


Development of a 2D Digital Animation for Yorùbá Folktale Narrative

Alade Samuel Mayowa, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8186-1640>

ABSTRACT

Yoruba folktales are endangered in the face of globalization, Westernization, and inter-ethnic interaction, with the few that are available not being competitive with foreign cartoons and movies. The purpose of this work is to develop a digital animation film using Yoruba folktale narrative as a case study with a view to providing a framework to enhance the production of animated folktales as well as supporting Africa's rich cultural heritage, using relevant technology resources. The resulting folktale animation was evaluated by both the target audience and multimedia experts. The formal digital animation system resulting from the study is useful for formal and informal children's education and enlightenment as well as a source of enlightenment for society on different sociocultural problems which invariably results in a more conscious and civilized society.

KEYWORDS

Animation, Culture, Education, Entertainment, Language, Moral Values, Multimedia, Narratives, Simulation, Technology, Virtual Reality, Yoruba Folktales

INTRODUCTION

Culture, education, entertainment, and folklore are intimately connected. Technology, ethnic dynamics, and globalization are now impacting African culture. Today's youth have much affinity for Western culture as it is usually represented by values, ideologies, and philosophies. This is certainly growing with the relentless rise of other cultures such as the Western culture. They are helped by the influx of Western folktales and films that are enhanced by technology in a competitive manner, even if they are not known by people who should preserve them. This study points out why the use of animation should enhance and preserve African folktales, especially Nigerian Yoruba folktales. In reality, they seem to have little or no knowledge of the stories because they are more exposed to Western stories like Cinderella than to Anansi, Ijapa ologbon ewe, and so on that are rich in culture without any violence like in much media today.

Culture is societally structured. This determines what is important and meaningless amongst the same language and belief group of people. As an integral part of human life, culture becomes widely known through oral communication used to express speech, songs, stories, and folktales, and proverbs. In this way, a society learns its own history, literature, and other information, through the generations (Guèye, 2008).

Storytelling has been part of long-standing oral communication practices (Adejumo, 2009), which has played a significant role in the learning and culture of people around the world in all walks of life (Garzotto & Forfori, 2006). Hodges (2014) affirmed that storytelling occurs and affects people

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due to its significance for social change. Culture itself is not, in fact, constrained, but the scope of its development and authentic evolution is determined by the tangible and intangible component of the material environment in which we live. Through the instrument of human language and technology, these experiences are conceived, transferred, and transformed into narratives.

Several scholars define the term *narrative* according to their respective fields of application. Chafe (1980) defined narrative as the most important and constant form of human expression irrespective of ethnicity and language. Tuffield et al. (2006) and Zarri (2012) stated that narrative is a coherent, logical, temporal arrangement and an ordered sequence of elementary events. Eisenberg and Finlayson (2019) noted that narratives and stories are ubiquitous, meaning they are found in every age, every place, and in every society used by everybody in a wide variety of forms. Finlayson et al. (2010) classified narratives into four modes, namely: formal, very formal, conventional, and informal. The traditional form includes fairy tales, fables, folktales, legends, and fabula of myths. Here, *folktales* are sayings, verbal compositions, and social rituals handed down from one generation to the next through word of mouth (Abrams & Harpham, 2011).

Folktale usually refers to stories like fairy tales, animal tales, and tales of wonder, which normally involve magical elements. Indeed, folktales are basically stories that involve a world of imaginations with surroundings, full of magical humans and animals with supernatural powers and features. Natasi (2011) stated that UNESCO is disturbed by how intangible cultural traditions are being endangered. These include Chinese puppetry, Mexican mariachi music, and poetic dueling in Cyprus, as well as African folktales, especially the Yoruba folktales.

Nevertheless, due to Westernization and technology, the Yoruba traditional folktales are at risk of going into extinction. Although researchers have tried to develop the art of digital storytelling, Yoruba folktales are yet to be produced through multimedia technology. This is because globalization, technology, multicultural interactions, and the influx of Western folktale films and movies enhanced with technology have affected African culture (Akorede, 2018). Pager (2013) stated that traditional culture is in danger of annihilation, and the effects of globalization (technology inclusive) extend distant corners of the world, thus putting pressure on the existing cultural diversity that has hitherto resisted change. In addition, Filani et al. (2003) corroborated Akorede and Pager's claims that technology, as well as the influx of western folktale films and films, was the most significant factor influencing African culture, which made it impossible to grow.

In this century, the rapid development of digital technology is constantly bringing innovations to education and entertainment. Its use affects the environment of learning and teaching, so it has changed the looks of education and entertainment. Works on visualization and visual perception have, therefore, become important (Guo, 2017). Based on this fact, multimedia technology refers to the integration of various types of media such as audio, video, sound, text, graphics, and animation for the delivery of information using digital computer devices (Malik & Agarwal, 2012).

In addition, this paper illustrates why African folk tales, especially Nigerian Yoruba folk tales, should be enhanced and preserved through the use of technology and aims to reverse the trend of culture dearth by using computer animation to create a cartoon or film clip of a selected Yoruba folktale in order to advance cultural heritage, encourage educational growth and incorporate it into the entertainment industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Culture is defined as the total way of life. It includes literature, people, food, norms, art, entertainment, religion, ethics, and values. As a result, it is the product of individuals existing in societies. Therefore, people of all ages and gender live in a group share its culture. Nevertheless, *culture* and *society* differ in that the culture is seen as the development of educated manners, designs, and views, whereas societies are groups of those individuals having the same language, living in an area and sharing the same laws.

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