, 2017).

Moreover, in the aspect of considering fairy tales as a resource for deep understanding of cultural differences through instrumental and methodological apparatuses, this has hardly been considered in the past literature. We argue, therefore, that the practical application of the methodology of analysis by students would provide an insight into the field of understanding of cultural differences by students than simply reading literature in class. This study uses Propp's methodology, which is based on the morphological analysis of fairy tales. The use of analytical tools within the framework of Propp's model can shed light on students' understanding of the narrative structure of Japanese fairy tales as in this study. In addition, there are many studies on Western fairy tales, but few on non-English-language fairy tales: this is one of the research gaps we have identified.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

When reading Japanese folktales literature, namely such as classic tales *Urashima Taro* or *Momotaro*, students of the Japanese Program, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, Universiti Malaya, simply skimmed through the content without trying to delve into the essence of the text. This may be due to cultural differences, where some cultural patterns are simply not understood by students studying the language in which the text itself is written (Kuo and Lai, 2006; Sheeraz et. al, 2015). For instance, in cognition between Westerners and East Asians, it is found that East Asians use socially oriented styles of interpretation to judge the content, the actions of the characters, and the relationship to time (Zhang and Lauer, 2015). Meanwhile, for Westerners, the centre of attention of any fairy tale is the hero. It is around him that various events take place, other characters help or hinder him, he loses and finds, and in the end achieves happiness. Every nation has its favourite heroes. They often embody not so much the best qualities of the people as the ideals that exist in it. The true heroes of European fairy tales are associated with such concepts as strength, courage, victory in battles, as well as physical beauty. Taking into account the features and differences of fairy tales of various people around the world, for instance Japanese, a methodological and structural-functional analysis need to be used. Therefore, the application of Propp's methodology is for students to study fairy tales by function and character role. Using Propp's methodology, one can see the internal structural, morphological features of the narrative, its motives, patterns, and the rules of plot construction. This allows the students to identify the functional features of the structural limitations of fairy tales with a tool that can give them an effective means of learning through identifying epistemological concepts of cultural manifestations of the story.

The purpose of this study is to identify unique or inherent features of Japanese fairy tales that may be different from those of other cultures. Along with this, we feel it is important to identify a suitable functional analysis for Japanese fairy tales in order to give students the skill of instrumental analysis of the structural-typological narrative. This is especially important because students will have a toolkit with which they can analyze folklore texts for their own understanding of plot lines and structures in the future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The respondents of this study were 20 students in the Japanese Program, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, Universiti Malaya who are required to take a literature course. Two approaches were applied in the study. In the first approach, students were asked to read several versions of one

fairy tale, namely *Urashima Taro*. The reasons for the choice of this fairy tale lie in its popularity as one of the most prominent fairy tales in Japan and in the variability of the historical period of writing from 1919 to the present. In other words, it is possible to trace levels of change in plot structures, which over time can be adapted to the realities of the present. As a basis, students were asked to read Kusuyama Masao's version of *Urashima Taro* from the website of Aozora-bunko, as well as to read other versions that they choose, as a comparison. This approach was to make them realize that there are a variety of versions of the same fairy tale.

Next, in the second approach, the students were asked to choose any other Japanese fairy tales they liked and analysed them using Propp's functional tool. Prior to the task, students were introduced and instructed on Propp's methodological tools. This was done to find out whether these tools helped students in understanding the fairy tale and its structures. In this regard, to help students indulge in the world of fairy tales, the scientific analysis of fairy tales was introduced. As a scientific approach to the analysis of fairy tales, the method of Vladimir Propp (1986), a scholar who introduced the comparative typological method in folklore into scientific use was implemented. Propp proposed an instrumental framework for the analysis of fairy tales (wonder tales) with an emphasis on analysing the Russian tale of Ivan the Fool. As mentioned above, the students had a theoretical and practical class with the lecturer before analysing the tales on their own, focusing mainly on Propp's methodology. Propp (1986) singled out the recurring constant functions of the 31 characters in total, laying the foundation for the structural-typological study of the narrative. Propp's model consists of parsing the tale into analyzable fragments and distinguishing 31 sequential functions in relation to the narrative, and a list of the main characters in the narrative that make up the structure of many tales (see Table 1). In addition, Propp identified seven major dramatis personae of the narrative: the protagonist, the antagonist, the love interest, the confidant, deuteragonists, tertiary characters, and the foil. Propp, being a philologist and structuralist, analysed the main plot components of Russian fairy tales in order to find irreducible elements in the narrative. In other words, he decided that the structure of fairy tales is based on fundamental recurring events that create a consistent framework for the narrative. Propp, breaking fairy tales into the smallest narrative functions, showed that they are the foundations of narration. Each function is an event that creates a narrative structure in dynamics in a certain direction, which always appears in that order.

Propp's work had a significant impact on the development of structuralism studies of mythology, folklores, and literary texts (Olshansky, 2008). From the position of practical application of this methodology, it can be stated that students, being able to use this toolkit independently, were able to clearly realize structural features of Japanese fairy tales. These findings will be explained in later chapters of this paper.

TABLE 1. Propp's (1986) Methodology of 31 Functions

	Functions	Meaning
1	Absentation	One of the members of a family absents himself from home
2	Interdiction	An interdiction is addressed to the hero
3	Violation of interdiction	The interdiction is violated
4	Reconnaissance	The villain seeks something
5	Delivery	The villain receives information about his victim

6	Trickery	The villain attempts to deceive his victim to take possession of his belongings
7	Complicity	The victim, succumbing to deception, unwittingly helps his enemy
8	Villainy and Lack	The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family / A family member lacks something
9	Mediation	The hero is told misfortune; The hero is asked for help
10	Counteraction	The hero decides to counter the villain
11	Departure	The hero leaves on mission
12	Testing	The hero is faced with the task of proving heroic qualities by getting help from an assistant or magical means
13	Reaction	The hero responds to test
14	Acquisition	The hero gains the ability to use magical means
15	Guidance	The hero approaches the location of the search object
16	Struggle	The hero and the villain join in direct combat
17	Branding	The hero is branded
18	Victory	The villain is defeated
19	Resolution	The initial misfortune or lack is resolved
20	Return	The hero sets out for home
21	Pursuit	The hero is pursued
22	Rescue	The hero escapes from the chase
23	Arrival	The hero arrives unrecognized at home or in another country
24	Claim	A false hero presents unfounded claims
25	Task	A difficult task proposed to the hero
26	Solution	The hero solves the task
27	Recognition	The hero is recognized
28	Exposure	The false hero or villain is exposed
29	Transfiguration	The hero is given a new appearance
30	Punishment	The villain is punished
31	Wedding	The hero marries and ascends the throne

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The fairy tale in the first approach was *Urashima Taro* in which Urashima Taro is the eponymous hero of this fairy tale. For this task, students chose the *Urashima Taro* in three variants, namely the Kusuyama version (from the Aozora-bunko resource: www.aozora.gr.jp), the Douwa-douyou version (www.douwa-douyou.jp) and the Hukumusume version (hukumusume.com). As can be seen in Table 2, students analysed three versions of the same *Urashima Taro* story and found differences in the interpretation. For example, for the place of residence of *Urashima Taro*，in Kusuyama version is 丹後の国水の江の浦 － *Tango no kuni mizu no e no ura* (bay of *Tango no kuni mizu no e*)，whereas in Douwa-douyou version it is not exactly indicated, and in Hukumusume version, the place is indicated by uncertainty as ある村 － *aru mura* (in a village). In other words, the Kusuyama version, being the most complete in the descriptive sense, at the same time appears in a certain sense "archaic", in the sense of the dialect in which the dialogues of the characters are described. This especially can be seen in the dialogues of the characters. Students had difficulties in understanding and interpreting because dialogues were syntactically composed in colloquial language. On the other hand, the other two versions, which adapted in a modern way, are schematized, and simplified both in word formation and in the semantics of sentences. Table 2 shows the results of the analysis of the same tale in the three different textual variants separated by the time frame mentioned above. In analyzing and comparing the texts, students focused on finding narrative differences without applying Propp's functions to the seven character roles in stories. This was done on purpose so that students could see the difference in narrative structure and plot with different topology and description. This gives students a glimpse of historicism and the difference in the textual and syntactic structures of sentences themselves without touching the analysis of character narrative structure.

TABLE 2. The Analysis of *Urashima Taro*

Scene	*Urashima Taro* 1 Kusuyama version	*Urashima Taro* 2 Douwa-douyou version	*Urashima Taro* 3 Hukumusume version
住む場所 place to live/residence	丹後の国水の江の浦 *Tango no kuni mizu no e no ura (bay of Tango no kuni mizu no e no ura)*	書いていない；あるところ not indicated; somewhere	村（特になし）；ある村 village (nothing in particular); a village
何・誰を助けた what and who saved	一匹の小さい亀の子 a little turtle	かめ；一匹の亀 tortoise; a tortoise	大きな亀 a big turtle
どうやってかめを助けた How was the turtle saved?	子供達を止めたが、彼らは聞き入れようともしないから、その子供達から亀を買いました；おあしをあげた。 Urashima stopped the children, but they wouldn't listen, so he	子供達を優しく接触し、説得した。 Urashima gently communicated and persuaded the children.	子供達を止めたが、まだ亀を離したくなかったので、金で買いました。 Urashima stopped the children, but the children still didn't want to let go of the turtle, so Urashima bought it with money.

	bought the turtle from them.		
どうして・誰が浦島を龍宮に誘えた Why and who invited Urashima to Ryugu Palace?	ほんのお礼のしるしに、亀さんが浦島を誘った。 The turtle invited Urashima as a token of gratitude for helping it.	亀さんを助けたので、お姫様の招待通りに、亀さんが浦島を誘えた。 The turtle invited Urashima as invited by the Princess because Urashima saved the turtle.	亀さんが誘ったからです。 Because the turtle invited Urashima.
龍宮（りゅうぐう）にどうやって行けたか How did Urashima get to Ryugu Palace?	亀の背中に乗って行った。 Urashima rode on the turtle's back.	亀の甲羅に乗って行った。 Urashima rode on a turtle shell.	亀の甲羅に乗って行った。 Urashima rode on a turtle shell.
龍宮で何をした What did Urashima do in Ryugu palace?	・御殿の中に案内された。 ・大小いろいろな魚たちを珍しいごちそうを運んできながら、にぎやかな酒盛りをした。 ・きれいな腰元の歌舞を楽しんだ。 ・お城の中にある東西南北の戸から四季の景色を見せた。 ・Guided inside the palace by Princess. ・Urashima had a lively drinking party while bringing fish of various sizes with rare delicacies. ・Enjoyed the singing and dancing of the beautiful waist. ・Urashima enjoyed the scenery of the four seasons from the north, south, east, and west doors in the castle.	・お城の中の大きな部屋に案内された。 ・豪華な料理を食べた。 ・魚たちの踊りを視聴した。 ・Urashima was guided to a large room in the castle. ・Urashima ate a sumptuous meal. ・Urashima watched the dance of the fish.	・亀さんに案内された。 ・魚たちが次から次へと、見たことがないようなごちそうを運んできた。 ・タイやヒラメやクラゲたちの踊りを見せた。 ・Urashima was guided by the turtle. ・The fish brought Urashima food after food like nothing he had seen before. ・Urashima was shown the dances of sea bream, flounder, and jellyfish.
水中の時間 Length of time in the underwater world	三年 3 years	7日 7 days	三年 3 years

陸上の時間 Time difference on the land	三百年 300 years	何百年も経ってしまった；何百年（特に書いていません) Hundreds of years have passed; Hundreds of years; (not written specifically)	七百年 700 years
子供たちの呼びかけ Pronoun for Children	なし N/A	なし N/A	おいらたち *Oira-tachi* (we)
姫の呼びかけ Address to the Princess	乙姫さま Princess Otohime	お姫様 Princess	乙姫さま Princess Otohime
竜宮御殿の状況 Situation of the Ryugu Palace	ものめずらしそうな鯛や、ひらめやかれいや、いろいろなお魚。 Sea bream, flounder, and various fish.	さんごに囲まれて、魚が泳いで、美しいお城。 Surrounded by corals, fish swimming, beautiful castle.	－ N/A
城にいるときの浦島の気持ち Urashima's feelings when he was in the castle	夢のなかで夢を見ているような気持ち。 Feeling like he's dreaming within a dream.	夢のような毎日。 every day like a dream.	天国にいるような気持ち。 feeling like he's in heaven.
竜宮で食べたもの Food eaten at the Ryugu Palace	タイ、カツオ、フグ、エビ、たこ。 Sea bream, bonito, blowfish, shrimp, octopus.	「たくさんの豪華な料理」だけ書いていた。 Written only as "a lot of sumptuous dishes".	「素晴らしいごちそう」だけ書いていた。 Written only as "a wonderful feast".
城にいるとき浦島太郎は誰かを思い出したか Did Urashima Taro remember someone when he was in the castle?	家と家族を思い出した。 Urashima remembered home and family.	村のことやお母さんのことを思い出した。 Urashima remembered the village and his mother.	家と家族と友達を思い出した。 Urashima remembered home, family and friends.
家や家族を探すとき、誰に尋ねたか Who did Urashima ask when looking for a home or family?	ひとりのよぼよぼのおばあさんに尋ねた。 Urashima asked a limp old woman.	なし N/A	一人の老人に尋ねた。 Urashima asked an old man.
箱を与えたときのお姫様の言葉	お姫様のお別れのしるし。	お姫様はただ箱を開けないようにと言った。	浦島に箱の中に何が入っているのか、そして、箱を開けたらどうなるのかを言った。

What did the princess say when she gave Urashima the box?	As a Princess farewell sign.	The princess just told Urashima not to open the box.	Princess told Urashima what was inside the box and what would happen if he opened the box.
煙・曇の色 Color of smoke/cloud	紫色 purple	白色 white	真っ白 pure white
話の結末 Ending of the story	箱を開けて老人になった後、「人間の一番大事な事は寿命だった」と悟って、悔しい気持ちを感じた。 で、どこからいい声で舟歌を歌うのがまた聞こえてきたので、浦島は昔のことを思い出していた。 After opening the box and becoming an old man, Urashima realized that "the most important thing for human beings was life expectancy," and felt frustrated. Urashima remembered the old days, as he heard a good voice singing a boat song again.	浦島は、驚きすぎたので、あの時どこにいるのか、夢なのかわからなくなってしまった。 Urashima was so surprised that he no longer knew where he was at that time and whether it was a dream.	箱を開けたら、煙の中に浦島が龍宮で過ごした時間の思い出を出されて、彼は一瞬喜んだ。しかし、その煙は次第に消えて、残ったのは、老人になった浦島だけだった。 When he opened the box, Urashima's memories of his time at Ryugu Palace were revealed in the smoke, and he was delighted for a moment. However, the smoke gradually disappeared, and all that was left was Urashima, who had become an old man.

Interesting features were discussed for the analysis of the Princess's gift to *Urashima Taro*. For example, the location of the main character in the Kusuyama version (Aozora-bunko) has a clear name, while the Douwa-douyou version does not, and the Hukumusume version specifies an undefined village. One can see that the structure is simplified from the more saturated text to the less saturated one. Further, the size of the turtle changes from small to large, which reinforces the empathy of the text in the first version (because the children were making fun of the little turtle) and reinforces the emotional sympathy in the second. The way of rescuing the turtle from the children's hands also differs from version to version, where the main character either redeems or convinces to give up the animal. There is an interesting difference in the concept of describing the time during which the main character was a guest in the underwater world. It varies from three years to seven days. The students noted that the same difference is observed in the difference in time on land, which is a difference of 300 to 700 years. The students noticed the ease with which the giant time gaps in the texts were operated and suggested that this might somehow mask a cultural peculiarity in the Japanese perception of time. Unfortunately, it was not possible to go further than these comments due to the scope of the study itself. One of the debatable differences was the princess' gift to the main character. For visiting her, Urashima received a truly frightening gift. The strange thing, according to the students, is that in giving this frightening gift the princess, from version to version of the tale, either tells Urashima that it is a parting gift; or when giving the

gift she orders him not to open the box; or she tells Urashima what will happen if he opens the box.

In the Kusuyama's version, the princess gives the box as a symbol of parting. In the Douwa-doyou's version, the princess warns Urashima Taro against opening the box. And in the Hukumusume's version, the Princess explains that Urashima Taro will turn into an old man if he opens the box. Nevertheless, the very concept of giving a deliberately losing option became the focus of the discussion. When Urashima Taro finally opened the box, he turned into a decrepit old man. The discussion escalated in an attempt to comprehend such a terrible gift. Why did the princess give such a box, despite her rewarding Urashima Taro as 恩返し ー *ongaeshi* (requital of a favour) for saving her life? In addition, because of her hospitality, Urashima Taro lost everything, both family and time of life in exchange for the fleeting joy in a foreign but interesting environment.

In general, the students had different degrees of understanding and interpretation of this mysterious tale. It can be concluded that students adapted morals of the *Urashima Taro*'s tale as the followings:

1. Time is the most important thing that a person has, and one needs to manage it properly.
2. Do not get carried away with unusual interesting offers, as well as fascinating environments, because it can lead to trouble.
3. 'Beware of Greeks bearing gifts', which means to be careful of an act of charity that masks a hidden destructive or hostile agenda.

According to the students, the semantic ascent of this fairy tale was difficult to understand. They were very surprised at how such a complex story could be a children's fairy tale. However, having delved into the genesis of the theory of fairy tales, the students accepted the concept that *Urashima Taro* is not fundamentally childish. Most likely, this is a fairy tale for an adult audience, where the concept of the relationship between human and the mysterious world is touched upon in an allegorical form. One could even say that *Urashima Taro* could become a symbol of our time, where we are all so much concerned about the environment and the place of human beings in it. In other words, *Urashima Taro* is an attempt to realize a person's place in time-space by appreciating time, and especially the time with someone's loved ones.

FREE CHOICE OF FAIRY TALE ANALYSIS

The second task was to read any of the fairy tales of the students' own choice and to apply some of the 31 functional categories proposed by Propp. Majority of the students chose well-known fairy tales such as 鶴の恩返し *(Tsuru no Ongaeshi:* "*Crane's Return of a Favor"*)，桃太郎 (*Momotaro*)，and 輝夜姫 *(Kaguyahime:* "*Princess Kaguya"*). Therefore, the task was to find the most applicable functional tools from Propp's methodology for these fairy tales and reveal the meaning of fairy tales through discussions in the class.

The first fairy tale is *Tsuru no Ongaeshi* (*"Crane's Return of a Favor"*). It is a fairy tale about a crane who returns a favour to a man who saved her. This story is one of the best-known tales in Japan about supernatural and enchanted family members (Seki, 1966).

For the analysis of the *Tsuru no Ongaeshi* fairy tale, students applied 6 to 8 Propp's functions from the list in Table 3. The difference in the number of functions can only be explained

by each student's understanding and possibility of application. Some saw the possibility of more application, and some limited themselves to the minimum.

TABLE 3. The Analysis of *Tsuru no Ongaeshi* Labe

不在 Absentation	おじいさんは町へたきぎを売りに出かけた。 The old man went to sell firewood in town.
禁止 Interdiction	おじいさんとおばあさんは娘が機を織るときに覗くのが禁止された。 The old man and the old woman were forbidden to look at the young girl as she weaved the loom.
侵犯 Violation of interdiction	おばあさんは約束を守れなくて、娘が機を織っているところを覗いてしまった。 Unable to keep her promise, the old woman peeked at the young girl as she weaved the loom.
寄与者(きよしゃ)の第一の 機能 Testing	娘は食事や家事を助、肩までもんであげた。そして、きれいな機を織りあげた。 The young girl helped the old woman with meals and household chores and even massage her shoulders. Moreover, she wove a beautiful loom.
主人公の反応 Reaction	おじいさんとおばあさんは優しい娘が大好きで、娘を家に泊まらせた。 The old man and old woman loved the kind young girl so much that they let her stay at their house.
不幸または欠落の解消 Resolution	二人は娘のおった布を売ったお金で貧しい生活が改善でき、幸せに暮らした。 The two of them were able to improve their poor lives with the money they got from selling the cloth that the young girl wove, and they lived happily ever after.
正体露見 Exposure	鶴は本体がばれてしまった。 The secret of the crane was exposed.
変身 Transfiguration	姿を変え、去っていった。 The crane changed shape and left.

In a semantic context, the story of this fairy tale is based on rigid binary logic, which is inherent in most Japanese fairy tales. In other words, this is the ethics of taboo where it is clearly spelled out what is possible and what is forbidden. Analysing the logic of events in which an old man saved a crane from imminent death and took good care of it. However, in returning the favour, the crane set an uncompromising condition that, by definition, will be torn apart in the binary logic genre, if this happens, then this will happen, and if this happens, then that will happen. On the other hand, the narrative, which has historically developed in oral art, strictly prescribes the ethics of human behaviour in society, where a person must comply with the norms of behaviour contained in the prescribed customs, culture of a particular society.

Students expressed that someone's boundless curiosity and greed can spoil any happy life. On the contrary, the analysis of the ethics of the elder's behaviour in this tale forced the students to take a deeper look at the causal relationship of the event processes of the narrative. In addition, the essence of this fairy tale says that a person needs to respect the other person's desires and secrets. Also, do not show excessive curiosity and accept a person as he/she is. It teaches nobility and generosity, as well as to help each other sincerely. But, on the other hand, as the students noted, as a member of the same family, hiding a secret is not ethical, because trust can disappear. This raises an interesting problem of trusting relationships in the family: is it necessary to reveal your secrets to a person, even if he or she is the closest?

One aspect that is interesting in Japanese fairy tales is the emphasis on taboo dogmas. The behavioural manifestation of taboo in family relationships sheds an interesting phenomenological aspect of Japanese culture, which students were able to realize in a mental manifestation through the analysis of a fairy tale. Moreover, further study of Japanese fairy tales may provide more factual materials for the study of Japanese culture. This theme of taboo and the importance of keeping a promise are also central in the fairy tales of *Urashima Taro* and *Yuki Onna*, for example.

The second fairy tale is *Momotaro. Momotaro* has the concept of a heroic fairy tale in a Japanese way. *Momotaro* is, without exaggeration, a popular hero of Japanese folklore. It is no secret that the image of the brave *Momotaro* was used during the war years by Japan to inspire society (Antoni, 1991). Students choose 8 to 11 of Propp's functions (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. The Analysis of *Momotaro*

不在 Absentation	桃太郎は家を出て、鬼ヶ島へ出かけた。 Momotaro left home and went to Onigashima.
仲介・連結の契機 Mediation	桃太郎は鬼の存在を知って、鬼を退治するために、おばあさんにきび団子を作ってもらい鬼ヶ島へ向かった。 When Momotaro learned about the existence of demons, he asked the old woman to make millet dumplings to exterminate them, and left home to go to Onigashima.
対抗開始まった反作用 Counteraction	桃太郎は鬼を退治するために、家を出て鬼ヶ島へ向かった。 Momotaro left home and went to Onigashima to exterminate the demon.
出発 Departure	桃太郎は鬼を退治するために鬼ヶ島へ出発した。 Momotaro left for Onigashima to exterminate the demons.
寄与者の第一の機能 Testing	途中で、桃太郎は犬、サルとキジに会って、きび団子をわけあって仲間を手に入れた。 Along the way, Momotaro met dogs, monkeys, and pheasants one after another, and obtained three companions with millet dumplings.
主人公の反応 Reaction	桃太郎は嬉しくて犬、サル、キジと取引をし、いっしょに鬼を退治に行った。 Momotaro was so happy that he made deals with the dogs, monkeys, and pheasants one after another, and went to exterminate the demons together.

闘い	桃太郎と仲間は鬼と直接戦いに入った。
Struggle	Momotaro and his friends went into direct battle with the demon.
勝利	鬼は戦いに敗れ、桃太郎に謝った。
Victory	The demon lost the battle and apologized to Momotaro.
不幸または欠落の解消 Resolution	鬼ヶ島に到着して一匹の鬼と戦った後主人公の桃太郎は本物の敵に会い、戦う。桃太郎は鬼に村人に悪い事をしないと約束してもらって、鬼の宝物を奪い取った。これで桃太郎の目的が達成された。 After arriving at Onigashima and fighting a demon, Momotaro, the main character, met a real enemy and continued the fight. The demon promised the villagers not to do bad things, and they received the demon's treasure. With this, Momotaro's goal was achieved.
帰還 Return	桃太郎、イヌ、サルとキジは、鬼から宝物を奪い取り、元気よく家に帰った。 Momotaro, the dog, the monkey, and the pheasant took the treasure from the demon and returned home in good spirits.
処罰 Punishment	鬼が桃太郎と仲間たちにぶっこまれて、宝物を失った。 The demon was hit by Momotaro and friends and he lost his treasure.

In the discussion, an interesting remark was made on why *Momotaro* simply heard that an evil devil lives on some island (place/country) and begins preparing for war with this creature. The fairy tale of *Momotaro* itself differs from version to version in that at the beginning the devil either attacks human settlements or lives on the island on his own and does not take any aggressive actions towards anyone.

The question arose when analysing the version where the devil is simply feasting on his island and does not threaten anyone. The student asks, "Why did *Momotaro* start a war with the devil when he did not threaten anyone? On top of that, *Momotaro* robbed the devil. Is this an expression of justice?" This opinion correlates with that of Fukuzawa Yukichi who states that *Momotaro* was right to punish the demons for their evil deeds, but *Momotaro*, who robbed the demons and their treasury (for the sake of the whole world), was a "despicable person".

Moreover, applying logic in the analysis, the motivation of the parents also became an unclear issue. Why did they not oppose *Momotaro*'s decision to punish the devil? As parents, they must protect him from danger. Once again, the analysis of this tale puts before students an understanding of the ethical side, which is expressed in the adequacy of the use of force against the overthrown enemy. Besides the peculiarity of *Momotaro*, as noted by the students, there are the ethics of group coherence and the importance of teamwork.

Moreover, it needs trust and mutual assistance from each other to form the best teamwork. To achieve victory, not only strength is important, but also sincerity in relationships. The student pointed out that one needs to face the fact that in order to get something, there is a need to be prepared to lose something. Such a give-and-take strategy noticed by a student in this fairy tale, in theory, should work out an internal behavioural understanding of efficiency when agents learn from each other. The strategy of mutual exchange, bringing higher returns in the future is the cornerstone of the behaviour of the hero Momotaro. From this position, the fact is clearly traced

that if a person shares his achievements or benefits with a partner, he will also receive psychological benefits (Lukasz et, al., 2022), which are relevant to the reader in ethical terms.

The third fairy tale is *Kaguya-hime*. Written in the late 9th or early 10th century during the Heian period, *Kaguya-hime* is considered the oldest surviving work in the *monogatari* form (an extended prose narrative tale). It is the oldest surviving Japanese short story and an early precursor of science fiction, understanding the genesis must be linked to understanding the historical and cultural aspects of the Heian era. The story details the life of Kaguya-hime, a princess from the Moon who is discovered as a baby inside the stalk of a glowing bamboo plant by an old woodcutter. The news of her beauty spreads throughout the country, which attracts five suitors seeking her hand in marriage, whom she turns away by challenging them each with an impossible task. She is actually a resident of the moon, exiled to earth for a misdemeanour, and went back to the moon at age 15.

For the analysis of *Kaguya-hime*, students were able to apply 6 of Propp's functions (see Table 5).

TABLE 5. Analysis of *Kaguya-hime*

禁止 Interdiction	かぐや姫は人間ではなく、月の人で、十五夜に月に戻るという約束したので人間と結婚できない。 Kaguya-hime is not a human, but a moon-dweller, and because she promised to return to the moon on the 15th night, she cannot marry a human being.
謀略計 Trickery	5人の若者がかぐや姫と結婚したい。姫は5人の若者に、望むものを持ってくることができたら、結婚の約束をする。だが、彼らは約束を守れず、偽物を持ってくることに。 Five young men wanted to marry Kaguya-hime. The princess promises to marry the five young men if they can bring her the things that she wanted. But they couldn't keep their promise and they brought fake things.
幇助 Complicity	姫が騙されそうな時、怒った職人に暴露される。作った物に対して代金が支払われないとか。 As Kaguya-hime is about to be deceived, one of the handed-out masters exposed the pretender for rigging a fake. The master said that this pretender did not pay for what he had made.
対抗開始まった反作用 Counteraction	天皇はかぐや姫が月に戻る必要があることを知ったら、それを防ぐためにかぐや姫の家に二千人の強い家来を送る。 When the emperor learns that Kaguya-hime must return to the moon, he sends two thousand soldiers to Kaguya-hime's house to prevent this.
出発 Departure	かぐや姫はおじいさんとおばあさんを離れるのが悲しむが、家を離れることに。月へ出向。 Kaguya-hime is sad to leave the old man and old woman, but she decides to leave home and flies to the moon.

呪具の贈与達獲得 Acquisition	月の人は天皇に不死の薬を与え、天皇に不死の可能性を約束する。また、姫は羽でできたドレスを羽織って、地球生活の記憶を失う。
	The Moon man gives the emperor the potion of immortality and promises the emperor the possibility of immortality. Also, the princess wears a dress made of feathers and loses the memory of her life on earth.

From the discussions, students understand that we are not talking about a mere mortal, but about one of the incarnations of some divine principle. It is because the Japanese express their traditional beliefs based on Shinto through the worship of ancestors and natural forces (Kuroda et. al., 1981). Therefore, in the legend of *Kaguya-hime*, the unknown author makes it clear that the girl is not ordinary. After all, the fame of her beauty has reached noble people. Again, it is necessary to make a perception that if we are talking about the upper class, then beauty primarily meant the package of the looks, intelligence and character of the girl, rather than her physical attractiveness alone. In a word, the glory of beauty is an allegory of the mind and intelligence of *Kaguya-hime*.

The interesting part can be seen in the scene where Kaguya-hime gives the impossible task to all five suitors seeking her hand in marriage. For example, how could they find the Buddha Cup? As the students noted, the Buddha Cup can only be found in oneself after a lifetime of experiences. This story hides a very deep nature of Japanese society, namely the concept where "deep shadow" is preferable to "superficial clarity" (Tanizaki, 1977).

On the other hand, the students noted the beautiful attitude of Kaguya-hime towards her adopted parents and Mikado. In addition, the very act of Mikado, who did not desire immortality, reveals the beauty of the "shadow" because it makes no sense for him to be immortal if Kaguya-hime is not around. This understatement was born from the concept of *shibumi* - a feeling of beauty without effort, the knowledge that also comes without effort.

The students, having read, analysed and discussed *Kaguya-hime*, learned this story as a brilliant example of the Japanese aesthetics of simplicity and unobtrusive beauty. Moreover, this story is the quintessence of reasonable restraint. The non-identical application of Propp's functions opened to students a structural understanding of this Japanese fairy tale at a deeper, emotional and psychological level. On the other hand, being a mythological or even magical projection, this tale appears to readers as a visually exciting experience of interaction between a person and the essence of inhuman nature. The students noted that being the quintessence of Kaguya's reasonable restraint, the fairy tale expresses the inhuman sadness and longing of the heroine, expressed through emotional ranges, reflected by the isolating mental upheavals of the doomed existence of a young woman in earthly conditions. The constant pressure of her parents to get her married, to aggravate her life against Kaguya's wishes, confronts the reader with the invisibly fatal fact of the relationship between human and non-human relationships. Kaguya's departure back to the moon with the dispassionate face of the Buddha is a manifestation of the cyclic nature of natural and human existence. In analyzing this tale, students emphasized the difference in story lines with an overwhelming number of magical fairy tales in Western culture, where the protagonist or main character ends the story in a positive way. And, that the text's naming is not subject to Propp's functional morphology, which once again shows the structural difference in the narrative of Japanese fairy tales.

CONCLUSION

The fairy tales of Japan are fascinating because they are unique, and the characters are almost impossible to confuse with any images from other myths and legends. In the second approach, by using the possible functions of Propp as a methodological framework, students could observe clearly the distinctive features of the characters in the three different Japanese fairy tales. It was also revealed that, from the point of view of cognitive complexity, most Japanese fairy tales could be characterized as a work with a unique plot, with a limited number of characters, and short in volume.

The use of Propp's functions helps to reveal "invisible layers" of the fairy-tales, so that while reading the fairy tales, students could focus and seek for the answers within the framework. It makes them think and explore the meaning and storyline, as well as understand the foundation for the structural-typological study of the narrative of the fairy tales. Even though they finally could not find the content that suits the framework, they understood that the characteristics of most Japanese fairy tales are not based on heroic epic stories. From the analysis of this study, it is found that Propp's functions framework suits well with the fairy-tale of *Momotaro* because the story has obvious hero and villain characters. Another fairy tale that is similar to *Momotaro* is *Issun Boushi*, which is not discussed here. However, only some of Propp's functions suit the other famous Japanese fairy tales such as *Tsuru no Ongaeshi*, *Kaguya Hime,* and *Urashima Taro* because we cannot really see black and white characters as dominant in these stories. This is because most Japanese fairy tales focus on the aesthetic parts of human behaviour and nature rather than ethics and morality.

It follows that the idea of a rigid narrative structural model underlying all complex narratives is not stable and culturally specific. It can be said that Propp's functions are not inherently full-blown in universalism, however, they can help students in analysing a text as a list of actions in a specific order. Since the purpose of Propp's model is to highlight the various actions that function in relation to the holistic logic of the fairy tale, the understanding of the relationship between folklore and literature must be modified, taking into account the application of Propp's functions, to include oikos types of structure and content. It is the students' understanding of distinctive imagery that, in addition to a specific inclination towards a certain plot, within a stable cross-cultural framework, there may also exist culturally preferred structural patterns like Japanese fairy tales. Future research should try to develop a structure suitable for the storylines of Japanese fairy tales so that the methodology can be used to expand the assimilation of not only plot differences, but also in the learning activities and study of the linguistic nuances of Japanese fairy tales.

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