



East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences

eajass.eanso.org

Volume 8, Issue 2, 2025

Print ISSN: 2707-4277 | Online ISSN: 2707-4285

Title DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/2707-4285>



EAST AFRICAN
NATURE &
SCIENCE
ORGANIZATION

Original Article

Analysing the Lexicogrammatical Patterns of Alur folktales

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Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.8.2.3363>

Date Published: ABSTRACT

21 July 2025

Keywords:

*Alur Folktales,
Clause,
Sentence,
Lexicogrammar,
Lexicogrammatical
Patterns.*

Alur folktales are a prose orature narrative genre of the Alur which have been transmitted orally across generations. They contain distinct and recognisable lexicogrammatical patterns that shape meaning across them, reflect their communicative purposes and permit us to understand how language functions in different social contexts. The aim of this paper was to examine the lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales to reveal their genre-unique lexicogrammatical structure at the sentence level. The study adopted a qualitative descriptive design and was underpinned by the Systemic Functional Linguistics approach (SFL) to genre theory. Within SFL, genre analysis was adopted as a methodological framework to examine the lexicogrammatical patterns realising meaning at the sentence stratum. Six Alur folktales selected from a corpus of 51 folktales collected through audio recording were analysed. The study findings reveal that three types of sentences are employed in Alur folktales, including simple, compound, and complex sentences, each of which performs a specific communicative function. A sentence consists of three elements encompassing participant, process, and circumstance realised by nominals, verb groups, and adverbials, respectively. Another recurring genre-unique lexicogrammatical pattern of Alur folktales is that non-human participants are personified. Hence, the lexicogrammatical resources used for human actors are also deployed for non-human entities. Alur folktales are narrated in the simple past and simple present tenses. The indicative and imperative moods are used. The analysis of the sentence structure also revealed that the message is structured into a theme and a rheme. Thus, the research concludes that Alur folktales are instances of language use. They are characterised by specific lexicogrammatical resources which create meanings in the folktales and define their narrative genre nature. The study recommends the use of Alur folktales not just for entertainment and imparting moral values, but also as resources for casting light on how language functions in different social contexts.

APA CITATION

Unega, C., Mugumya, L. & Kasule, H. (2025). Analysing the Lexicogrammatical Patterns of Alur folktales. *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 8(2), 777-793. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.8.2.3363>

CHICAGO CITATION

Unega, Cwinya'ay, Levis Mugumya and Hawa Kasule. 2025. "Analysing the Lexicogrammatical Patterns of Alur folktales." *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* 8 (2), 777-793. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.8.2.3363>.

HARVARD CITATION

Unega, C., Mugumya, L. & Kasule, H. (2025), "Analysing the Lexicogrammatical Patterns of Alur folktales", *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 8(2), pp. 777-793. doi: 10.37284/eajass.8.2.3363.

IEEE CITATION

C., Unega, L., Mugumya & H., Kasule "Analysing the Lexicogrammatical Patterns of Alur folktales", *EAJASS*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 777-793, Jul. 2025.

MLA CITATION

Unega, Cwinya'ay, Levis Mugumya & Hawa Kasule. "Analysing the Lexicogrammatical Patterns of Alur folktales". *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, Vol. 8, no. 2, Jul. 2025, pp. 777-793, doi:10.37284/eajass.8.2.3363

INTRODUCTION

Alur folktales are a prose narrative orature genre of the Alur people, members of the Nilotic tribe situated in Zombo, Nebbi, Pakwach and Arua Districts in Uganda. The Alur are also located in Ituri Province in the northeastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Alur folktales consist of fictional and characteristically anonymous, timeless, and placeless traditional stories circulated primarily orally among the Alur people across generations, although there is a decline in their oral performances in modern Alur society. Alur folktales serve as a powerful resource, primarily functioning to entertain, educate, persuade, moralise, and transmit Alur cultural values to Alur community members. They also play an important role in shaping world perceptions and enhancing social bonds within the community.

As a genre, Alur folktales are defined by their genre patterns, which represent conventional recognisable structures, including the generic structure, the rhetorical organisation, the lexicogrammatical structure, and the discourse-semantic features. These patterns help Alur folktales' users swiftly recognise and understand the type of content they are engaging with. Thus, analysing genre patterns involves examining the recurring features, language choices, and overall organisation within Alur folktales. Literature shows that less is known about the genre patterns of Alur folktales. The few studies that exist on them explore non-genre pattern aspects. This study was limited to the analysis of the

lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales at the sentence level because a sentence is the centre of meaning in a genre. In fact, sentences constitute the basic units through which meanings are realised in the folktales, and understanding the structure and components of a sentence is crucial for comprehending various meanings expressed across Alur folktales.

Lexicogrammar, also called lexical grammar, is a term used in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to emphasise the interdependence of vocabulary (lexis) and syntax (grammar). The term, introduced by renowned linguist Halliday, is an amalgamation of the words *lexicon* and *grammar* with the adjective *lexicogrammatical* deriving from them (Sinclair, 2004). The advent of corpus linguistics, notes Pearce (2007), has made the identification of lexicogrammatical patterns much easier than it once was. Sardinha (2019) asserts that lexicogrammar is a level of linguistic structure where lexis, or vocabulary, and grammar, or syntax, combine into one. At this level, words and grammatical structures are not seen as independent, but rather mutually dependent, with one level interfacing with the other. According to Sinclair (2004), lexicogrammar is fundamentally grammar with a certain amount of attention to lexical patterns within the grammatical frameworks. Hence, lexicogrammar is concerned with how words combine and the rules that govern their combination. In other words, lexicogrammar underscores the relationship between lexis and syntax, and it believes that each lexeme has its own grammar. For example, a noun is a lexeme which

has syntactical use in terms of singularity and plurality, masculinity and femininity (Irshad et al, 2021).

Indeed, analysing text means analysing its language (Brown & Yule 1983). A grammarian describing language must set out to describe the semantic functions of grammatical patterns by examining their functions in discourse, in the texts that people speak and write with each other (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Rose, 2016). This is because in genres, language is regarded as a system of functions that are employed to organise meanings (Firth in Rose, 2016). Halliday (1985b) argued that linguists who described language without considering text were barren, and describing text without relating it to language was empty. This is because genres are abstract, socially recognised ways of using language. Language is seen here as embedded in (and constructive of) social realities, since it is through recurrent use and typification of conventionalised forms that individuals develop relationships, establish communities, and get things done (Hyland, 2002). Hence, genre analysis is efficient in identifying genre-unique regularities at the phrase level-recurrent lexicogrammatical patterns which are typical of a given genre (Bhatia, 2002). In other words, genres are accompanied by a detailed lexicogrammatical description of how the various moves/phases unfold (Flowerdew, 2011). Therefore, it is essential and interesting to analyse text. Through texts, many aspects of linguistic function can be studied, such as the realisation of metafunction meaning in lexicogrammar (Ngongo et al., 2018).

According to Eggins (2004), recurrent ways of using language are developed to characterise genres. She argues that analysing a text at the level of lexicogrammar starts at the clause. Systematists parse texts into constituents, differentiate between different types of meaning in language, examine how different units are put together and separated, and examine how this organisational pattern employed can be effective in bringing differences in

meaning. In other words, systematists investigate how people use language in different contexts, and how language is structured for use as a semiotic system by focusing on the lexicogrammatical realisations of these components at the clause level.

Indeed, in prose narrative genres such as Alur folktales, language is construed as a system for making meaning. It is used to construct meaning by selecting specific lexicogrammatical resources. Here, language is a system of communication in which grammatical structures function to express meaning in context. While all languages can achieve the same basic communicative ends, they each use different means to achieve them, particularly in the divergent ways that syntax, semantics, and pragmatics interact across languages (Valin, 2005). Undeniably, the lexicogrammatical analysis of the folktale genre suggests that language is a patterned activity. At the formal level, the lexicogrammatical patterns in the folktales are patterns of meaningful organisation whereby certain regularities are exhibited over certain stretches of language activity (Halliday in Matthiessen, 2002). Notably, when people use language to make meaning, they do so in specific situations, and the form of language that they use in discourse is influenced by the complex aspects of those situations. Thus, grammar becomes a study of how people arrange the choice of words and other grammatical resources to convey their purposes (Fadlillah, 2016).

Therefore, the lexicogrammatical exploration in this study underscores the fact that Alur folktales are language products. From this lens, they are defined by the lexicogrammatical patterns that help define what makes them recognisable as belonging to a specific genre. Put differently, Alur folktales are characterised by specific lexicogrammatical choices at the level of the sentence that provide insights into how language resources are deployed to realise meanings in a narrative context. The lexicogrammatical sentence-level analysis is also valuable to understand the communicative functions

of the sentences and maintain the Alur folktales' genre conventions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is underpinned by a genre-analytic framework (Bathia, 2017; Martin, 1985; Martin & Rose, 2008). The Systemic Functional Linguistics approach (hereafter SFL) to genre theory was applied to guide genre analysis of Alur folktales. SFL is an approach to linguistics, among functional linguistics, that considers language as a social semiotic system. It views language as a resource that people use to accomplish specific purposes through expressing meaning in context (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). SFL posits that language is functional. Its function is to make meanings. These meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged. The process of using language is a semiotic process, a process of making meaning by choosing. The key elements of SFL are the three strata that make up the linguistic system in genre: meaning (semantics), sound (phonology), and wording or lexicogrammar (syntax, morphology, and lexis) (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). This study is limited to lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales, and SFL is applied to explore the large network of lexicogrammatical choices used to create meanings at the sentence level across Alur folktales.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There exists an abundant literature on the lexicogrammatical patterns of genres (for instance, Ädel, 2014; Bhatia, 2014; Eggins, 2004; Flowerdew, 2016; Green, 2019; Matthiessen, 2002; Paltridge, 2000; Walsh et al, 2021). Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) note that the interaction between lexis and grammar has become a linguistic research focus. In descriptive linguistics, the exploration of lexicogrammatical patterns of genre has given rise to lexicogrammatical and construction grammar theories, for example, systemic functional grammar (Halliday, 1994).

Lexicogrammar is still firmly a kind of grammar, laced, or perhaps spiked with some lexis. It does not integrate the two types of patterns as its name might suggest. It is fundamentally grammar with a certain amount of attention to lexical patterns within the grammatical frameworks. It is not in any sense an attempt to build together grammar and lexis on an equal basis (Sinclair, 2004).

According to Halliday (1985b), if we talk about grammar, there are three kinds of grammar. Theme is the grammar of discourse. Mood is the grammar of speech function. Then, transitivity is the grammar of experience. It is the grammar of the clause that is regarded as a structural unit for expressing a particular range of ideational meanings (Halliday, 1985b). Halliday (2002) suggests that the clause is the centre of the action in grammar. It is where fundamental choices are made. In other words, the clause is not only a constituent but a central processing unit of meaning. This position underscores the need to look at the sentence elements to understand how meanings are created in a genre. According to Halliday (1994), a sentence/clause structure is constituted by three components encompassing the process (the activity that is going on in a clause), the participant involved in the process, and the circumstance in which process and participant are involved. Elaborations of the sentence elements are provided as follows. Butt et al (2012) explain that a participant can be a person, a place, or an object and in the grammar of a clause, the participant is realised by a nominal group, typically a noun or pronoun. According to Halliday (2004), a participant is a subject involved in the process. It is a nominal group. Process is the core of a clause that carries meaning. It expresses the activity that is going on in the clause. It is realised by a verbal group. Circumstances are the elements that provide a piece of information about "how, when, where, and why" of the process. According to Ernst (2020), circumstantial meanings are expressed through adverbials encompassing finite clauses, non-finite clauses, verbless clauses, prepositional phrases, adverb phrases, and noun

phrases. As can be noticed from the above studies, circumstances constitute peripheral elements that complement the meanings of verb groups, which carry more weight than all the other sentence components.

In the sentence grammar, each element is further subdivided into kinds representing the different roles they achieve in making meaning across genres. Hence, participants have roles such as actor, goal, sensor, phenomenon, carrier, attribute, sayers, target, behavior, existent, etc (Halliday, 2004). Process is subdivided into six types encompassing material, verbal, mental, relational, existential, and behavioural (Oktoma, 2017). Gerot and Wignell (1994) explain that circumstances are divided into seven kinds, namely, time, place, manner (consisting of means, quality, and comparison); cause (encompassing reason and purpose), accompaniment, matter, and role. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) later identified nine types of circumstances in a new pattern which is needed for the analysis of circumstances: extent, location, manner, cause, contingency, accompaniment, role, matter, and angle.

According to Halliday in Dashela (2021), there are three lines of meaning in the clause that match three grammatical patterns. Firstly, the theme functions in the structure of the clause as a message since a clause itself has meaning as a message, as a quantum of information. The theme is the point of departure for the message. It is the element the speaker selects for grounding what he is going to say. Secondly, the subject functions in the structure of the clause as an exchange. It is the element the speaker makes responsible for the validity of what he is saying. Thirdly, the actor functions in the structure of the clause as a representation; the actor is an active participant in the process. It is the element whereby the speaker portrays the one who does the deed.

Halliday (2002) expands on the grammar of clauses as representations (transitivity) to discuss the grammar of clauses as exchanges (mood and

modality) and messages (theme and rheme). Adejare (2014) examined the manifestation of mood and modality in symposia texts to identify their pattern of occurrence, compare their frequency, and account for possible differences between their manifestation and reported norms. Mood is defined as any of the several groups of forms in the conjugation of a verb that serves to indicate whether it expresses a predication, a command, a wish, or the like. It is a category of grammar that deals with the differences in the morphology of the verb (Adejare, 2014). According to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002), mood is the grammaticalization of the differences between commands and statements. It is concerned with the speaker's attitude towards the proposition, which is reflected in the form of the verb (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). Thus, mood is situated in the verbal group or both the clause and the verbal group. There are two terms in the system of mood (imperative and indicative), although some grammarians like Greenbaum (1996) recognise a third, the subjunctive mood. Imperative and indicative moods are differentiated semantically based on factuality and non-factuality (Huddleston, 1984; Quirk et al., 1985).

Quirk et al. (as cited in Adejare, 2014) define modality as the way the meaning of a clause is qualified to reflect the speaker's judgment of the likelihood of the proposition it expresses being true. As a lexicogrammatical feature of the verbal group, modality is marked by modal auxiliary verbs, although Halliday (1976), Greenbaum (1996), and Palmer (2001) separately note that it may also be marked by non-verbs such as possibility and perhaps. Modal meanings are variegated, which probably explains their diverse classificatory criteria. Palmer (1987, 1990) classifies modality into epistemic, deontic (discourse-oriented), and dynamic (subject-oriented) subtypes. Epistemic modality is concerned with the speaker's attitude to the factuality of the proposition, deontic modality relates to the subject, and dynamic modality relates to participants' roles. Epistemic and deontic modals

are the “true” modals because they have illocutionary force.

Halliday (1994) argues that the theme is seen as a universal element. In every language, there is a means for identifying what the clause is about. He defines theme as a function where a special status is assigned to one part of the clause, and rheme is the remainder. Dashela (2021) studied theme and rheme in the text of the short story entitled *Sleeping Beauty* by Charles Perrault using a Functional Grammar approach. The aims of his study were to identify theme and rheme, to classify the types and components of theme, and to describe the correlation both theme and text development. Dashela (2021) found that there are two types of themes (topical and textual themes) that could be found, while the interpersonal theme could not be found in the data. Moreover, the components of theme in the category of textual themes are conjunctive adjunct, conjunctive, structural, continuative, and conjunction. Meanwhile, for topical theme, the components of the theme are as subject and the marked topical theme (adverbial as theme).

It follows that several lexicogrammatical resources are attested in folktales, realising transitivity, mood, modality, theme, and rheme that require an investigation to increase knowledge about the semantic architecture of the folk narrative genre. Although literature indicates that a lot of studies have examined the lexicogrammatical patterns of genres, the lexicogrammatical exploration of orature genres such as Alur folktales has been given little attention. Hence, this study sets out to explore the lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales to understand how meanings are created in Alur folktales.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design. Qualitative descriptive research design in genre studies focuses on providing a detailed account of the characteristics, features, and

conventions of a specific genre or a group of genres. It aims to understand what a genre is by describing its observable elements and how it functions within a particular context (Fraenkel et al., 2012; Ponelis, 2015). In this study, a descriptive design focused on genre analysis of Alur folktales by concentrating on the exploration of the lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales at the sentence stratum. Genre analysis is regarded as a set of methods for understanding genres, how they are used, their users, and examining texts based on their purpose in the communities that use them (Swales, 1990).

Six Alur folktales selected purposively from a corpus of 51 folktales collected through recording were analyzed including *Gwenu giku Kalanga* (a hen and a groundnut); *Rombu pa gwogi i adura* (Dogs' village meeting); *Piny mamaku danu* (An abductor); *Afoyo giku rwoth* (A rabbit and a king); *Alwala ku Nyang* (a monkey and a crocodile) and *Kite ma jakwo, utit, kupino, jadwar nam, jadwar ley gamu nyarwoth oloyogi* (How the thief, glow worm, wasps, fisherman and the hunter failed to marry the king's daughter). Participants consented to being recorded prior to the recording. I ensured that they understood the purpose of the recording and assured them that the recordings would be anonymised, secured, and only used for this research purpose. A small sample size was selected for the purpose of this paper. It is justified by the need to conduct an in-depth qualitative analysis to shed light on their lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales. Leedy & Ormrod (2021) recommend that we choose only those units of analysis that can yield the most suitable information relevant to the study problem. The inclusion criteria for corpus selection were folktale types and fictionality. I ensured that various types of fictional folktales were included, although in Alur folktales, fables outnumber other folktale types.

The analysis of Alur folktales did not involve software because they are primarily transmitted orally. Close reading combined with syntactic parsing was used to examine the sentence structure

of Alur folktales. Syntactic parsing is a grammar-driven approach to genre analysis that concentrates on intra-sentence discourse-level relations. It deals with the allocation of structure to single sentences through segmentation to identify basic discourse units (Lüngen et al, 2006). In this study, syntactic parsing entailed looking at the sentence types, identifying their functions, characterising the sentence components, describing mood and modality, and examining theme and rheme, which were supposed to unveil the message structure, and exploring the lexicogrammatical realisations.

RESULTS

The exploration of the selected Alur folktales revealed that several lexicogrammatical patterns characterise them. Below, I examine and discuss the findings that emerged from the lexicogrammatical analysis of the sentence structure.

Sentence Types

A close inspection of the sentence structure suggested that three sentence types are employed in Alur folktales: simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Simple sentences are used to ensure that Alur folktales are clear and easy to understand. Hence, by using simple sentences, the narrator does his best to avoid ambiguity, misunderstanding, and miscommunication. Simple sentences are also used to create emphasis by being direct, as attested in the examples below.

(1) *Gweno uyero ni Kalanga utel yo.*

Hen told groundnut to precede her.

(2) *Kalanga kwero.*

Groundnut refused.

Compound sentences (syndetic parataxis) are utilised to link two equal ideas or thoughts. They denote the involvement/participation of characters in two connected activities as exemplified below,

where the coordinating conjunction *man* is used to connect the two independent clauses.

(3) *Ngey cwiny umaku gwenu man egamemwonyu kalanga.*

Hen was irritated and swallowed ground nuts.

Complex sentences(hypotaxis) present interrelated and interdependent ideas/thoughts. They further indicate the complexity of Alur folktale narrations, whereby entities have unequal status. Such hypotactic relations capture hierarchical sentence structures and can introduce more nuanced relationships between events and characters, allowing for deeper analysis and thematic development (Golebiowski, 2006) as illustrated below.

(4) *Sawa nyang utuc ipacu pare, eyero lembe mutime eno ceke ni juru ot pare.*

When the crocodile arrived at his home, he narrated to his relatives everything he had experienced.

Sentence/Clause Components in Alur Folktales

The analysis of the sentence structure shows that in Alur folktales, a clause/sentence is composed of the three elements below.

Participants

Participants represent the folktale actors. In Alur folktales, they can consist of human and non-human entities. Non-human participants include animals, abstract entities such as wind, supernatural beings, etc., all of which are realised by nominals encompassing common nouns, proper nouns, abstract nouns, personal pronouns, etc. Noticeably, in Alur folktales, non-human participants, for example, animals, are personified. Hence, the lexicogrammatical resources that are deployed for human participants are also utilised for non-human entities. Examples of participants are provided below.

(5) *Gwogi ku kajangu de gilar gibedo ilum.*

Dogs and cats first lived in the bush.

Process

A process represents the basic element of a clause, carrying the core meaning. It expresses the activity that is going on in the clause and is realised by a verb group. The lexicogrammatical exploration of Alur folktales indicated that six processes are employed in the folktales, including material process, verbal process, mental process, relational process, existential process, and behavioural process. They are examined below.

Material Process

Material processes denote doing or happening. They are realised by action/activity verbs (Halliday, 1994).

(6) *Samu utingu katoko pare, pala pare midwar, man eyikire pidwar.*

Samu **took** his paddle, his fishing knife and **prepared** for fishing.

It is worth noting that in Alur folktales, as Halliday (1994) suggests, material processes are not necessarily concrete, physical events. They may be abstract doings or happenings as in (7) below.

(7) *Yamu koto matek.*

The wind **blew** so widely.

As (6) and (7) above show, material processes describe the activities happening in Alur folktales.

Behavioral Process

Behavioural processes describe behaviours as illustrated below.

(8) *“Caku tin nituc awene, kendu ci wabilayu ongo i te yen” Gwogi aryo eno waco.*

“From today on, we **shall never be urinating** under a tree again,” said the two dogs.

(9) *Samu udongo ku kwo mi dwaru rec ni caku ku oro 10.*

Samu **grew up** a fisherman since the age of 10.

As (8) and (9) show, in Alur folktales, behavioural processes describe participants’ behaviours that can be judged either commendable or condemnable according to social norms.

Mental Process

Mental processes are processes of sensing, thinking, feeling and perceiving as shown in the examples below. (10) *“Eyo, atye ku paru”, Gwok acel owacu. Mapodi edaru ongo paru pare, gingeyo ongo nia yen ma gibe gilayo ithere ca lake otop.*

“Yes, I **have** an idea”, one of the dogs said. Before he finished his thought, they did not **know** that the tree under which they were urinating had rotten roots(cognition).

(11) *I adura eca Samu ubedu ngati acel madhanu zo omaru.*

In that village, he was the only man **liked** by almost everybody(affection).

In (10) and (11) above, the mental processes characterise cognition, affection, and perception of participants. This is consistent with Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), who classify mental processes into three classes: cognition (process of thinking, knowing, understanding, etc.), affection (process of liking, fearing, etc.), and perception (verbs of seeing, hearing, etc.).

Verbal Processes

Verbal processes describe saying as exemplified in the sentence below.

(12) *Ceng acel mir abije, Alwala olwongo jarimone ma Nyang ni lyewe pikwiru nindu mi nyol pa nyathin migi manicou.*

On a certain Friday, a monkey **invited** a crocodile to come and attend their son’s birthday party.

As (12) above shows, in Alur folktales, verbal processes describe participants' verbalisations. The process of verbal clause is realised by a verbal group where the lexical verb denotes saying. The participants of the processes are sayer (participant who speaks), receiver (the one to whom the verbalisation is addressed), verbiage (a name for the verbalisation itself) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Relational Processes

Relational processes are processes of being. They are realised by verbs denoting being.

1) Intensive, "x is a" (establishes a relationship of sameness between two entities).

(13) *Gwok ke **otye** jaramer man jakony pa dhanu.*

The dog **is** a friend and helper of men.

2) Circumstantial, "x is at a" (defines the entity in terms of location, time, manner).

(14) *Adura eca **obedu** kago ku dupii bor ongo ku pacu pa Samu.*

In (16) above, existential processes represent something that exists or happens. They are typically realised by the verb *be*, or some other verbs expressing existence, such as *exist*, *arise*, followed by a nominal group functioning as existent (a thing which exists in the process). The existence may be a phenomenon of any kind, and is often, in fact, an event (Emilia, 2014).

Circumstance

Circumstances are the conditions in which processes occur. They answer questions such as *when*, *where*, *why*, *how*, *how many*, and *what*. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), there are nine types of circumstances: extent, location, manner, cause, contingency, accompaniment, role, matter, and angle. They are examined below.

The village **was** near the river, not far away from Samu's home.

3) Possessive, "x has a" (indicates that one entity owns another).

(15) *Rwoth Gulugulu **obedo** kunyare acel maleng makwe.*

King Gulugulu **had** one very beautiful daughter.

As the examples above show, relational processes describe relationships between participants. The examples further indicate that there are three types of relational process in a clause in Alur folktales, including intensive, circumstantial and possessive.

Existential Processes

(16) *Con **obedo** kit leya aryo. **Obedo** leya mi pacu man leya mi lum. Leya mi lum **obedo**: -Lamvor, kwach ku mukende. Leya mi pacu **bedo**: kajangu, gwogi ku mukende mapol.*

Long ago, there **were** two categories of animals: wild animals and domestic animals. Wild animals **were** lions, leopards and so forth, and the domestic animals **included** cats, dogs, and others.

Extent

Extent can be described as the distance in space over which the purpose unfolds or the duration in time during which the process unfolds, as exemplified in (17) below.

(17) *Tic pa jadwar nam mi yeyo Nyaparwoth ku yei sawa **mi dwogo kud i polo**. Wangayo matundu ipolo **obedo ku yokiwinam**.*

The fisherman's role was to carry the king's daughter using the boat on their way **back from heaven to earth**, because **the direction to and from heaven was through the water**.

(17) above reveals that extent construes the extent of the unfolding of the process in space-time. It encompasses duration, distance, and frequency. It is lexicogrammatically realised by prepositional

phrases, noun phrases, and adverb phrases (Halliday, 2004).

Location

Location expresses the absolute place. Place includes not only location in space but also the source, path, and destination movement (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

(18) *Leya mi lum gimaro bedo i lum pikum gibedo kwiny ni juwadgi mwande. Gwogi ku kajangu de gilar gibedo ilum. Nikum kura migi maber, dhanu otingogi gidwogo kudgi i pacu. Kadok nangu kajangu de judwogo i pacu, ento mer makecha kude ku dhanu otye nok. Ento Rwoth gingeyongo nia Jadwar leya olaro oneno gi kubor.*

Wild animals prefer to stay **in the bush** because they are always harsh and cruel to others. Dogs and cats were at first called wild animals. Due to their good morals, they were brought **home from the bush**. Though cats are brought **home** by men, they are not friendly. However, King did not know that the hunter had seen them **from far**.

(18) above shows that in Alur folktales, location is the circumstantial element that basically describes the place and time of events. It answers the question *Where? When?* and is realised by the lexicogrammatical resources such as the adverbs of place and time, and prepositional phrases.

Manner

Manner expresses the way in which the process is actualised. Manner comprises four subcategories, such as means, quality, comparison and degree. It answers the questions *by what means, How, Like what, How much*, and is realised by the adverbs of manner (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), as shown in (19) below.

(19) *Giringo matek makwe yor ibang yen madit kara uwek gicopo pondu ingeye.*

They ran **very fast** towards the wood so that they could hide behind it.

Cause

In Alur folktales, cause tells us the source of a problem, an event, an incident, etc. According to Setiawati et al. (2022), cause expresses the reason why the process is actualised. It comprises three subcategories, such as reason, purpose, and behalf, and answers the questions *why, for what purpose, on whose behalf*, etc. In the example above, the lexicogrammatical resource **because** realises cause as exemplified in (20) below.

(20) *Leya mi lum gimaro bedo i lum pikum gibedo kwiny ni juwadgi mwande.*

Wild animals prefer to stay in the bush **because** they are always harsh and cruel to others.

Role

Role describes the function on an entity. In (21), the character *Samu* is described as a fisherman.

(21) *Samu udongo jadwar rec ni caku ku oro 10.*

Samu grew up **a fisherman** since the age of 10.

In the example above, role construes the meaning be and become circumstantially. According to Halliday (2004), role includes the subcategories of guise be and product become, and is lexicogrammatically realised by a noun phrase as evidenced in (21).

Accompaniment

Accompaniment refers to the entity that accompanies a participant, as illustrated in (22)

(22) *Nyang ulwongo jarimone alwala ku juruot pare.*

Crocodile invited **his friend monkey with his family members**.

The example above indicates that in Alur folktales, accompaniment is the circumstantial element that brings someone or something into the process. It is realised by a prepositional phrase. Accompaniment comprises two subcategories, such as comitative

and additive, and answers the questions *with who?* *With what?* (Halliday, 2004).

Matter

In Alur folktales, matter refers to the discussion topic. For example,

(23) *Nindo acel, nyang ucok rombo marek magiweco ikum wang ngom, bedo agwoka migi, ley mabedo iwi ngom utye ngo wat migi.*

One day, the crocodiles organised a standing meeting where they discussed **border protection and their safety**. Matter is related to verbal process. It is expressed by prepositions such as about, concerning, with reference to and sometimes simply of (Setiawati et al., 2022).

Contingency

Contingency involves condition, concession, and default. They are expressed by prepositional phrases like *in case of*, *in the event of*, *on condition of*, *notwithstanding*, *in spite of*, *regardless of*, *if not*, *unless*, *in the absence of*, *in default of* (Halliday, 2004), as evidenced in the example below.

(24) *Nangu zoo ateyu mer kudi ngo kanangu angeyo nia iwotho yoo kumeni.*

I would not have made friends with you **if I had known you were a slow-moving person**. **Mood and Modality**

Mood refers to the grammatical forms of verbs that indicate the speaker's attitude or perspective toward the action or state expressed. Modality, on the other hand, is a semantic category that deals with the speaker's attitude towards the truth or reality of a proposition (Halliday, 1994). Two moods are used in Alur folktales, namely, the indicative and the imperative moods as exemplified below.

Indicative

(25) *"Juwadwa, wungeyo nia judongo mwa eno ginogowadit nikum ringu ma nia wabekwalu. Ento*

gingeyo ongo nia wan re mawabedwaru igi ringu ne.

"Our fellows, **you know** that our masters **are killing** us because of the meat that we steal. However, they do not know that we are the ones who hunt that meat" said the two dogs.

In the example above, the indicative mood is recognised as a statement (declarative). It can also be questions (interrogative) and command (imperative).

Imperative

In Alur folktales, as evidenced in the examples below, imperatives are used to give instructions and commands. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), imperatives are typically used in commands, requests and directives, and do not occur in subordinate clauses or questions because they are performative (Palmer, 2001). (26) *"Kakumeni, waseyu yore macopo ketho wawok kudipeko maeno", Gwogi eno weco.*

Let's find a solution to this kind of problem that we are facing.

(27) *Kud wabed abeda ni neno kite ma junegowa kude. Watim gimoko.*

Let's not sit and watch us being killed just like that. Let's do something.

(28) *Giringo matek makwe yor ibang yen madit kara uwek gicopo pondi ingeye.*

They ran to the big tree very fast so that they **could** hide behind it.

(29) *Jakwo eno omito makwe nia egam nyapa rwoth eni ento elarere ire ongo pi bor pa polo ku ngom. "Acopo ketho gin ma copre ngo ni copre nenedi?" Jakwo penjo kwo pare gire.*

The thief wanted so much to marry the king's daughter, but he **couldn't** make it because the journey to heaven is long. "How **can** I make the impossible possible?" the thief asked himself. (30)

“Eyo, atiye ku jumer para macopo konya ni tundu i polo kama nyarwoth ni iie.

Yes, I have my friends who **can** help me reach heaven where the king’s daughter lives.

(31) *Jurumer pa Jakwo eno de, gibedo kupar mi nyomo nyarwoth eno ento ecopere igi ongo. Jakwo eno ocaho nyuthu ni jumer pare kitema **omako** gitug kuwoth mi cidhu i polo.*

The thief’s friends also had the intention of marrying the king’s daughter. Of course, all of them were interested in the king’s daughter for marriage. The thief assigned his friends the tasks they **must**

do to reach heaven. In (27) above, the negative imperative is realised by **kud**(not).

The lexicogrammatical exploration of Alur folktales also shows that modality aspects are realised by modal auxiliary verbs as in (28)-(31), whereby **copo** (may, can, could) is used to show possibility; **omako** (must) is used for obligation, **omako ngo**(prohibition); **elarere ire ongo** expresses impossibility.

Theme and Rheme

The theme and rheme structure of the Alur folktales is presented in the table below.

Table 1: Theme and Rheme Structure in Selected Alur Folktales

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Rheme</u>
<i>Nominal groups/disjunctive adverbials</i>	<i>Verbal group plus adverbials</i>
<i>Iwangayo gi-</i> <i>On their way, they</i>	<i>nen piny mamako dhano.</i> <i>saw the monster.</i>
<i>Disjunct Nominals (personal pronoun)</i>	<i>Verbal adverbial (noun phrase)</i>
<i>Piny mamako dhanu</i> <i>The monster</i>	<i>ukadho gi akadha enyang ongo.</i> <i>passed without noticing them.</i>
<i>Nominal group</i>	<i>Verbal group adverbial (prepositional phrase)</i>
<i>Con obedo</i> <i>Long ago, there were</i>	<i>kite leya aryo.</i> <i>two categories of animals</i>
<i>Disjunct clause</i>	<i>Adverbials (nominal group)</i>
<i>Kanangu wan aryo ewacidho ongo idwar ku jadit mwa eno,</i> <i>If we had not gone with our master for hunting,</i>	<i>nangu wande de enegowa.</i> <i>we would have been killed too.</i>
<i>Finite clause</i>	<i>Verbal group adjunct</i>

The table above presents the message structure in Alur folktales. It describes how information is organised in a clause in the Alur folktales. Indeed, in the folktales, a clause/sentence is structured into theme and rheme. As the table above shows, in Alur folktales, the theme is what the clause is about. It is located at the beginning of the clause. Rheme is the remainder of the clause. It elaborates on the theme. Both the theme and the rheme enable us to locate fundamental information and what is said about it. They play a crucial role in focusing and organising the message and contribute to the coherence and success of the message (Dashela, 2021). The table above also summarises the lexicogrammatical

realisations of theme and rheme in Alur folktales. While a theme can be realised by nominal groups, disjunctive adverbials, and a dependent clause, a rheme is realised by a verb group, an adverbial or a verb group plus an adverbial.

DISCUSSION

The findings on the lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales presented above are significant. They demonstrate that Alur folktales have genre patterns. They are characterised by specific lexicogrammatical patterns at the sentence level that permit us to gain insights into how texts communicate meaning and achieve their purposes

within a community or a culture. Hence, Alur folktales have a formal mode of presentation that distinguishes them from non-narrative genres. According to Frog et al. (2016), narrative genres are assemblages of texts that are distinguished by criteria such as the formal mode or medium of representation, what is being represented or content and the manner of representation, although this study focused on the medium of representation. Aristotle (as cited in Frog et al., 2016) thinks about genres in terms of constellations of features that, individually, might be found across several genres, and to parse these with sometimes quite subtle analytical distinctions as criteria for genre classification.

Lexicogrammatical structure reveals the language resources that are utilised to realise the various strands of meaning in genres. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), genre lexicogrammatical exploration helps to theorise language resources that characterise the genre, account for meaning structure in genre, and enable genre users/discourse community to identify it. The lexicogrammatical analysis of this study focused on the elements that operate in the sentence structure of Alur folktales. It allowed the study to throw light on the sentence types, sentence components, mood, modality, theme, and rheme, and underscore the realisational patterns that characterise them. Study results indicate that Alur folktales display an array of lexicogrammatical patterns. Three types of sentences were identified, each of which performs a specific communicative function. This finding contradicts some previous studies, for instance, (Gerot & Wignell, 1994; Lwin, 2015; Siyaswati, 2016), which suggest that folktales do not use complex grammatical structure. In fact, the sentence types used in Alur folktales must not be taken for granted. They capture the semantic structure of Alur folktales and reflect variation in the microstructural patterns of the folktales. The three sentence types further represent the multiple styles used in presenting the content of the Alur folktales. As the folktales' extracts above show, each sentence type

performs a specific communicative function. Simple sentences are used to ensure the narration is clear and easy to understand. Compound sentences are utilised to underscore the interconnection of activities aimed at achieving a specific goal. Complex sentences are utilised to capture the interdependence of entities having unequal status.

As for the sentence components, in Alur folktales, a sentence contains three elements: participant, process, and circumstance. Although the nature of these elements is genre-specific, this finding agrees with Halliday (1994)'s study, which outlined the sentence elements. The same finding also shows that the lexicogrammatical resources used for human entities are also deployed for personified or non-human participants. This result is corroborated by several previous studies by Lwin (2015), Gerot and Wignell (1994), and Tan (2009).

The study results also indicate that six processes are employed in Alur folktales to perform various semantic functions, including doing/happening, sensing, behaving, saying, existing, relating, etc. Although Alur folktales revolve around specific themes, the six processes reveal the nature of the meanings conveyed across Alur folktales. All the processes are realised by verb groups (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). This study discovered that two moods (indicative and imperative) situated in the verbal groups are used in Alur folktales. Even if the indicative mood is primarily used for expressing facts, stating opinions, or asking questions about reality, in Alur folktales, it is used to express hypothetical or counterfactual situations because Alur folktales are fictional narratives. The imperative mood is used to give commands, instructions, or requests. Study results also reveal that the following modalities are used in Alur folktales: ability, possibility, certainty, usuality, and probability. This finding is consistent with Halliday and Matthiessen (2004). It demonstrates that Alur folktales not only contain genre-unique lexicogrammatical patterns, but they are also

embedded with universal lexicogrammatical properties.

The exploration of theme and rheme in Alur folktales unveiled the lexicogrammatical devices used to structure the message in Alur folktales, whereby theme and rheme specify which information part carries more weight than the other and where each information part is located. Hence, in Alur folktales, theme and rheme primarily have to do with locating information in a clause. This result is validated by Jianghong et al. (2005), who report that theme and rheme are used to organise information. The theme is viewed as the starting point of the message (Halliday, 1994) and as "an orienter to the text" (Fries, 1995), providing a framework for the interpretation of the message. As a device for organising meanings, theme helps to structure the flow of information in ways that shape interpretation of the text (Martin, 1992) whilst rheme is simply defined as the remaining part that develops the theme (Belmonte & McCabe, 2003; Jianghong et al., 2005; Wang, 2007).

CONCLUSION

Genres are instances of language use. The aim of this study was to provide a lexicogrammatical description of Alur folktales at the clause level. The exploration of the selected Alur folktales demonstrated that Alur folktales display genre-unique lexicogrammatical regularities at the clause/sentence level. The following lexicogrammatical patterns emerged from a close inspection of the selected Alur folktales. Three sentence types are used in Alur folktales: simple sentence, compound sentence(parataxis), and complex sentence(hypotaxis). Participants consist of humans, animals, supernatural, and abstract entities, and are realised by nominal groups. Alur folktales employ material, mental, verbal, and relational processes that are realised by verbs. Verb tenses and aspects include simple past tense and present simple tense. Circumstantial meanings are realised by adverbials. The following modalities are used probability, usuality, ability, improbability,

possibility, etc. Themes are realised by nominal groups/disjunctive adverbials and rhemes are realised by verbal groups plus adverbials. Areas that need further study encompass the lexicogrammatical devices used to characterise inter-stage shifts in Alur folktales.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the lexicogrammatical patterns of Alur folktales to gain an understanding of how language is used to achieve specific social and communicative goals within the Alur folktales. However, the current study was limited to sentence-level analysis. It did not explore the semantic aspect, which would reveal how meanings are created in Alur folktales.

Future research could further examine the discourse-semantic structure of Alur folktales to throw light on how lexicogrammatical choices construct meanings within the Alur folktales. It could also contribute to a deeper understanding of how meanings are interpreted and shaped by the socio-cultural contexts, whereby they are exchanged.

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