

# Development of a 2D Digital Animated Mwaghavul Folktale for Teaching and Learning of Oral Literature in Primary Schools

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**Abstract:** *The forces of this globalisation have brought new ways of relaxation where the younger generation and adults alike no longer make use of their native folktales despite the socio-cultural, educational and recreational values encapsulated in the tales. This study aims at developing and testing Mwaghavul folktales as edutainment tools for teaching and learning oral literature in Nigerian primary schools with a focus on selected schools in Plateau State, Nigeria. To achieve this, the methodologies that adopted were experimental and evaluation. Experimental shall develop the tool and establish the relation between the use of the tool and teaching/learning outcomes while evaluation shall ensure the measure of the effective use of the tool. The research will employ the survey method in gathering data for this study. The major outcome of the work will be a 5-10 minutes 2D animation for pupils age 5-12 years old. The result of the study will be visible in the motivation of both teachers and learners of oral literature in the teaching and learning process; stimulation of interest in both teachers and learners; making available indigenous digital materials to ease delivery of subject content and understanding for both teachers and learners of oral literature in primary schools.*

**Keywords:** edutainment, development, testing, teaching, learning, oral literature

## 1. Introduction

The Nigerian National Policy on Education (2013) enshrines the use of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction in lower primary schools. Although the decision to use indigenous languages as a medium of instruction in lower primary schools was made in 1977, the implementation of this policy statement was and is still hampered by the non-availability of educational materials especially in minority languages such as Mwaghavul, Berom, Ngas, Taroh, Ejagham and many more. There was a need to revise the Nigerian National Policy on Education to reflect the global dynamism and the 21<sup>st</sup>-century realities in every sector. Subsequently, the Nigerian National Policy on Education was revised; section 2 of the NPE (2013) now has three distinct paragraphs that address the basic educational objectives of Early Child Care to Post-Secondary Education. In Section 2a: Early Child Care Development and Education (0-4), Paragraph 16j states:

Government shall...ensure that the medium of instruction is primarily the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community and to this end will: develop the orthography of more Nigerian languages; and produce textbooks, supplementary readers, and other instructional materials in Nigerian languages.

Section 2b paragraph 17e stipulates that one of the objectives of education at the pre-primary level is to “inculcate in the child the spirit of inquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music, and the use of toys, etc. ”. In the sub-section of Primary Education, paragraph 20d states: “the medium of instruction in primary school shall be the language of the immediate environment for the three years in monolingual communities”. These references from the NPE buttress the

need to make available educational materials in indigenous languages to facilitate learning as enshrined in the NPE. The government commits the responsibility of implementing the NPE to schools and scholars.

The motivation for this study is in response to this responsibility. There is the need to transform the already existing indigenous folklore materials which are at the brink of extinction as an edutainment resource for the teaching and learning of oral literature in Nigerian schools. According to Okan (2012), edutainment is a mixed genre combining learning and fun. It relies mostly on visual material, narrative or game-like formats. The purpose of edutainment is to attract and hold the attention of the learners by engaging their emotions through a computer monitor full of vividly coloured animations. Similarly, “edutainment” suggests entertaining learning materials, which contain messages addressed to both teachers and learners. Through explicit educational claims, edutainment software encourages the teachers and learners to believe that learning can be enjoyable and fun.

Nigeria manifests prodigious and diverse evidence of folklore materials that includes poetic genres such as praise poetry, sacred chants, songs, incantations, parables, riddles, idiomatic expressions, and proverbs. However, this study will be narrowed to the folktales of the Mwaghavul people of Nigeria. The choice of folktales is quite deliberate because of their richness in authentic sources of raw African values. It is purposely used to inculcate positive values in the listeners because they are didactic and morality-laden and driven. They are generally about human beings and animals and they were the best form of entertainment for both children and adults. Adeyemi (1997) affirming this position writes that folktales can be promoted:

... if the government, the parents, educational planners, publishers and teachers work together to halt the emergence of pop culture ravaging our nursery schools, Day care centres, and individual homes nationwide. The involvement of all stakeholders in standing up to the utilization of folktales in the education of children is germane.

One method of creative textual production available to researchers is leveraging existing technology to produce teaching and learning materials that will impact learning as well safeguard our indigenous cultural materials.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought in its wake a plethora of problems as well as robust opportunities. More than ever before indigenous cultures and traditions on which most of the African arts nursed from its milk are been threatened by forces of globalisation creating what Ahmed Yerima summarises as 'rootless' African citizens. Globalisation has brought new ways of relaxation where the younger generation and adults alike no longer make use of their native folktales despite the socio-cultural, educational and recreational values encapsulated in the tales. Thus, in some instances, especially children's leisure time, the narration of folktales has declined and is gradually going into extinction. The youth and children do not seem to have a good knowledge of indigenous folktales since a good number of them are exposed to foreign animated fairy tales and texts currently supported by modern technology. The exposure of children to animated folklores of different Eurocentric culture is a common phenomenon in most Nigerian homes and classrooms, even though these tales content (value, moral) and plot, may not adequately meet the needs of the Nigerian child because they do not conform to the African socio-cultural values. Children are more exposed to tales such as *Cinderella*, *Jack and the Bean Stalk*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Aladin and the Forty Thieves*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Princess and the Frog*, *Tangled*, *Rapunzel*, *Barbie*, *Tom and Jerry*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Musketeers*, rather than tales of *Daafwanki Daakur*, *Daafwan Dí Ndumu Fuut Kàa*, *Mee Ngukwatki Ndaajii Diimat*, *Soghokì Daafwanki Nlumwat*, *Ar Dí Nlumwatmo Baa La* among others. The elites prefer Eurocentric animatic films which are believed makes the children more proficient in the English Language.

Lamenting on the influence of western texts on the educational process of the African child, Nyamnjoh (2012) argued that education is the impartation of facts as knowledge and also a set of values used in turn to appraise the knowledge question. Therefore, when values are not appropriate or broadly shared, the knowledge acquired through this system of education becomes irrelevant and cosmetic. The graphic picture of the kind of education the Nigerian child is exposed to depict the concern of this project on the need to foster and vigorously encourage the use of technology for the promotion of education and entertainment that embraces African endogenous content. The non-availability of oral literature materials in anthologies, small finger book texts, and animation has affected the usage of these folktales in the school system.

Despite the NPE's position on the use of indigenous languages and content in the early school stage, this policy statement is not backed up with commensurate educational materials. There is at the moment, a dearth of indigenous teaching and learning materials that will enhance both teachers' and learners' interest in Nigerian oral tradition especially of minority languages which is fundamentally a result of non-recognition of the cultural lore as a form worthy of serious academic attention in our educational system, hence the insufficient production of its texts among scholars. The need for this study is enormous; the choice of the proposed indigenous community is to serve as a springboard for other indigenous communities to pick up this challenge of production of indigenous teaching/learning and entertainment materials for the Nigerian primary schools.

Furthermore, from the observation made by the researchers, the Mwaghavul folktales are not a common feature any more in the daily lives of the people in the 21st century, due to modernisation and most people seem to not know of the existence of such stories. Also, many adults or parents rarely or never tell folktales to their children any longer. This creates a worrisome gap that this study intends to fill. The urgent need for research to develop indigenous edutainment materials which take into consideration the socio-cultural values of indigenous literature cannot be over emphasised. The study hopes to revive and redeem the dearth thus making oral literature more vibrant and recognisable. It will help in preserving and popularising the oral traditions in our society and make it accessible as a contemporary learning resource to the global community through digitalisation as specified in the NPE (2013).

### Research Objectives

The objectives of this work are to:

- 1) Retrieve and write scripts from the already collected, transcribed and translated four Mwaghavul folktales.
- 2) Develop a model for the animation and produce the edutainment tools from the collected Mwaghavul folktales.
- 3) Test the edutainment materials in primary schools.
- 4) Carry out advocacy using the developed edutainment tools in primary schools communities.

### Research Questions

This study answers the following questions:

- 1) What methods can be explored to retrieve and write the script from the already collected, transcribed and translated four Mwaghavul folktales?
- 2) To what extent can Mwaghavul folktales be appropriate to develop a model for animation and the production of edutainment tools?
- 3) How can the developed edutainment tools be used as educational tools in primary schools?
- 4) How can advocacy impact the usage of the developed edutainment tools in primary schools communities?

### 3. Literature Review

A burgeoning body of literature exists on the need to incorporate technology in the teaching and learning process. There are three strands of academic literature that this project will engage with: the concept of edutainment, submissions that classify folktales as a literary and artistic expression for children and the functional theory. Dikul and Kiting (2019) in their study found that learning by using role-playing strategies which use comic media will make the students feel happy, relaxed, and not stressed in the learning. According to them, the learning method by using comic media can also motivate students to better understand a problem. This position is affirmed by Ladson-Billings (2014) and Gay (2013), and they added that using culturally relevant pedagogic materials improves the educational experiences of students. Scholars continuously advocate for the integration of technology in the teaching and learning process and that this would enhance the learning process for both teachers and learners. Kim, Song, Lee & Amy Bach (2018) posited that a teacher can use the right comics to motivate students in increasing reading interest. The main role of comics in language teaching is to motivate students' interest in learning foreign languages. This can be combined among the use of comics with the use of teaching methods to promote the teaching and learning of oral literature. Argan, & Sever (2010) affirmed that the main purpose of edutainment is to attract students' attention and to make them focus on events and teaching materials during learning. Employing this creativity can help teachers to ease the teaching and learning process, hence learning becomes more fun, cheerfully presented, and in a conducive effective environment. Accordingly, the use of comics and storybooks is one of the methods that teachers can apply in the teaching process in the classroom to attract students to engage in learning oral literature. Characters and personalities contained in comics or storybooks can motivate students from the positive side. In addition, Dikul, J. and Kiting, R (2019), stated that through the learning outcomes found in animated folktales students can acquire knowledge and develop a creative personality to enhance intellect through the activities of reading and exploration of knowledge using various media. Therefore, folklore materials available should be utilized and the use of storybook material as a means of obtaining knowledge.

Some aspects make the researchers choose folklore. One aspect of the researchers' selection of animal stories is due to the elements of entertainment, teaching and also preserving the tradition that is still abundant in the story. The function or purpose of the animal story selection is a goal or direction as well as a role that one wants to achieve. In this case, the function and purpose of the selected animal story can be used as a guide in clarifying each argument raised on the matter. Generally, folktales on animal stories are entertaining for the people. So with the unusual humour elements in this folklore, it will indirectly attract students' interest to pay attention during the learning session. A creative teacher is either using a humorous element or is spontaneously done when it comes to recognizing that their students seem less interested or bored with their teaching. The humour elements found in the folklore itself will automatically create a more fun learning atmosphere.

Also, works on Children's Literature have argued in favour of the classification of folktales as a vibrant and fertile legacy worthy of academic discourse (Usman, 2018; Emenyonu, 2015; Diala-Ogamba, 2015; Iworetok, 2017). One of the basic assumptions of this study is that children draw from flora and fauna in their socio-cultural environment to comment on life. While previous studies of children folklore reveal socialisation processes that sustain and modify the conduct and behaviour of the child in a given community, the studies have not adequately addressed the issues of using these indigenous materials as a formal means of edutainment creation and how nature is employed to depict other topical issues such as nature's interplay with the concept of gender wealth creation in the process of children's socialisation.

Several critical theories have been used to study African oral literature in general and folktales in particular. These theories are subsumed into three broad categories as impressionistic, anthropolinguistic and sociological. These theories, according to some African oral literature scholars, are inadequate in engaging debates and explicating the meanings and usefulness of oral texts. Muleka (2014) argued that "the use of western theories, some developed to respond to written literature, cannot adequately and accurately explain some of the oral literature dimensions that are purely uniquely African, thus the need to come up with relevant theoretical approaches". Laudable as Muleka's (2014) submission may be, Masinjila (1992) cautions that theories should be ostensible facilitators of literary criticisms, and therefore it should aim at interpreting and synthesizing ideas and concepts that will elucidate the aesthetics of the oral art.

In line with Masinjila's (1992) cautionary note, this study is multidisciplinary, hence adopts an eclectic framework that will address the objectives of the study. Bearing in mind theories like evolutionary theory, historical-geographical or diffusionist theory, structural-functional theory, functional theory, aesthetic theory, formalist theory, structuralist theory, rhetorical theory, and many more, this study, as earlier stated adopts an eclectic approach, which combines theories and concepts for the interrogation of the data. The theory that will be adopted is the functional theory. Functionalism is a theoretical view that tries to explain folklore and other socio-cultural events in terms of their functions or effects on the wider social or cultural system. Functionalism was fully introduced into folklore by Bascom (1954) in his essay entitled, "Four Functions of Folklore.". In this essay, Bascom enjoined Folklorists to pay more attention to the social and cultural contexts of folklore and the functions that folklore fulfils in society. Furthermore, he defines and illustrates four particular functions of folklore. The first is an escape; that is, escape in fantasy from the restrictions and frustrations imposed on the individual by his or her society or environment. For example, Zuni folktale motifs concerning the abandonment of children might permit the expression of resentment against children that the Zuni could not express more directly. The second function is validation; folklore can be used to justify the rituals and institutions of the society. A myth might be used to justify a particular ritual, or a proverb might be used to support a particular course of action as appropriate. The third function is education. Folklore can inculcate the values of society in



the younger generation. Folktales frequently illustrate moral principles and describe the consequences of failing to strictly obey them. The role of folklore in education is noted as particularly important in non-literate societies in which all education is conducted orally or through customary example. The fourth function is social control; folklore can be used to reward and punish individuals to ensure conformity to group standards. A traditional song, riddle, or proverb can be recited to express disapproval or ridicule someone who has violated a social norm. Bascom explains that the functions of folklore are not limited to the aforementioned, but are cardinal. Each function contributes to the sustenance of a cultural system through time. The functional theory thus became a basic element in the teaching and explication of folklore and ways of ensuring the survival of the society. Given the important roles of folktales in indigenous society, the proposed project will rely on testing the functionality of folktales in research communities using functional theories.

With the growing rate of lack of interest in and dearth of indigenous content teaching materials in most African countries in general and Nigeria in particular, this research hopes to fill the gap of near-absence and silence cast over the production of indigenous animation as a teaching and learning aids. The study fills a lacuna of under utilisation of the folktale genre, thereby extending scholarship on oral literature.

### 3.1 Research Methodology

The methodologies that were employed in this research are experimental and evaluation. Experimental covered the development of the tool and establish the relation between the use of the tool and teaching/learning outcomes while evaluation measured the effectiveness of the tool.

### 3.2 Research Design

The research employed the survey method in gathering the data for this study. The researcher chose a survey research design because it best answered the questions and the purposes of the study. Survey research enables a group of people or items to be studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of an entire group. In other words, only a part of the population of the Mwaghavul people provided the data, and findings from this are expected to be generalised to the entire population (Nworgu, 2006) defined survey research as assessing public opinion or individual characteristics by the use of questionnaire and sampling methods. The current study involved the development and testing of edutainment tools from Mwaghavul folktales. The primary data were retrieved from already collected, transcribed and translated folktales and transformed into a script and storyboard. The research is interdisciplinary, where oral literature interacts with digital technology. The amassed data were analysed structurally and descriptively.

### 3.3 Sample and sampling technique

In this study designed towards retrieving and developing edutainment tools for the teaching of oral literature in Primary Schools, the population will be the total number of primary schools in Mangu LGA, Plateau State, Nigeria. The sample will be four Primary Schools in the area. The archived Mwaghavul folktales will make up the population from which the sample folktales for this study will be chosen. The sample will compose of two animal tales and two human-animal tales.

### 3.4 Data collection

Semi-structured interview with educational officers at the ministry of education, teachers and students/pupils, non-participant observation and visual research are the methods used in this study. From the interview with the educational officers at the ministry of education, teachers and students/pupils, the main problem associated with teaching and learning oral literature were ascertained. The folktales to be used were retrieved from the already collected, transcribed, translated and archived folktales in the Mwaghavul Folktale offline Database.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Contingency tables for the response of the pre-test and post-test were prepared. The mean and standard deviation were calculated in every set, for both the pre-test and post-test using simple percentage. In order to examine the effectiveness of the developed edutainment material, the difference between the pre-test and post-test responses were calculated and compared.

### Edutainment tools development

The data were analysed and prototypes were developed by the animation practitioner and evaluated. The evaluations are divided into two stages, pre-test and post-test. Among the aspect evaluated in the pre-test and post-test are design, readability, message and motivation. Visual, text describing (scriptwriting) visual and voice reading the selected folktales will be employed as a component of the animation design process.

The combination of visual, text, dialogue and narrating simple storyline to depict the animation as reading a storybook were employed during the production process. The animation development process is the most important stage in this research and it is depicted in Figure 1.

The idea is to create an animated series based on Mwaghavul folklore to enhance the teaching and learning experience. The work will be a 2D animation that runs for about 5-10 minutes. The target audiences were pupils age 5-12 years old.



Figure 1: The animation development process

**Testing of edutainment tools:** The researchers visited the selected primary schools for the study and the edutainment tools developed were used for two purposes. First to present the tools to the teachers and train them on their use. Secondly, to teach the pupils during the class storytelling sessions. The effectiveness was evaluated through the responses of the participants.

#### 4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

##### Details of the study results

The current study was conducted using two approaches; the development of the animated stories and the testing of the animated stories in classroom situation with the total sample size of 158 pupils belonging to different schools as shown in Table 1 and Table 2. The result shows responses expressed by the pupils in the pre-test and post-test in questions asked like: do you understand the stories, enjoyed the stories, prefer to listen, like to read or watch the animated version.

#### 5. Result and Discussion

##### Using the developed edutainment (animated folktales) to enhance preservation and accessibility

Technology has provided a vast ambience for the transformation of oral material as educational resources as well as serving the purpose of entertainment. This a technique that enables the visualisation of these materials while creating a lasting memorable learning experience. The animated stories were converted into a teaching material as seen in figure 2. This is the first creation and attempt at producing Mwaghavul folktales as teaching and learning materials. Although the purpose of this research is to produce an educational entertaining material, it is necessary to state that, the approach adopted will enhance the efforts made by oral scholars to preserve cultural material through technology.



Figure 2

##### Using the developed edutainment (animated folktales) as a teaching material

In every human society, impacting the lives of the young ones is a very critical issue. So, it is in Mwaghavul land where everything and almost anything including folktales is used to train the children; the purpose being to secure their future. This research examines the efficacy of Mwaghavul animated folktales in school children. Dorji Penjore avers that folktales are “more pedagogic devices and less literary works, deliberately composed to inculcate values in children with no formal instruction on what and what not to do” (263). Folktales can, to some extent, be said to reveal the soul of a given society; they express their hopes, wishes, desire and beliefs about the world. They are often the product of preliterate imagination, simple and plain without any pretention of being scientific. The tales, as well as the characters, have constant functions throughout the narration. This research compared the impact of the narrated story as

well as the animated on the school children selected for this study.

##### Result from the first phase oral narration of the selected story

Mwaghavul folktales can be used as a pedagogical springboard to encourage children’s imaginative and critical thinking by asking the listeners to self-evaluate their experiences at the end of a story session. To illustrate how this might occur in a classroom, four selected story were narrated and the children had the opportunity to express their views through guided questions. Table 1, 2 and 3. present the demographic response of the children to each question asked.

Table 1: Demographic Details

Variables		No. of Pupils	Percentage
Gender	Male	80	50.6
	Female	78	49.4
Schools	LGEA Primary School Kerang	32	20.2
	LGEA Ampang-West	37	23.4
	Central Primary School Panyam	40	25.3
	Pilot Model Primary School Bungaha	49	31
Total		158	

Table 1: Result from the first phase oral narration of the selected story

Schools	No in Class	Number of Pupils							
		Understood		Enjoyed		Preference		Watch	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
LGEA Primary School Kerang	32	17	10	20	12	20	12	20	12
LGEA Ampang-West	37	16	18	16	18	16	18	16	18
Central Primary School Panyam	40	19	14	24	15	25	15	25	15
Pilot Model Primary School Bungaha	49	11	26	19	27	19	28	19	29
Total	158	63	68	79	72	80	73	80	74
Mean	39.5	15.75	17	19.75	18	20	18.25	20	18.5

Table 2: Result from the second phase oral narration of the selected story

Schools	No in Class	Number of Pupils – Non Mwaghavul Speakers							
		Understood		Enjoyed		Preference		Watch	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
LGEA Primary School Kerang	32	16	12	16	14	20	12	20	12
LGEA Ampang-West	37	14	23	14	24	14	24	14	23
Central Primary School Panyam	40	24	15	24	16	24	15	24	16
Pilot Model Primary School Bungaha	49	20	29	20	28	20	27	20	29
Total	158	74	79	78	78	78	78	80	78
Mean	39.5	18.5	19.75	18.5	20.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	20

Comparing the understanding of the folktales

To test the understanding that animated folktales will facilitate the pupils understanding when it is used for teaching, the study was conducted on a sample of 158 pupils in four schools in a Nigerian State, Plateau. To measure the impact of the animation on the pupils’ understanding of the folktales; the average difference of the responses in pre-test and post-test was calculated.

Table 4: Details of the comparison response in four different areas of interest

	Understood		Enjoyed		Preference		Watch	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Mean	32.75	38.25	37.75	39	38.25	39	38.5	39.5

6. Discussion

The study shows that in all the variables measured the pupils had a more impactful learning experience during the storytelling session facilitated by the animation. The final result in Table 4 of the study shows the mean score of the pupils response to be 32.75 for the pre-test and 38.25 for the post test. The difference in the mean of the traditional storytelling session and the experience facilitated with the animation as educational material is 5.5. This shows that the pupils had a better understanding of the animated folktales than the oral narration without the aid of the animation.

As shown in Table 4 the comparison of the pupils who enjoyed the animated storytelling session reveals a difference in the level of entertainment the pupils derived

from both sessions. The study shows mean score to be 37.75 in the pre-test and 39 in the post-test. The difference in the mean is 1.25. This shows animation has played crucial role in enhancing the enjoyment of the folktales by the pupils. Comparing the pupils’ response in whether they would prefer the animated storytelling session to the traditional method, the difference in response as seen in Table 4 reveals a score difference in the pretest and posttest. The scores established in Table 2 and 3, show that 38.25 prefer the traditional method, while 39 prefer the session where the animated version was used. The mean difference between the two is 0.75. Although slightly lower, than the other variables, there is still a significant difference in the score. This implies that the storytelling session facilitated by the animated folktales remains the most preferred by the students.

The result to test if the pupils would like to watch the animated version of the folktales shows a mean of 38.5 for the pretest and 39.5 for the posttest, giving a mean difference of 1.00. Again, it is proved that the animation facilitates the pupils attention from start to finish and they would want to experience this sessions again. The analysis of the scores obtained by the students provides sufficient evidence for this.

The researchers observed during the course of the study that the pupils, especially in the semi-urban environment were more attracted by the animation instructional material used. As the folktales were in the form of animation, pupils easily understood the message as revealed by their body language



and facial expressions. However, when they were asked if they would love to have this method of teaching, many while responding positively were concerned with the electronic gadgets needed as well as power supply. This for the moment is the limitation of the use of this method of teaching folktales to primary school children in semi-urban and rural communities.

## 7. Conclusion

With the help of computer-mediated communication techniques, especially by using tools like animation, teachers are able to give distinct learning experience to the pupils. In general, animation can help to present a complex concept in a simpler form, to create interest among the pupils, to motivate towards learning and to draw pupils' attention on particular lessons inherent in the folktales, which eventually facilitate better learning of their cultural values. The use of animation can turn passive pupils into active learners and co-producers of knowledge and enhance learning abilities of pupils in the classroom setting and it can provide positive stimulus to pupils in most of the subjects they study. However, the degree of improvement in pupils' learning of their cultural values through animated folktales may largely depend on the design of the animated content and also on the mode of presentation of instruction material in the classroom.

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