

NIGERIAN CHILDREN'S STORIES: A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Jenna Santyr, BA, Queens University, 2015

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ABSTRACT
Nigerian Children's Stories: A Cultural Perspective
Masters of Arts, 2017
Jenna Santyr
Program of Early Childhood Studies,
Ryerson University

This paper explores the narrative construction of experience of Nigerian children through the stories they told while participating in a variation of Vivian Gussin Paley's story-telling/story-acting exercise. Two theoretical approaches guided this research; narrative theory and the strength of children's perspectives. Bruner's theory of narrative construction is used as a theoretical framework for understanding children's cultural participation. A sociology of childhood perspective is used to ground the research method and prioritize the child's voice. Stories were collected from 3-5-year-old children attending a private school in Abuja, Nigeria. From the stories collected 6 story types were identified and 10 themes emerged within and between each story type. Of the 10 themes 4 of the themes were analyzed for cultural relevance and examples of cultural reproduction. The results of this study contribute to the ongoing research in children's cultural participation and narrative construction of experience broadly, and to Nigerian children's storytelling and perspectives, specifically.

Keywords: childhood, storytelling, Nigeria, Jerome Bruner, Vivian Gussin Paley

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DEDICATION

This work is in dedication to my Grandmother, Thelma Lillian Hill, who passed prior to its completion. Despite the distance Nana, I am forever thankful for your spirit and the love of storytelling you instilled in me. I would also like to dedicate this work to my family and my community of support to which I am eternally indebted. Lastly to the children and educators of Nigeria who invited me into their world of storytelling. It is by your inspiration and imagination that this work came into fruition.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 Theoretical Frameworks.....	9
Chapter 3 Review of the Literature.....	18
Chapter 4 Research Methods.....	32
Chapter 5 Findings.....	47
Chapter 6 Discussion.....	58
Chapter 7 Conclusion.....	78
Tables.....	82
Appendices.....	107
References.....	131

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. A list of story type categories and the number of stories within each category.	82
Table 2. The frequencies in which individual themes occurred in each story type category.	83
Table 3. Example of all formal story markers present in the stories.	84
Table 4. Example of all violent themes present in the stories.	85
Table 5. Example of all family characters present in the stories.	86
Table 6. Example of all home scripts present in the stories.	87
Table 7. Example of all school scripts present in the stories.	88
Table 8. Example of all friendship themes present in the stories.	89
Table 9. Example of all supernatural themes present in the stories.	90
Table 10: Example of all moral value themes present in the stories, with an area dedicated to heroics.	91
Table 11. Example of all famous characters present in the stories.	92
Table 12. Example of all themes present in Fantasy stories, with their accompanying frequencies of occurrence.	93
Table 13. Example of all themes present in Popular Culture stories, with their accompanying frequencies of occurrence.	95
Table 14. Example of all themes present in Biography/Script stories, with their accompanying frequencies of occurrence.	98
Table 15. Examples of all themes present in Folklore stories, with their accompanying frequencies of occurrence.	101
Table 16. Example of all themes present in Books stories, with their accompanying frequencies of occurrence.	103

Table 17. Example of all themes present in Other stories, with their accompanying frequencies of occurrence.

105

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A – Assent Form	107
Appendix B – Coded Stories	108
Appendix C – Drawing that accompanied child’s story	130

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Why Do We Tell Stories?

Anthropologists have stated that storytelling is a central component to human existence; that it exists in every known culture (Ellyatt, 2002). It has been argued that human beings at any age are natural storytellers, who can't help but create and impose narrative structure onto events, memories or occurrences that aren't really stories (Spear, 2011). Stories have the ability to evolve with us, to engage us and to connect us with others, which speaks to their purpose as much deeper than simply entertainment.

Haven (2007) and others have argued that information is better remembered, for a longer period of time, and is recalled more accurately when it is first presented in a story structure. Bruner (1991) has stated that the conceptualizing and telling of stories has become so habitual that it is now the default for structuring experience itself and thus causing the consolidation of memories to be in story form. Numerous studies are in accordance with the idea that storytelling is central to memory and that experiences revisited are recalled and understood in a story format (Haven, 2007). Zaltman et al. (2000) has furthered this claim by stating that storytelling is not an activity we choose to do but one we have to do in order to remember anything.

Bruner identified the process of narration as a specific mode of knowing in which he argues that the principle way in which our minds construct daily life is through the stories we tell and listen to (Rutten & Soetaert, 2013). From years of clinical studies Bruner (1991), has shown that humans are born predisposed to search for story elements within their environment and derive meaning from them. This evolutionary predisposition of the human brain to attend to and think in story terms has been reinforced by a heavy exposure to stories in childhood. Children

hear stories, read stories and tell stories on a daily basis resulting in the irrevocably hardwired tendency for adults to create meaning and understanding through story (Bruner, 1991).

Cultural Participation in Storytelling

Bruner (2004), believes humans have a predisposition to narrative, which they rely on in order to derive meaning from their everyday lived experiences; how then, does culture interact with this conceptualization to bring about meaning? Bruner (1991) argues that the symbolic systems of a culture, that are represented in language, discourse modes, and narrative structuring, are what give meaning to actions and situations. The cognitive and linguistic processes of an individual are culturally shaped by the qualities of narrative within that culture, which subsequently structure perceptual experience, the organization of memory and the construction of a “life” (Bruner, 2004).

Given the constructed nature of narratives and their dependency upon the language and conventions of a culture, the construction of experience thus reflects the prevailing theories of narrative that exist within the given culture. The characterizing feature of a culture is the narrative models available for representing a life. From this stock of what, Bruner (2004) refers to as, “canonical life narratives” members of a culture construct their own life narrative and experience in reflection. Individuals are brought into a culture through the narratives they learn. This learning of narrative occurs through storytelling and the introduction begins in childhood.

Why Do Children Tell Stories?

With continued research in the area of storytelling two things have become very clear: 1) the narratives children use to organize their knowledge about the world is actively constructed by the child using meaning derived from their social interactions with the culture; and 2) the stories children construct as a representation of knowledge and experience act as scripts for appropriate

and effective interaction with the real world (Engel, 2005). These conclusions regarding narrative are consistent with Bruner's theory that stories do not merely provide an outlet for special fantasies or unusual and bizarre representations, but also provide a fundamental space in which children can construct meaning in the world and reproduce culturally specific modes of understanding.

It has been argued that children's first engagement with storytelling begins with their participation in the stories their parents tell, however, an important step occurs before this interaction and that involves symbolic play (Engel, 2005). Symbolic play in its simplest form, involves the use of something, such as an object or gesture, to represent something else. This type of symbolic representation involves the transformation of reality which is a powerful process in early childhood and essential for storytelling. Children's experimentation with symbolic play in the early years eventually involves the sequencing of gestures and events accompanied by language; this is the beginnings of storytelling (Engel, 2005). Children's use of language in play evolves as they gain language skills and actively encode memories. Early on, language acts as a means to amplify the play, then to situate and describe the action of the play and finally to plan the sequence of play as to who is who and what events will unfold.

It is important to understand storytelling within the context of play as data has shown many of the purposes it provides children involves interactions with others. These purposes include; solving emotional and cognitive dilemmas, establishing and maintaining friendships, constructing and communicating a sense of self within a social environment, and participating in the culture (Engel, 2005). Bruner's theory has made evident the difficulty of teasing apart the story structure, from the mode of thinking and experiencing that children are acquiring. One perspective research has taken is to view the change that occurs in the story structure as a

reflection of the child's growing competence with cultural and linguistic forms. Another perspective has assumed narratives as the structure in which mental representation is constructed, and that changes in the story structure reflect changes in the mental representations children are creating (Monteagudo, 2011).

What Are We Missing?

The study of children's narrative skills and their functions has had a longstanding history in developmental psychology (Bruner, 1986; Sutton-Smith, 1995). Despite this, developmental psychologist and those working in the field of childhood studies, are still trying to identify the various forms of narrative children experience within the diverse context they inhabit. In addition, there is still much work that needs to be done in order to understand all the different ways narratives are used by children, their caregivers, and the larger culture in promoting the construction of experience and the building of a sense of self and cultural identity. The exploration of culture through the eyes of the child, has actually received very little attention in both the fields of cultural studies and childhood studies. Surprisingly only a few empirical articles have been published which explore culture through the child's perspective, one being by Sandy Kaser and Cathy Short (1998). In the article, *Exploring Culture Through Children's Connections*, Kaser and Short (1998) attempt to highlight diversity in children's cultures through a cross-cultural literature-based Family Studies inquiry, which took the form of group discussions and journal writing based on children's reactions to a collection of children's literature. Multicultural children's books were introduced to a 5th grade classroom in order to encourage children to explore their own culture and the cultures of others. Literature discussion groups and subsequent journal writing was designed to stimulate children's talking and thinking about culture with limited instruction from researchers in the mode of introducing issues and

questions they thought the class should explore. In the implications for classroom section at the end of the article, Kaser and Short (1998), stress the importance of children's storytelling for their connection between personal cultural spheres; home, school, and peers.

While the article presented here clearly exposes the importance and legitimacy of studying culture with children there are some obvious limitations of the study. The particular areas of culture the children address are restricted to the themes presented in the books chosen for them by adult researchers and written for them by adult authors. The study was also conducted in America concentrating on a group of children which have been the focus of most child studies thus far. The researchers used an educational framework to situate their research which has clear implications for future adult application. With that being said Kaser and Short (1998), provide the stepping stones for what the exploration of children's perspectives can offer us in the study of culture. My work hopes to take studies like this one step further by increasing child agency within the research process and exploring cultures that have received little attention in the fields of child studies and cultural studies.

What Are We Doing?

Building off of the work of narratologists in the field of early childhood studies (Bruner, 1991; Nicolopoulou, 2008) this research seeks to contribute to the larger theoretical project, of understanding childhood experience through storytelling, by examining narrative in a particular context. A cultural context in which narrative is incorporated into historical tradition but where new and distinctive forms of narrative are also encountered. This study makes a modest attempt at taking the work of Vivian Gussin Paley and applying it to Bruner's theory of narrative construction in order to study children's storytelling through a cultural lens. Following the works of Nicolopoulou (2008) and Binder (2014) I embrace a sociology of the child perspective by

creating an informal narrative space using a variation of Paley's story-telling/story-acting model. This approach involved refraining of directing or modeling narrative styles by simply asking the children for a story and validating their narratives by writing them down and reading their stories back to them. The Western world has monopolized child studies since its conception as such I explore a culture relatively untouched by childhood studies and immersed in a rich oral tradition. Following Bruner's (1990) argument that children are inducted into a culture through their exposure and reproduction of the culture's narrative qualities, I explore the narratives of Nigerian children and how they reflect and reproduce Nigerian culture in their meaning making. My work attempts to address the questions of: What aspects of culture do Nigerian children incorporate into their storytelling?

Why Nigeria?

Like children all over the world, Nigerian children are exposed to stories by the adults in their lives as a means for socialization (Jirata, 2014). In Nigeria the common narrative form of folktale, for example, illustrates the skills, moral standards and values a community identifies as necessary for the reproduction and successful navigating of the customary ways of life. Grandparents and parents are often deemed as the transmitters of knowledge to children, acting as mediators between the past and the future reproduction of the culture (Jirata, 2014). Stories in this sense are used to uphold the present structure of a society and maintain it into the future. The narrative provides a verbalization of the relationships and constitutions of a society and an easily accessible form from which children can learn (Finnegan, 2014).

While parents in Nigeria are often attributed with the primary position of exposing children to the cultural narrative there is a degree of specialism that has been adopted by what can be considered the 'professional' storytellers of a society. These storytellers move from

village to village, living off their talents for narrative and have been documented within the Hausa and Yoruba communities of Nigeria (Finnegan, 2014). Within West Africa these professional storytellers are known as *griots*, and act as the social memory of a society, providing its people with the knowledge and teachings of the past (Mitchell, 2013). With the existence of the storytelling profession there is also significance given to the storytelling event; a significance that may not be seen in other cultures. For the Edo of Benin, Nigeria, the activity of storytelling is given prominence in the form of a specific gathering called an *ibota* (Pellowski, 1977). The event typically includes the entire family unit and takes place in the largest room of the house with the primary aim being to transmit knowledge from the past and celebrate the important events of the day, such as the successful sale of a crop or the visit of a relative (Pellowski, 1977). Storytelling is an integral component of Nigerian life and as such it provides a rich context for the study of children's storytelling.

The Nigerian Context

Nigeria is a country that consists of different groups divided by geography and language – the Hausa Muslim in the North and the Christian Ibo/Yoruba in the South; as such the country does not possess a single cultural narrative (Dawson & Larrivee, 2010). This separation by language can be explained in the history of Nigeria. Nigeria, originally consisted of three colonial territories; the North (Hausa), the South (Ibo) and Lagos (Yoruba). Each territory operated independently and were comprised of their own political infrastructures, however, after the civil wars of the 1960s the country introduced a national democratic assembly which was until recently plagued by corruption and military juntas. Based on the history of Nigeria it is clear that the country does not possess a narrative culture that is decidedly Hausa, Ibo or Yoruba but it does possess one that is Nigerian (Dawson & Larrivee, 2010). There does exist a cultural

narrative that can be heard across the country, regardless of ethnic labels, and that narrative evolves from Nigerian English. It is not that simple, however, to view Nigerian English as the cultural narrative of the nation because of the colonial undertones in which the language embodies, and as such it is essential that the colonialism that exists alongside Nigerian culture be explored.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Social Constructivism

Social constructivists believe that individuals gain an understanding of the world through their interactions with others and are able to generate meaning from their experiences. These experiences are uniquely personal and thus the meanings derived are subjective and varied. The researcher, therefore, cannot create limited categories in which to organize meaning but must rely on the participants' own interpretations of that which is being studied (Creswell, 2014). In regards to the study of children, social constructivism can best be understood as the investigation of the dynamic relationship between the child and the environment (Fleer, 2015). I have structured my own research within a constructivist framework. My research focuses on children's construction of meaning as demonstrated through storytelling, with consideration of the cultural influences that are taking place. The subjective meanings children create are situated within a historical, cultural and social context. Their understanding of the world is not simply imprinted on them but is generated through the interactions they engage in and the societal norms they are encouraged to abide by. Social constructivists acknowledge the different institutions in which children participate and how the traditions and practices of these institutions influence children's everyday lives (Fleer, 2015). Constructivist research often focuses on interactions among individuals and the specific contexts in which they occur (Creswell, 2014). The aim of the current study is to look at the intrinsically social activity of storytelling in regards to children's construction of meaning. Hedegaard et al. states that:

It is important to include the child's perspective in a research methodology as this will enable researchers to investigate how children contribute to their own developmental conditions... It is children's intentional activities, and the interactions in which they take

part in their everyday social situations – and how other participants contribute to these situations through their interactions – that should be studied (2008: 5-6).

Childhood culture has been largely unrepresented in childhood research, with children's concepts, oral traditions and cultural artifacts being dismissed as trivial or unsophisticated (Engel, 1995). It is within their child-focused milieus, however, that research is able to attend to the ways that children naturally adopt new ideas and construct concepts and reproduce them in their own (rather than adult-directed) creations, behaviours and thoughts. Using a social constructivist framework which acknowledges children's competency and capacity to construct and understand their world this paper explores the representation and transformation of culture through storytelling. The child's perspective is given the utmost respect throughout my research process, while Bruner's theory of narrative reality construction is used as a framework to analyse the stories the children produce. I developed meaning from the patterns that emerged and as a social constructivist I recognize that my own background has shaped my interpretation. By acknowledging my personal, cultural and historical experiences I hoped to better position myself within the research.

Narrative Construction of Reality

Bruner identified the process of narration as a specific mode of knowing in which he argues that the principle way in which our minds construct daily life is through the stories we tell and listen to (Rutten & Soetaert, 2013). For Bruner, a story begins with the creation of a world, whether fictional or real, with laws and conventions that define the ordinary, this is known as the "initial canonical state" (Rutten & Soetaert, 2013, p. 330). The next stage of the story is the "engine" of the narrative in which the initial canonical state is disrupted, violating the laws of ordinariness. Following the engine is the "action" where efforts are put in place to undo the

damages of the engine and restore the canonical state. Once the canonical state has returned to normal or has been replaced by a new canonical state the story has come to a “resolution” (Rutten & Soetaert, 2013, p. 330). Bruner makes sure to note that the resolution is not essential to the narrative process and the story does not need to progress through the traditional beginning, middle and end but must include the canonical state and the engine (Bruner, 1991).

In regards to cultural participation, Bruner identifies the default mode in which we experience the world as the “canonical” state and this narrative construction of reality is imposed on children as they are exposed to the stories of a culture. The conflicts that disrupt the “canonical” state of daily life make up our life narratives and the solutions we develop in response reflect the larger cultural narrative (Bruner, 2004). Bruner’s definition of the narrative form acts as a backdrop to his theory of narration as a mode of knowing and participating in one’s culture. Stories help children adjust to the canonical states of the world and recognize disrupting events that can replace or redefine the initial canonical state. Bruner identifies the principle function of narrative as grounding conventional expectations in a culture, and illustrating the potential conflicts that may occur. The narrating of both fictional and real stories is a universal component of culture that informs its members of the changes of life and prepares them for disrupting events that may threaten the conventional (Rutten & Soetaert, 2013). Furthermore, storytelling allows moral structures to be imposed on experience as the action of the story involves the repairing of disrupted conventions. This explains why stories are often used to teach appropriate conflict resolution and the identification of healthy behaviour (Monteagudo, 2011). Bruner’s perspective on storytelling makes clear the power of stories on children’s learning and construction of reality and the importance of listening, analysing and understanding its uses. Not only do narratives introduce children to the conventions of society

but also allow them to break the rules and turn over the canonical state in order to experiment with resolution strategies and create concepts pertaining to their daily lives.

Sociology of Childhood

The sociology of childhood views children as active, rather than passive participants in their daily lives and in their construction of knowledge. The sociology of childhood, like social constructivism, understands childhood as socially constructed and views it as a variable among many influencing the child's development (Grieshaber, 2007). Therefore, the cultural, historical and social settings in which children create meaning is worthy of study in its own right and may offer a more authentic understanding of the child's perspective. The sociology of childhood argues that children are knowledgeable about their own lives and, therefore, research needs to begin to understand childhood from the child's perspective rather than an adult's perspective. Early childhood research has notoriously positioned children as objects of research "by assessing, testing, and observing them" (Grieshaber, 2007: 172). Using a theory of sociology of childhood this study positions children as subjects rather than objects, and uses their participation to direct and inform the research. Based on the idea that children possess accurate knowledge and understanding of their own lives, and that the ideas of adults may be drastically different in regards to childhood, I have collected stories told by children to gain insight into their meaning making and cultural participation. Involving children as voluntary research participants is consistent with the sociology of childhood perspective and it enables children to have complete control over the stories they tell and the information they reveal. By having children discuss matters that are significant to them, the stories children tell have granted me access into the unique perspectives and concepts of childhood culture that are situated within a specific educational setting, in a specific historical period, in a specific modern, urban Nigerian culture.

Story-Telling/Story-Acting

Stories have always been seen as an important tool in early childhood learning. Recently, there has been an increased focus on the storytelling process and its uses in the education setting (Cooper, 2005). The storytelling curriculum as developed by Paley (1991) has been shown to promote learning in a wide array of areas of development, from using language to build knowledge and express intention to learning appropriate behaviours and making friends. Vivian Gussin Paley was influential in her introduction of play as an effective means to study and understand children's social, emotional and cognitive development. Paley fully embraced a sociology of childhood perspective as she incorporated the story-telling/story-acting practice into her everyday curriculum to illicit an in-depth view of the world through the child's eyes (Paley, 1991; Bacigalupa & Wright, 2009).

The story-telling/story-acting exercise contains three roles in which all children take part in: a) creating and dictating stories b) participating in the dramatization of their own and other children's stories and c) acting as an audience member to the performances of stories by other children in the class (Nicolopoulou et al., 2009). The purpose of the exercise is to provide children with an opportunity to express themes that are significant to them. Paley has found that through this cathartic examination of emotionally important themes children have displayed both cognitive and emotional development (Cooper, 2005). Children incorporate themes, characters and plots from a range of sources, including children's literature, television, and other children's stories. Participating in this activity enables children to adopt the identity of storyteller within the context of a classroom, as well as, peer-group. This shared "miniculture" that exists within the classroom allows children to further their understanding of the world and self through the use of

other children's stories and provides a safe environment in which children can test their theories of reality (Nicolopoulou et al., 2009).

The story-telling/story-acting model is an example of research that utilizes the knowledge of the child and embraces the qualities of the sociology of childhood perspective. The first part of the story-telling/story-acting activity involves the children narrating a story to the researcher who then transcribes the story and acts as an initial audience member for the child. Engaging in the activity is completely voluntary and acknowledges children as most knowledgeable about their own cultural participation. It provides children with a platform which they are familiar with (storytelling) and validates their form of communication and their topic of interest. After the child has completed their story the story is read back to them as further validation and the child is given an opportunity for revisions and control over how their voice will be heard. The exercise of retelling also gives the child a general sense of how the story might be dramatized. Next is the dramatization, after the child has dictated their story they will select classmates who they would like involved in the story-acting section of the activity. Children who are not participating as actors will comprise the audience (Paley, 1991). Dramatization is important to the story-telling/story-acting model because it allows children to see the possibilities within storytelling and often shape their future narratives in order to produce a dramatic effect (Paley, 1991). Paley's story-telling/story-acting research method has been adopted in this study to provide a research design that stresses the child's voice and their important contributions to our understanding of culture.

Post-Colonialism in Nigeria

A fuller appreciation of the dynamics of child storytelling, as well as children's perceptions of it, requires consideration of childhood culture, the country's sociocultural climate

and the interrelationship between the two. In the past children have been understood as passive receivers of culture or existing in a pre-cultured state of becoming, however, it would be inappropriate to assume that children are anything but active cultural beings capable of producing and manipulating concepts, actions and feelings that mould their existence as children (Engels, 1995). As such it is imperative that the culture in which the storytelling takes place be examined. A large portion of this literature review will be dedicated to exploring research conducted on West African oral storytelling culture and the larger post-colonial context in which Nigeria exists in order to situate the children's stories.

In Nigeria, as elsewhere, language in its written and oral forms is practised in a community of people (Finnegan, 2014). An analysis of the oral narrative tradition of a society must then take into account the social and historical context. Nigeria has a rich history in regards to language and colonial powers. Firstly, the term oral tradition refers to a culture whose use of "oral testimony transmitted verbally from one generation to the next" reconstructs the past of a society (Prins, 1991). Within the non-literate societies of Africa, oral tradition acts as a repository for their history and culture. The narratives that are passed on by word of mouth encapsulate the history, values and identity of the particular society that produced them and the particular generation who retells them (Awe, 1991). Oral traditions invite us to see historical knowledge as more than just sustained in written text but fully engaged with the social intelligence, experience and manipulation of the people in which it involves and influences.

In the African context, the European powers existing in colonial relationships deemed the oral tradition of these societies' languages as neither appropriate nor intellectually relevant as a media of communication, or a means of education (Abdi, 2007). As a means to strip the indigenous of their native languages colonial powers used the systems of education to promote

and implement the written, colonial language while simultaneously controlling and prohibiting the use of native languages (Chapman, 1998). This process some believe has resulted in the deculturing and social dislocation of African peoples (Abdi, 2007). In this regard it is essential that colonial influences be examined within this paper as the national institutions of Nigeria have been subjected to colonialization resulting in English being the national language and the language of education.

A famous Nigerian author, Chinua Achebe, once wrote: “As long as Nigeria wishes to exist as a nation it has no choice in the foreseeable future but to hold its more than two hundred component nationalities together through an alien language, English” (Dawson & Larrivee, 2010). It can be argued that the powers holding individuals together as a community, as a nation, is their narrative. The story of the people “is the most intense and comprehensive expression of the culture” (Chapman, 1998). So what happens when that narrative is colonialized? Following Bruner’s theory of storytelling as a mode of thinking, the process of narration allows the mind to create concepts and understandings of daily life through the stories we tell and listen to (Rutten & Soetaert, 2013). In this regard the language we use gives us a view of the world, however when the language of one’s education is no longer the language of one’s culture a bond may be broken. In that case a change in language causes a change in narrative and thus a change in the understanding and constructing of daily life. In consider storytelling as a means to capture, record and identify a sense of self in society, the issue clearly has pertinence in Nigeria where questions concerning whose story is being told or what constitutes a Nigerian story are reflected in the country’s separation between the current ‘alien’ language and cultural history. Here the question is whether Nigeria’s story is one of Nigeria or one of colonialism.

A colonial presence does not mean that the Nigerian culture has been forgotten. A nation's past constitutes its present and as such Nigeria's oral traditional history as well as its colonial history, contribute to its current cultural identity. Colonial languages have become an important part of Nigerian identity with oral tradition becoming embedded into the dominant language used (Achebe, 2000). In talking to Nigerian parents it is clear that the stories children hear and create have developed based on the fusion of the Western and African. Bruner has equated language to a tool individuals use in order to construct and understand their experiences (Rutten & Soetaert, 2013). In this sense, oral tradition and authentic Nigerian culture lives on within the colonial language in the way these children create meaning through their storytelling. Even in a society dominant by the written word the aspects of oral tradition are not lost.

CHAPTER 3. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Purposes of Storytelling in a Cultural Context

Storytelling has been argued by many as a cultural tool used by a community in order to generate and maintain a cultural identity (Opondo, 2014). The common themes woven into stories provide an intergenerational space for the transfer and change of cultural tradition, but in what ways do humans use storytelling in order to achieve this? Throughout the literature on storytelling three main theories have emerged for why children and humans in general engage in storytelling; meaning making, memory and transference of knowledge. While the theoretical framework of social constructivism I am using concerns itself primarily with meaning making, the study of cross-cultural narrative has typically occurred from a structural perspective. Though this paper uses a thematic, content-based approach, it is important to consider work in children's storytelling that has been carried out across different cultural contexts and as such studies will be explored that focus on the narrative and grammatical structuring of story.

Meaning Making

The oral narrative process provides a platform in which human beings may create and understand their mental worlds. Storytelling as such, assists a narrative community with the group awareness and appreciation of self and society characteristic of a cultural identity (Opondo, 2014). It is meaningful to consider this cultural perspective in light of Bruner's (1991) theory of meaning making in which he argues that the principle way in which our minds construct daily life is through the stories we tell and listen to. Wang and Leichtman's (2000) research, for example, showed Chinese children's narratives revolving around moral obligation and authority, while American children focused on the autonomy of the character. Chinese children narrated stories that involved a character resolving conflict by using proper, moral

behaviour to help another, which is consistent with collectivist views. In line with individualism, American children created stories around the character's interest, dislikes and personal needs. The notion of collectivism and community has also been a dominant theme in the stories of Latino children of Mexican, Caribbean and South American descent (Cristofaro & Tamis-LeMonda, 2008). In the stories in which family was a central theme narratives were often co-constructed with a family member (Cristofaro & Tamis-LeMonda, 2008). In this instance it is clear that the values of the culture and the cultural process of narration directly influenced the narrative content.

Memory

The organizing format in which we encode and recall memories reflects the larger culture of the community. In a study conducted by Celinska (2009) African American and Caucasian child narratives were similar in length and structure, but different in context. African American children had personal narratives that were shorter but included more episodes overall when compared to Caucasian children. Studies have also shown that Latino children's personal narratives contain more episodes involving interaction discourse than other cultural groups (Melzi, 2000). These findings are consistent with the understanding that culture influences narrative structure. Central American mothers were more likely to encourage storytelling within the context of conversation, whereas European American mothers encouraged their children to expand on their storytelling through sequential organization (Melzi, 2000). In further contrast to the single experience stories told by Caucasian children, Japanese children tended to construct narratives similar in structure to African American and Latino children in that they included a concise collection of several experiences (Minami & McCabe, 1991). When asked to describe an instance when they were injured Japanese children responded with several brief descriptions of

separate injuries, which resembled the structure of a haiku. In comparison Caucasian children responded with a rich detailed account of a single incident (Minami & McCabe, 1991).

According to Bruner, the ways in which an individual constructs a story affects the ways in which they understand other stories and vice versa. When Puerto Rican and African American children, for example were told a story, the nature of what they recalled was very different. While the total amount said remained the same between the two groups; Puerto Rican children recalled more descriptive details and African American children recalled more action events (John-Steiner & Panofsky, 1992). In a study involving North American children and Ponam children from Papua, New Guinea, who were told European stories, Ponam children were unable to recall the significant narrative elements of the story such as, resolution, consequence or moral, whereas North American children were (Invernizzi and Abouzeid, 1995). What these studies suggest is that children are better able to comprehend and remember stories that conform to the structure of story they are exposed to at home. Narration is a tool children use to make sense of their experience (Bruner, 1991).

Transference of Knowledge

Stories have always been seen as an important tool in early childhood learning. Recently, there has been an increased focus on the storytelling process and its uses in the education setting (Cooper, 2005). In a study conducted by Becker (2010), he studies the sources of the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge in German and Turkish 3-4-year olds. The results of his study indicated that higher levels of storytelling within the home were significantly related to higher scores on a standardized test of cultural knowledge. Becker's study further supports the claim that storytelling not only provides a source of learning but also a form of cultural participation.

The storytelling process has been classified as both narrative text and narrative performance. The delivery style a narrator adopts is heavily influenced by the listeners and the demands and expectations of the culture. African American children, for example, were more likely to include internal responses to the events of a story than Caucasian children in personal and fictional stories (Celinska, 2009). An elaboration of internal response helped African American children to emphasize the motives of the characters and engage the audience members more fully. In this study African American children placed significant emphasis on the performance factor of storytelling rather than the text (Celinska, 2009).

Storytelling Research Using Paley

Vivian Gussin Paley began her long-standing career working with children, as a kindergarten teacher. Paley began tape recording her conversations with the children as a means to better understand the children perspectives and improve her teaching. What Paley realized was that the discussions the children were most passionate about were the on the same topics that occupied their pretend play: fantasy, fairness and friendship (Paley, 2007). The dialogue the children engaged in during play and storytelling was so inspiring that Paley began to transcribe it as it occurred, thus emerged her story-telling/story-acting exercise. The children's stories provided the perfect middle ground between the children and herself, in which they were able to speak the same language and thus transfer knowledge easily. In transcribing the stories of children Paley was able to expose the delicate social fabric of the classroom miniculture and illustrate the strength of storytelling in revealing children's complex constructs and emerging knowledge (Paley, 2011).

Paley's story-telling/story-acting exercise has been adopted by many childhood studies researchers as a means to study children and the child perspective. Nancy Csak (2002), used a

variation of the exercise to study the topics first-grade students were interested in when given the opportunity to narrate their own stories. Csak sat one-on-one with students and recorded the gist of their stories in a notebook over the school year as a teacher-researcher. She collected 15 stories from 23 students and through a content analysis was able to identify particular temporal framing options and story features that developed as patterns or expectations (Csak, 2002). The most common temporal frame involved events that had just happened while the story feature categories that emerged included; repeating, continuation, status, cause and effect, building, media, relating and intent. Csak found that many of the story feature categories were integrally related to certain temporal categories. Csak's research illuminates how children position themselves in the world through story and the ways in which they integrate themselves into the adult world of communication by extending and expanding the abstract lessons of the curriculum (Csak, 2002).

Paley's story-telling/story-acting exercise involves many components beyond that of storytelling and some researchers have chosen to focus on those aspects in order to study children and their perspectives. Wright, Diener, and Kemp (2013), conducted a study focusing on the social interaction component of the story-telling/story-acting exercise to explore children's community building. Using video recordings of approximately 100 stories told by children in a preschool class, the authors conducted a thematic analyse to uncover community building strategies children were using during the story-telling/story-acting activities of dictation, dramatization and audience participation. The results of the study showed that group interactions during storytelling provided multiple opportunities of community building through four emerging themes; individual roles, group membership, inclusion and relationship building. Wright, Diener, and Kemp (2013), stressed the importance of storytelling in the classroom in the

development of social and emotional skills and in building relationships, membership and belonging to a community.

In a study exploring children's meaning making and strategies for building community, Binder (2014), uses a multimodal approach to study children's stories told, acted and drawn. Binder expands on Paley's story-telling/story-acting exercise to include children's drawings of their dictated stories in order to gain a deeper understanding of their worlds. Of the 20 junior and senior kindergarten students each child constructed 2 stories in which observations during the time of telling were made on the changes and emergent themes between the two narrations. The children's drawings were also incorporated into a storybook accompanying their stories which provide another form of analysis along with the content analysis. From the analysis, Binder, identified many themes with some overlapping such as everyday experiences, popular culture and imaginary stories. Themes that emerged were also consisted with Paley's work such as friendship and retellings and some themes differed by gender. Specific observations during the acting portion of the exercise were consistent with Wright, Diener, and Kemp's (2013), findings on community building in which there was an increase in helping behaviour and caring interactions (Binder, 2014). During the drawing stage multiple children used the opportunity to extend their stories modifying the places and characters present from the original dictation. Binder's study emphasizes the importance of choice in reflecting the intention of the child and how story helps children explore their identity, relations and world. Story also provides a space in which the complexity of children's meaning making can be revealed.

Storytelling and Culture

I use a cultural perspective in my research and as such I have attempted to find articles that explore storytelling through a cultural lens. Khimji and Maunder (2012), conducted a study

in a city-based infant primary school in England to explore the cultural influences a child's context can have their story content. The authors use multiple forms of narrative as a methodological tool for studying the role of culture in children's narrative construction. Twelve children between the ages of 5-6 years participated in three storytelling activities. The participants came from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds with the most prominent being Indian. The first activity provided the children with a picture acting as a catalyst for the child's subsequent story. The second activity involved the beginning of a story being read to the child and the child narrating the ending. In the last activity children were asked to dictate a story about a personal experience (Khimji & Maunder, 2012). The thematic analysis used within this study centered on how children used personal perspectives 'mediated' by cultural practices to formulate their narratives. The children's social and cultural contexts provided frameworks for their imaginary and narrative capabilities. The authors also noted the beliefs and practices the children used as mediating tools operated at different levels, suggesting the children resided in more than one cultural community such as family, peer group and/or religious group (Khimji & Maunder, 2012).

The study of culture through storytelling has also been used to examine the subcultures children create when reproducing larger society. Richner and Nicolopoulou (2001), conducted a study in which they analyzed 593 stories by 30 preschool children to explore how children's conception of personhood was influenced by the selective reappropriation of culturally specific models that existed in the larger society. The authors used Paley's story-telling/story-acting exercise to collect their stories and were able to identify gender specific constructs through analysis. While Richner and Nicolopoulou (2001) had a focus of gender in their study of

children's stories, there were able to discover ways in which storytelling built upon a common culture in the classroom.

Storytelling has also been used to study children's cultural participation and subsequent meaning making through the process of retellings. In a study conducted by Allen and Lalonde (2015), a First Nations cultural educator was invited to a first-grade class in British Columbia, Canada to tell traditional oral stories of the Kwakwaka'wakw people of Tsax'is. Of the students in the classroom none identified as Aboriginal and few had any familiarity with the cultures. Through a verse analysis of the original stories told by the cultural educator and the retellings told by the children the authors identified particular patterns of speech being employed in order to construct meaning. Verse analysis involves examining specific groupings of lines to study structure and meaning. The organization and grouping of lines varies based on language and cultural narrative style. Cultural patterning, in this sense, refers to specific features of the story form. Allen and Lalonde (2015), found that during the retellings children transformed that stories cultural patterning to resemble that of their own. This example of acculturation provides evidence of the dynamic relationship that exists between culturally-based narrative form and function and the subsequent meaning attributed to it. Specifically, through verse analysis, the authors were able to demonstrate imposing cultural patterning on retellings acts as a process of cultural participation through meaning making (Allen & Lalonde, 2015).

Storytelling Research in Africa

Perhaps in part due to the superior status given to written literature, limited research has been conducted on African oral storytelling. Throughout this paper it has been argued that children are active participants in the generation and maintenance of culture and the stories they listen to and tell offer a window into their past and present cultures. Therefore, the literature

reviewed in this section will pertain to the relatively simple characteristics and qualities of West African storytelling and research that has been conducted with children in several African countries, as well as to the nature of oral stories in West Africa specifically, which serves as background to interpreting the stories collected for this study.

Reproduced and Recreated

The re-narration of material referring to the self, community or past comes from a general working knowledge recreated by the narrator rather than from fragments of a once formal narrative account (Cohen, 1989). In essence, the story when retold belongs to the narrator and the personal meaning they attach to it. In a recent program initiative at the Kenya Schools and Colleges Drama Festivals (KSCDF), oral storytelling was introduced as a performative number. Recognizing the reciprocal relationship between storyteller and listener, the intention of the program was to create a connection and sense of community with audience members (Opondo, 2014). Further goals of the KSCDF involved the promotion and protection of the threatened practice of indigenous oral tradition within and among Kenyan tribes. The stories performed in the KSCDF were mindful of their audience members and thus incorporated multiple languages found throughout the country of Kenya and made reference to traditional ‘folklore’ as well as popular culture given the age range of the audience. Narrators also chose material that would resonate with the audience, choosing topics that were of social and cultural concern. Thus the story of “Eclipse” narrates the national census, “Promulgation” involves the successful adoption of a new national constitution, “King and I Land” speaks to the sexual harassment of women, while “For Sale” encourages the purchase of local products in order to promote the Kenyan economies (Opondo, 2014). Each of these stories was chosen based on the audience which would be listening as well as the social and historical concerns of the time.

Using the story of a devious rabbit in a Zimbabwean Shona trickster narrative, Chinyowa (2001) demonstrates how storytelling is a pedagogical tool for communicating the knowledge and wisdom of a culture to its people. The story is about a selfish rabbit, who takes advantage of members in his community in order to receive the benefits of communal work without paying his dues. In the midst of a draught the Elephant King declares that all animals should contribute in digging a well for the community. The rabbit refuses and as such he is told that he does not have permission to drink from the well because he didn't help his fellow community members with building it. Once the well is made the rabbit tricks multiple animals guarding it into tying themselves up, after which he precedes to drink from the well and bathe in it. Finally, the turtle is appointed guarding duty, upon which he hides from the rabbit inside the well and grabs his foot as he bathes. With the rabbit apprehended he is beaten and banished from the community (Chinyowa, 2001). The story, though centuries old, reflects how knowledge of past traditions can combine with present social contexts opening up discussions of varying viewpoints within a culture and between generations. The traditional view of the rabbit is that he is selfish, maniacal, and ultimately incapable of living with others, thus inhabiting all negative character traits. This view, consistent with generations from the past, embraces a collectivist ideology which puts presidency on the community over the individual. A more recent view of the rabbit is one in which the rabbit is seen as creative, strong-willed, and innovative, thus possessing positive characteristics and subsequently being oppressed by the rest of the community (Chinyowa, 2001). This view represents an individualistic ideology and is an example of the globalizing influence of the West. Chinyowa's (2001), use of the trickster story demonstrates how the audience's interpretation of a story can change from one telling to another and that shift in meaning is directly related to present social conditions.

Transference of Knowledge

In an article conducted by Tedessa Jelata Jirata (2014), she studies the children of three Ethiopian villages, ability to generate knowledge and interpret culture through listening and retelling stories. Jirata argues that the children's stories reflect the morals of former generations while they simultaneously add and critique the social complexities of their current environment. The children engage with the existing cultural norms while experimenting with the narratives of modernity. Jirata studies children's storytelling by participating in the children's storytelling events outside of the house with their peers, while herding cattle or playing in the neighbourhood. In the household children do not actively participate in the storytelling activity but eagerly anticipate these evening events. Jirata describes the folktales told as having a didactic purpose in which the knowledge of the past is transmitted to future generations (Jirata, 2014).

The events of the past are not transmitted genetically and, therefore, they are transmitted by other means, primarily by culture (Jackson, 2005). While storytelling passes on an oral history through generations it also provides a community with a basis for comprehending the experience. Each narrative performance provides a cultural frame of reference for what are the norms and standards of a society, Jirata's study illustrates the flexible nature of the cultural narrative and its ability to integrate the traditions of the past with the matters of the present.

In a study conducted by Dennis Banda and W. John Morgan (2013), the folklore of the Chewa culture of Zambia is used as an example of the ability of storytelling as a tool for moral teaching. The authors give examples of how various aspects of Chewa folklore are used to highlight appropriate traits and discourage others in the listeners, such as how to work well with others. They argue that Chewa folklore remains relevant in their society as moral and intellectual knowledge which allows their cultural identity to be maintained. Banda and Morgan (2013)

conclude with the suggestion of integrating the Chewa folklore tradition into the education system to improve the teachings of morals, attitudes and values.

Meaning Making

A change in cultural narrative can result in a change in meaning making. Jirata and Simonsen (2014), discovered that the Guij of South West Africa, shift from nomadic pastoralism to sedentary life based on agriculture, caused a shift in generational storytelling as exemplified in the children's folklore. While traditionally, storytelling was an activity reserved for adults during the periods of rest in the nighttime, children now have increased independent duties with their new sedentary life style. Adults spend their time cultivating crops, while children perform tasks with peers and siblings such as herding and household chores. This division of tasks has created a unique space for children to engage in their own storytelling sessions. During these sessions, children retold and adapted the stories of their parents, they also produced co-narrations that expressed the customs of the past and the children's modern interests such as, television and humour (Jirata & Simonsen, 2014).

Stein (2001), in her study of children from Johannesburg, demonstrates their ability to re-appropriate cultural narratives into the classroom space. The children integrated the traditional African oral storytelling style with the performativity of contemporary film and television when presenting stories for the class. Stein described the combination as a redefining of the relationship between mainstream and marginalized discourses in the language classroom. This study illustrates the "moving orality" of language; stories are transformed for new contexts and new historical moments. The children of the study freely draw on the languages and discourses within the culture and transform them for their own contemporary meaning-making and representational purposes (Stein, 2001).

In all the varied aspects of narrative explored within this review, from the building of a shared knowledge and community to the integration of past traditions with the world of modernity, storytelling is deeply ingrained in the lives of children. Such narrative devices are not merely forms of entertainment but integral as well as flexible parts of the construction of experience within a culture.

There has been very little research on the storytelling of children in Nigeria, West Africa, or indeed Africa, to date. The available research is presented here, followed by other research in children's meaning-making through storytelling and children's storytelling through a cultural lens. Research on the purpose of storytelling gives us an idea as to how and why children tell stories, but fail to examine the particular interests of the child and how culture may shape their construction of meaning. The work that has been done by researchers who have taken an empirical approach to Paley's story-telling/story-acting exercise provides the foundation on which this study is based. The studies emphasize choice and the importance of the child's voice when exploring children's interests, relationships and meaning-making (Binder, 2014; Wright, Diener, & Kemp, 2013). Little research using Paley's approach, however, has been conducted in non-Western contexts, though studies have demonstrated that culture can be studied using the method (Khimji, & Maunder, 2012; Allen, & Lalonde, 2015). Nigeria offers a context in which storytelling is an essential part of the history and daily living of children. Previous studies conducted in Africa have demonstrated the complex interrelation between storytelling of the past and present (Jirata & Simonsen, 2014; Jirata, 2014; Stein, 2001) but have not looked at the particular cultural elements interwoven within the stories of children. Combined with knowledge from the African oral tradition and the current research on children's storytelling in Africa the rationale for the present study is derived.

This study attempts to apply Vivian Gussin Paley's story-telling/story-acting method of data collection to the Nigerian context in order to explore children's storytelling through a cultural perspective. The specific methodological approach is used to shed light on the question: What aspects of culture do Nigerian children incorporate into their storytelling?

CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH METHODS

The methods used in this study follow the basic characteristics of qualitative research. The children's school was utilized within the research design in order to gather information in the field through face-to-face interactions in a location where the phenomenon of storytelling naturally occurs. Qualitative research, broadly defined, refers to research obtained without the use of quantitative and statistical procedures and as such I, as the key researcher, acted as the instrument of data collection using a variation of the story-telling/story-acting model designed and developed by Vivian Gussin Paley (1991), which I will refer to as the oral storytelling collection method. This method was chosen in order to preserve the child's voice and utilize a collection method the children would be familiar with. I adopted an emergent design understanding that aspects of my method were subject to change when I entered the field. Throughout the qualitative research process participant meaning was placed at the forefront while active reflectivity was maintained to account for my own researcher bias. A respect for emergent design was continually upheld allowing for changes to occur from the initial plan and for the perspectives of the participants to influence the direction of research, this will be outlined in later sections.

Research Design

The theory of social constructivism, which has shaped much of my study, argues that knowledge is socially constructed and is thus subject to change depending on the circumstances. Crotty (1998) has defined social constructivism as the view that knowledge being socially constructed ultimately results in reality being socially constructed. This construction of reality is thus, dependent on human practices and the interaction between humans and each other, and

humans and the environment (Crotty, 1998). Human understanding of the world is, therefore, developed and transmitted within an almost exclusively social context.

The oral storytelling collection method used in this study is a variation of an ethnographic design of inquiry. Ethnographic research studies “the shared patterns of behaviour, language and actions of an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time” (Creswell, 2014). Ethnomethodologists in particular organize their research around understanding how a group’s sense of reality is constructed (Angorsino, 2011). Their social constructivist approach is based on two assumptions; human interaction is reflexive and information is indexed. The reflexivity of human interaction can be understood as the joint interpretation of communication cues between individuals as upheld by a shared vision of reality (Angorsino, 2011). Indexed information refers to the pre-existing meanings present in a particular context which are linked to the historical and cultural biographies of the individuals interacting (Angorsino, 2011). One particularly influential ethnomethodologist, whose work was also influenced by Jerome Bruner, is the sociologist Erving Goffman. Goffman (2006) developed what is known as a dramaturgical approach to the study of human communications, in which he focused on the performative aspect of interactions in the creation of meaning. His research explored the descriptions people used to construct their “presentation of self” and observations of the ways in which those selves were performed. Goffman suggested that the intentionality behind the construction of a “presentation of self” was its design to construe the best possible self in the shared reality of others (Goffman, 2006).

Meaning is constructed (Bruner, 1991), and thus the search for meaning and the exploration of culture requires an examination of the intentional states in making meaning, which brings me to storytelling. Storytelling can be understood as a tool in the construction of meaning

(Bruner, 1991). The patterns that exist in the language of storytelling are unique to the culture (Bruner, 1991) and thus rely on the reflexivity of human interaction in order for teller and listener to share meaning. The content and structure of storytelling is also deeply dependent on the indexed information present within the storytelling episode. The phenomenon of storytelling and the uninterrupted collection of a story position themselves within ethnography as a product and a methodology (Angorsino, 2011). What I mean by ethnography as product is that the stories generated by the group are the research interest and thus become a product of the research in their ontology as well as the subsequently narrative fashion of dissemination, while simultaneously acting as the ethnographic mode of data collection.

The sociology of childhood perspective (Grieshaber, 2007) I have adopted is also evident in the ethnographic design qualities of my research. A subcategory of ethnography is known as “life history” (Angorsino, 2011). In this approach, the emphasis is on exposing the voices of people who have been historically relegated to the margins of society; this includes children. As such the child participants of this study are viewed as active, rather than passive contributors to the construction of their own realities. By allowing children to have complete freedom over the stories told, the content and type of story is chosen based on interest rather than researcher inquiry. Life histories reject the notion of a detached researcher in the hopes of reducing issues of power and de-centering the researcher-participant relationship, or adult-child relationship (Angorsino, 2011). By the same token the traditional interview is abandoned in favour of a more egalitarian dialogue. In order to maintain the sociology of childhood understanding that children are knowledgeable of their own lives, the research methodologies chosen within this study attempt to remove adult manipulation and provide a platform in which children can speak freely and comfortably through their storytelling. The oral storytelling collection format is intentionally

broad in order to reduce constrictions placed on the practice of storytelling and the power differential that exists between adults and children. Within the oral storytelling collection method, the children determine what topics will be included in the data set and provide perspectives that go beyond that of the researcher. The method used in this study adopts the life history approach of ethnography with the intent to gain the most untouched version of the child's ideas and concepts.

From this review it is clear that ethnography has had a longstanding history with social constructivist theory and can easily be applied to the sociology of childhood perspective thus lending itself nicely to the exploration of meaning in Nigerian children's storytelling. Another important aspect of ethnographic research is the approach known as participant-observer, which is a way of conducting research where the researcher is placed in the midst of the community of study for a prolonged period of time (Angosino, 2011). The time I spent in Abuja, Nigeria consisted of 5 ½ weeks and during that time I spent 4 weeks attending the children's school on a daily basis. I spent the entire school day in the classrooms of the children I was studying and made myself an individual they recognized and felt free to engage with. While my time in Nigeria may be considered short compared to other ethnographic research (Anogrsino, 2011), my attempt at participant-observer research was achieved in the rapport I built with the children. It is important to note, however, that certain issues of power were unavoidable and my outsider status was always evident, which will be further explored in limitations. My method of story collection, also should be said, does not rely on a true ethnographic design due to the procedures employed to elicit stories from the children. The naturalistic element of ethnographic research, while still partially implemented in the participant-observer aspects of the study, were undermined in that children were taken from their classrooms and asked to produce a story of their choosing by

myself, who could still be considered a ‘novel adult’ to the children. The heavy emphasis on field work and personal interaction present in my research design does emphasize its ethnographic qualities but I hesitate to attribute full ethnographic status to the design due to the limited time immersed in the culture and the unnatural means of story production.

Research Procedure

Oral Storytelling Collection

Consistent with Vivian Gussin Paley’s (1991) story-telling/story-acting approach, the current study employed a variation of the activity. The exercise contains three roles in which all children take part in: a) creating and dictating stories b) participating in the dramatization of their own and other children’s stories and c) acting as an audience member to the performances of stories by other children in the class (Nicolopoulou et al., 2009). The story-telling/story-acting model includes two interdependent activities. To begin with children are asked to dictate a story on any topic of their choosing and then the story is dramatized using other members of the class (Cooper, 2005). Within the parameters of this study only the dictation portion of the model was carried out. Being mindful of the time constraints involved in this study, the dramatization aspect of the study was removed from the story-telling/story-acting model, in order for appropriate attention to be given to the actual stories children were creating.

Dictation.

The first part of the story-telling/story-acting model involves the children narrating a story to the researcher who then transcribes the story and acts as an audience member for the child. Engaging in the activity was presented as completely voluntary with the child initiating participation. I began the activity by using an opening prompt to signal to the child when to begin: “Tell me your story.” Without direction from myself, children were encouraged to tell

stories about any topic, whether fictional or non-fictional. In order to avoid misunderstanding the child, I asked for clarification on confusing points. After the child completed their story I reread what the child had dictated to allow an opportunity for revisions and give the child a sense of pride in hearing what they had created.

Research Setting

Research was conducted at a private school in Abuja, Nigeria during the regular school day. The school is classified as a Christian private school, teaching to Early Years, Elementary and High School classes. Oral storytelling was initially collected in the children's classroom in order to provide a more natural setting, however, due to the amount of children in the room, often multiple children would attempt to tell a story or influence another child's story. Oral storytelling collection was, thus, moved to the porch at the front entrance of the school giving children more space to perform their stories while telling them.

Access

Access to the school was gained through the collaborative work being done with the Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI). ECDI was currently introducing a play-based learning curriculum to the school and encouraged research on children and play to be conducted during this process. Once ethics approval had been obtained and the research team was on location consent forms were sent home with children of appropriate age groups, requesting consent from parents for participation (Appendix A). Children were chosen for one-on-one storytelling sessions when I would ask the class, "Who would like to tell a story?" Those interested would raise their hands and children with parental consent would be subsequently removed from the classroom one-by-one and provided with a verbal explanation of the oral storytelling collection process.

Participants

The child participants in this study were between the ages of 3- and 6-years and came from the Early Years sector of the school including; Pre-Kindergarten (3-4yrs), Lower Kindergarten (4-5yrs) and Upper Kindergarten (5-6yrs). While this age group is still acquiring language skills they have already had ample exposure to storytelling in their engagement with others and so were of an appropriate age to be considered for the study. Participants consisted of 12 children from Pre-Kindergarten including 6 females and 6 males, 5 children from Lower Kindergarten including 4 females and 1 male, and 5 children from Upper Kindergarten including 1 female and 4 males, resulting in 22 child participants.

Data Collection

Over the course of 4 weeks I visited the school on a daily basis for the entirety of the school day. I alternated the days for which classrooms I was in. I did not begin to collect data until the second week I was there, which provided time for me to establish rapport with the children, as well as my participant-observer presence within the classrooms. During oral storytelling collection I used the narrative approach described above to transcribe the children's stories verbatim into a notebook in a manner that allowed the children to observe the transcription. A storytelling area was established on the porch outside the entrance to the school. I remained seated as children had the option of sitting next to me observing the transcription of their stories or use the ample space around them to engage in the performative aspect of their storytelling. The space in which the research was conducted was intentionally chosen to increase the child's control during the research process. Many children took the initiative to include other forms of narrative in their oral storytelling process this included, acting out the story as they told it and using my notebook as a prop to draw out their stories. All of the children's stories were

entered into an electronic database. The database included information about the author of each story (child's first name, gender, and age), and the date of the storytelling. All information was later anonymized during the analysis process.

Data Analysis

An in vivo analysis was used, as it involves preserving the participants' words and using their language to create themes. The study's purpose was to learn about children's perspectives through storytelling and using a sociology of childhood perspective, maintaining authenticity in their words was essential. The first steps of the data analysis process involved typing up the stories that had been transcribed by hand during their initial telling. Next I looked over the data to get a general idea of what participants were saying and how they were saying it. Following the coding process outlined by Tesch (1990), I proceeded to code my data for recurring patterns. I initiated the process of coding by beginning with the first story I was told and reading through it to get a general sense of what it was all about. After reading the story I made a list of all the topics that came up. I then generated codes for each of the topics and went back to the story to mark them down accordingly. Using the codes I had created, I proceeded to read the remaining stories. During this first pass through I was able to group categories according to story type. I then started the coding process over again. After placing stories into story type categories I went from category to category identifying passages of the transcribed stories that exemplified the same theoretical or descriptive idea. After I had identified several passages with similar underlying themes I linked them together under a unifying code. With the addition of other coded categories, I was able to establish a framework of thematic ideas evident in the children's storytelling. After I had coded all the transcripts I combined codes that were examples of the same idea and managed and organized my data accordingly (coded stories can be found in

Appendix B). Once all stories were coded for I identified codes that were dependent on the cultural context. On instances where no written material could be found to support the data, Patricia Falope, CEO of the Early Child Development Initiative, Nigeria, was consulted as a cultural interpreter.

Code definitions

Attaching a label to a passage of text is not arbitrary; it involves the deliberate categorizing of data based on content and meaning (Gibbs, 2008). In order to establish consistency in coding, a definition of the code or category was made, involving the thinking behind the code and what content it could be applied to. Throughout the coding process I attempted to move away from descriptive coding to include a more analytical and theoretical level of coding. I achieved this by identifying categories that components of multiple children's transcripts fell under and refrained from using the respondent's terms as labels. Once categories were established I was able to go back and perform a more in-depth content analysis. My analysis involved data-driven coding, which took on an emergent theory approach (Gibbs, 2008). I focused on inductively identifying novel theoretical ideas from the data instead of testing theories generated beforehand. Setting aside my adult-driven theories regarding storytelling ideas I analyzed emerging themes and used deductive analysis to connect existing theories to my interpretations.

My Role as Researcher

Qualitative research is interpretive research and as such, I, as the researcher have acted as the data collection instrument and analysis interpreter, which introduces a range of strategic, ethical and personal issues into the research process. With these concerns in mind I have

attempted to identify reflexively the biases, values and personal experiences that shape the directions and interpretations I have made during the study.

As early as I can remember I have been an avid storyteller. Growing up in an upper-middle class home my bedroom was filled with books and I was read to on a regular basis. Storytelling and the sharing of experiences was highly valued in my home and made up most of the conversations around the dining room table. Attending a Western-centric school in Canada, storytelling was also encouraged and seen as an effective means of interaction both with teachers and peers. Within the school system there was also a heavy emphasis on the literary component of storytelling as exemplified through children's literature and story-writing.

My interest in storytelling continued to follow me into graduate studies where I conducted multiple research studies on children's engagement with the storytelling process. One of the studies conducted focused on the concept of fear and how it manifests in children's stories, while the other study focused on children's concepts of the storytelling process. The fear study was conducted at a subsidised after school program located in the downtown core of Toronto, Canada and consisted of a primarily Ethiopian participant pool between the ages of 5-7 years. The study on storytelling concepts was conducted at an Early Learning Center located in Toronto, Canada and included participants from a variety of ethnicities between the ages of 3-5 years.

The cultural and socioeconomic background I come from and the experiences I have had with storytelling have certainly influenced my research interests and have created in me an unmovable appreciation for storytelling. Growing up in Canada my exposure to storytelling primarily took the form of reading and this is often not the case for many of the Nigerian children in my study who experience a greater amount of oral storytelling in the home. Literacy,

however, was just as strongly emphasized in their school curriculum. A tendency towards literacy has influenced my choice of research method as evident in the transcription element of the process and in my coded categories and themes. My experience in graduate school with children's storytelling affected my expectations for children's ability to narrate based on age and I found that ability in Nigeria did not go beyond my expectations based on my observations in the Canadian context.

Conducting research in Nigeria, as a white female adult entering a school environment I may have given children the impression that I am a school teacher or I that I was there to evaluate them. This was affirmed by the fact the children addressed me as Ms. Jenna and I was regularly sought out when a child was tattling or looking for permission to engage in an activity or go to the bathroom. Being perceived as a teacher may have caused children to tailor their stories to subjects a teacher would approve of, though this certainly wasn't the case for all children, and my obvious outsider appearance may have made children reluctant to participate and invite me into their narrative worlds.

Ethical Considerations

My primary ethical concern when conducting this study related to the largely European-Western academic perspectives and theoretical underpinnings I used to shape the direction of the study; such as Bruner and Paley. In order to make my research procedures more ethically appropriate I openly acknowledged the culture-specific definitions available in Bruner's narrative theory and modified Paley's educational activity of story-telling/story-acting to explore a practice relevant within the participants' culture and larger community. Understanding that my own theoretical frameworks may be incongruent with those of my participants I made conscious efforts not to project my own values onto the research process and respected the culturally

sanctioned standards of my participants. During my oral storytelling collection with children I emphasized my desire to hear their story and placed the participants as experts on the practice of storytelling within their culture.

Literature involving cross-cultural research has reported marginalized and minority participants as frequently feeling misunderstood and misrepresented in research projects conducted by researchers with a Western background (Marshall & Batten, 2003). Regardless of the fact this study was being conducted in Nigeria where the participants were from the mainstream culture and I was a minority, misinterpretation was still a serious concern for me. In order to reduce participant concerns of misrepresentation and chances of researcher misunderstanding a great deal of effort was put into rapport building in order to increase my level of cultural awareness and foster trusting relationships with my participants.

When entering into the field it was imperative that cultural sensitivity be at the forefront of my research process. In order to maintain this, respect and continuous communication with knowledgeable community members was required. I worked closely with ECDI and the school administration. I also used the collective knowledge of the culture to inform my methodological framework by researching the history of African storytelling.

With regards to working with children, coming from a sociology of childhood perspective, it was important to me that the children participating in my study were not treated as objects. Therefore, I have taken a very child-centered approach to my research design actively involving the children in constructing the forms in which their knowledge and perceptions are structured and delivered. To ensure that the data collected is determined by the child, participation was entirely voluntary and the style and content of stories were up to the children to decide.

The research question I have chosen, and more importantly the methods I chose to implement, have been noted as beneficial to the child. The practice of storytelling has been associated with an increase in literacy skills (Cooper, 2005, Nicolopoulou & Richner, 2007, Nicolopoulou, et al., 2009) and further development of the self (Engel, 1995). In the context of Nigeria storytelling is seen as a special event within the household and a profession for some (Finnegan, 2014, Pellowski, 1977), as such storytelling is a real and natural part of the children's lives. In order to reduce any risks within the research project I refrained from prompting children or encouraging them to tell stories when they were not interested. By allowing children to choose the stories they wished to tell I intended to provide them with an environment in which they felt comfortable and where distressing emotions were not induced. Based on the format of the research activity I stressed the importance of consent and voluntary participation. The standard letter of consent that participants read and signed only acted as one part of this process and due to cultural differences precautions were taken to ensure that only truly informed participation occurred. It was made clear that in no way was the child required to provide a story and they were free to disengage from the activity at any point. I also anticipated there to be cultural, religious, or gender difference in the participants and the subsequent stories they told. I remained mindful throughout the research process of my own cultural background and was respectful of the different norms and rules each participant followed.

Throughout the research I attempted to address the generational and power differences that existed between myself and the participants (Creswell, 2014). One strategy my research design offered, in regards to empowering the children in my study, was the child-directed method of the storytelling process. Rather than using structured or formal interviews the oral storytelling collection method allowed children to have control over the topics explored. While

this method encouraged children to discuss themes that were of relevance to them, it did not completely remove issues of power. Therefore, it was important that I remain aware of the biases I hold and seek clarification in order to accurately analyze children's stories.

During my content analysis I actively made sure to avoid taking a deficit/stage model approach in my interpretations, by viewing differences in storytelling ability and content as stemming from differences in the child's socio-cultural background and not their development. I also ensured that the privacy of my participants was respected by using pseudonyms for the individual authors and the classmates and family members that appeared in their stories.

Quality of Design

In quantitative research the most valuable measures of the quality of a study is reliability and validity. In qualitative studies reliability and validity can be conceptualized as quality and trustworthiness (Creswell, 2014). The term reliability refers to the testing or evaluating of quantitative research and if we think of testing as a way of eliciting information than reliability transfers to quality in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). A good qualitative study can help bring a social phenomenon to the surface in order for it to be better understood. This relates back to the concept of quality when evaluating in quantitative research is done for the purpose of explaining and quality in qualitative research is done for the purpose of generating understanding. The term validity refers to the appropriateness of a test. In qualitative research this can be affected by the researcher's perception and choice of paradigm assumption and as such is referred to as trustworthiness (Creswell, 2014).

In order to defend the results of my study as an example of quality research I will explore the "big-tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research (Tracy, 2010). Good qualitative research should focus on topics that are considered worthy in their relevance, timing and significance

(Tracy, 2010). This study has occurred at a prime time within the research field because a shift is occurring towards child perspectives. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper research with children typically did not take into consideration the perspective of the child. With the emergence of the sociology of childhood, however, research initiatives have changed their directions and are focusing on what is relevant to the child. My study offers a child-centered approach to the study of storytelling and a contribution to the limited research available regarding the topic cross-culturally, as well as child research in general in Nigeria. In this respect my study covers all the areas of a worthy topic. Rich rigour is also achieved in this study through the extensive analysis I have undertaken and the in depth description of the data collection and analysis processes. I have maintained transparency by providing a step by step account of the methods I employed and the potential biases I possessed before conducting my study. Each of these aspects has contributed to the sincerity of my research. My research can be viewed as credible in that the data I have presented and the analysis I have carried out fit with existing literature and can be viewed as plausible interpretations. Multivocality emerged in my study through the analysis of children's perspectives. The findings of this study achieve resonance as every reader was once a child and all individuals participate in storytelling. Through the use of appropriate methods and procedures and meaningful interconnections with literature this study has achieved meaningful coherence and has met the requirements of good qualitative research.

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS

In seeking to investigate and analyse the meaning of children's storytelling, it may be useful first to consider notions of narrative analysis and cultural exploration. This section will look at this issue, the five narrative structures the stories fall into and the categorical themes within these categories. The narrative analysis I undertook for this study focuses on the thematic content of the children's stories in order to explore children's conceptions of the world and understand the fundamental aspect of narrative as a cognitive tool with specific social and cultural functions (Bruner, 1991). As such the approach I have used attempts to integrate a formal analysis of children's narratives into an interpretive understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which the stories are being produced.

Story Type

In the initial phase of coding, themes around narrative structure and storytelling style were identified, this led to the classification of stories into one of five categories based on story type. Stories were classified by this means because the stories naturally fell into a prior categories based on genre and it seemed inappropriate not to acknowledge this fact. The story type categories I deferred to existed outside of the emergent design of my study and came from Cullinan's (1981) definitions of children's literature genres. The story type categories consisted of fantasy, popular culture, biography/script, folklore, books and other (*Table 1*).

Fantasy

Out of the 46 stories collected 5 of the stories were categorized as fantasy stories. Fantasy stories were defined based on Cullinan's (1981) definition. The genre follows a linear narrative similar to that found in popular children's stories but are created from the child's imagination and include the impossible. Central to a fantasy story is the imaginative nature of events, places

and characters. The events of fantasy stories include events that could never take place in the real world or result in consequences that could never occur, while the characters and places possess qualities that range from the supernatural to the unbelievable. Within fantasy stories the unbelievable is made believable based on the fantastical context the child has created. Within popular culture, fantasy stories are predominantly in the medievalist form sometimes void of the unbelievable but still categorized as fantasy given the fantastical culture associated with medieval characters.

Features characteristic of the fantasy category in accordance with Cullinan's (1981) definition include;

- imaginary worlds made believable,
- characters who possess supernatural qualities, and/or
- contains medievalist qualities.

Popular Culture

Out of the 46 stories collected 8 of the stories were categorized as popular culture stories. Popular culture stories are stories that make direct reference to characters, events and places that exist in popular movies and television shows (Hurly, 2005). These references can occur in the form of a retelling or an adaptation of the movie or TV show where the ending or major conflict may have been changed. Stories that follow an entirely new narrative but include characters from popular culture will not be categorized as popular culture as the categorizations are made in reference to the narrative as a whole, with that being said famous characters will be included as a thematic subcategory.

Features characteristic of the popular culture category include;

- characters from movie and/or TV shows,

- direct reference to the events in a particular movie or TV show,
- the retelling of a movie or TV show, and/or
- an adaptation of a specific movie or TV show plot.

Biography/Script

Out of the 46 stories collected 12 of the stories were categorized as biography/script stories. Biography/script stories involve narratives that have either occurred or could occur in the child's life (Cullinan, 1981). The story is set in modern time and mirrors the daily life events of the child. These stories bear the imprint of the child in that they include characters, places and events that the child is familiar with in their day to day. The biography component of the stories refers to the aspects in the story that make direct reference to characters or incidents in the child's life, while the script component refers to the cognitive ordering children prescribe to expected situations.

Schank and Abelson (1977), define cognitive scripts as predictable sequences of actions that can be attributed to frequently occurring events that, in turn, guide the behaviours and expectations of everyday experiences. When an event is experienced multiple times an internalized "template" is created that maps the expected sequences of actions, participants and props that are likely to occur within that situation. A birthday party script, for example, contains a basic linear series of actions that typically occur at a birthday party (cake, singing, opening presents), expected characters (birthday boy/girl, guests, parents) and common props (cake, presents, balloons, camera). While scripts refer to a specific event they also possess a degree of flexibility within a range of similar events children can experiment with. For example, a birthday script for a peer's birthday can also be applied to a grandparent's birthday or a rabbit's birthday because both scenarios encompass similar sequences of action.

Features characteristic of the biography/script category in accordance with Cullinan's (1981) definition include;

- an allusion of reality,
- characters found in everyday life,
- real-world settings,
- language similar to natural spoken language, and/or
- plots structured around a person's life.

Folklore

Out of the 46 stories collected 11 of the stories were categorized as folklore stories.

Folklore are the stories that are handed down from one generation to another and are moulded and changed as they pass from storyteller to storyteller (Cullinan, 1981). Folklores mirror the language and values of a culture and often include condensed morality tales designed to teach the listener about the cultural norms and social conducts within the society (Finnegan, 2014).

Animal characters are often used to embody the virtues and vices of humans within these stories. Classical mythology is another area often explored in folklore in which the origins of the earth, the phenomena of nature and the relation between humans and their gods are explained (Walker, 1995).

Features characteristic of the folklore category in accordance with Cullinan's (1981) definition include;

- personified animal characters,
- obvious themes illuminating human values and morals,
- obvious lessons being taught,
- explanations of origins, and/or

- gods and religious figures.

Books

Out of the 46 stories collected 6 of the stories were categorized as book stories. Book stories are stories that make direct reference to characters, events and places that exist in children's literature. Included in children's literature are stories that, though potentially made into a popular movie or television show, were originally written stories. Thus, regardless of how the children were introduced to the material these stories will be categorized as book stories to simplify categorization. Literary reference can include the retelling of a classic children's story or an adaptation to one by changing characters, events or situations. Like the popular culture category stories that follow an entirely new narrative but include characters from children's literature will not be categorized as book stories but will be included in the thematic category of famous characters.

Features characteristic of the books category include;

- characters from children's stories,
- direct reference to the events in a particular children's story,
- the retelling of a children's story and/or
- an adaptation of a specific children's story plot.

Other

Out of the 46 stories collected 4 of the stories were categorized as other stories. Other stories are stories that due to their narrative structure or content did not fit neatly into any of the categories above.

Features characteristic of the other category include;

- there is no linear structure, and/or

- the narrative leaves the realm of language.

Thematic Codes

Once stories were organized according to story type each story was recoded for emerging themes. Thematic codes emerged from the characters, events and overall point of the story. Of the stories collected and analyzed nine thematic categories emerged, with many appearing both within and between story type categories. These nine thematic categories included; formal story markers, violence, family characters, home script, school script, friendship, supernatural, moral values and famous characters (*Table2*).

Formal Story Markers

Language is filled with certain observable regularities, which eventually become agreed upon patterns of language within a culture, that communicate a specific meaning. Taylor (2002), identifies a particular type of cognitive grammar which suggests the thinking of a genre as a particular semantic schema. By this he refers to a stored prototype of a genre of narrative that is activated when encountering the discourse of that genre. Formal story markers in this study, thus, refer to the combination of grammatical and lexical features that are embedded with the meaning of a specific literary discourse, in particular the formal beginning/ending of a story. Out of the 46 stories collected 45 of the stories included formal markers at both the beginning and end of the story and occurred across all story style categories. Examples of the formal story markers used by the children include (a list of all formal story markers can be found in *Table3*);

- “Once upon a time...”
- “Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) ...” and
- “The end...,” “That’s the end of my story...”

Violence

The Miriam-Webster dictionary defines violence as; “the use of physical force to harm someone, to damage property” and “[a] great destructive force or energy.” In this study any activity, therefore, that is injurious or damaging in anyway will be described as violent. Out of the 46 stories collected 32 of the stories included violent themes and these themes occurred across all story style categories. A list of all themes of violence can be found in *Table4*; the most reoccurring themes of violence included;

- beat,
- biting, and
- fighting.

Family Characters

In the context of human society, a family can be considered as a group of people connected to one another either by blood in which relation is recognized by birth, affinity in which relation is created as the result of marriage, or co-residency in which relation is established through shared living space. Members of the immediate family include; parents, spouses, siblings and children. Members of the extended family include; grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces. With recent shifts in family structure combination families are becoming more present and these members include; stepparents, stepchildren and stepsiblings. Out of the 46 stories collected 28 of the stories included family characters, who appeared within all story style categories. A list of all family characters can be found in *Table5*; the most reoccurring characters included;

- mother, and
- father.

Home Script

Following the definition of cognitive script outlined above by Schank and Abelson (1977), home scripts can be understood as predictable sequences of actions that can be attributed to frequently occurring events that take place in the home or in association to family members and subsequently guide the behaviours and expectations of the child's everyday home experiences. Out of the 46 stories collected 27 of the stories included home scripts that occurred across all story style categories. A list of all home scripts can be found in *Table6*, the most reoccurring examples were;

- eating,
- sleeping, and
- bathing.

School Script

Following the definition of cognitive script outlined above by Schank and Abelson (1977), school scripts can, similarly, be understood as predictable sequences of actions that can be attributed to frequently occurring events that take place in the school or in association to recognizable school characters (teacher, student etc.) and subsequently guide the behaviours and expectations of the child's everyday school experiences. Out of the 46 stories collected 8 of the stories included school scripts within the categories of fantasy, biography/script and other. A list of all school scripts can be found in *Table7*; the most reoccurring examples were;

- writing,
- going to and from school, and
- playing.

Friendship

Fehr (1996) wrote, “Everyone knows what friendship is—until asked to define it. Then, it seems, no one knows. There are virtually as many definitions of friendship as there are social scientists studying the topic” (p. 5). Based on the passage above it is clear that there is no simply definition of friendship and because of this ambiguity the category has been limited to only including specific instances where children used the word friend or friendship in their story. Out of the 46 stories collected 8 of the stories included the theme of friendship and these occurred across all story style categories except the category of other (a list of all instances of friendship can be found in *Table8*).

Supernatural

Referring to something as supernatural is very different than referring to something as fictional. Fiction implies falsehood where supernatural is not to call a thing unreal or untrue but accept its existence. Supernatural refers to “the inexplicable things [that] happen which we identify as being somehow beyond the natural or the ordinary... that exist beyond what we might typically see, hear, taste, touch, or smell” (Walker, 1995: 2). Out of the 46 stories collected 15 of the stories included supernatural themes and occurred across all story style categories (a list of all supernatural themes can be found in *Table9*).

Moral Values

Throughout history, communities have placed emphasis on what is culturally considered acceptable behaviour. These behaviours, or traits which influence behaviour, encompass the importance of group welfare and the preservation of the cultural standards of the community. In the context of this study, moral value was identified when a story acted as a moral teaching for a specific behaviour or trait (Crow & Crow, 1962). Out of the 46 stories collected 24 of the stories

included value themes and occurred across all story style categories except for the other category (a list of all value themes can be found in *Table10*). Within the category of moral values the most reoccurring value was that of heroics.

Heroics.

The Miriam-Webster dictionary defines heroics as; “[one] exhibiting or marked by courage and daring; supremely noble or self-sacrificing; relating to, resembling, or suggesting heroes.” Heroics in this study, therefor, refers to acts which are associated with heroes or require great bravery. Out of the 24 stories collected with value themes 14 of the stories included the value of heroics. This sub-theme occurred across all categories in which value themes occurred (a list of all heroic themes can be found in *Table10*). The most reoccurring heroic theme throughout the stories was the act of “saving” someone from something.

Famous Characters

A character is a representation or a portrayal of a person. Famous refers to the character’s existence in a popular works of art such as, a novel, movie or television show. Famous characters were identified by name regardless of if they occurred in their traditional narrative. Out of the 46 stories collected 17 of the stories included famous characters and they appeared within the categories of: popular culture, biography, popular literature and catchall. A list of all famous characters can be found in *Table12*, the most reoccurring characters included;

- the characters from *Frozen*, and
- Cinderella.

From the thematic analysis of the 46 stories collected six distinct story genres emerged, consistent with many of the themes Binder (2014) identified; everyday experiences, popular culture and imaginary stories. Within and between the different story types, nine themes were

identified reflecting many of the same themes found in previous studies; friendship, family, retellings etc. (Binder, 2014; Nicolopoulou, 2008). From the stories collected it is evident that the children effortlessly and effectively combined the traditions of the past with elements of the modern (Jirata, 2014). What was of interest to them stood at the forefront of each story illustrating their competence and enjoyment in storytelling. Each story type will be examined from a historical and cultural lens in order to understand the children's exposure to story genre and subsequent reappropriation. Thematic themes will be parsed down to include analysis of only those that included specific cultural reference.

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION

Analyses of the stories yielded a total of six story types and nine emergent themes.

Khimji & Maunder (2012), have stated that the social and cultural context in which children reside are fundamental in the narrative frameworks they rely on and the themes that are important to them. The varying levels in which children incorporate the beliefs and practices of their environment suggests that children are a part of more than one cultural community (Khimji & Maunder, 2012). The story types and themes reflect that which has been documented in the literature previously, the children's bicultural experiences, and the uniqueness of Nigerian culture. In regards to the research question of what aspects of culture do Nigerian children incorporate into their storytelling, the culture is not simply Nigerian. Similar to children outside of Nigeria, the child's voice is represented by their choice of topic, reflecting their own interests (Binder, 2014) melded with the cultural practices used to formulate their narratives (Khimji & Maunder, 2012).

Story Type

Upon reading the children's stories, it was clear that many of the stories possessed similar characteristics and could easily be classified together. Once the categories of story type were determined the stories were organized and labeled. And the question of why these narrative structures were used in the children's storytelling came to the forefront. This section will explore the origins of story type and their uses in contemporary children's literature.

Fantasy

Before there was fantasy there was folklore, which will be explored more thoroughly below. Fantasy took the strong moral lessons of folklore and placed them in the realm of the unbelievable and fanciful (Cullinan, 1981). The stories reflected what Cullinan (1981) defines as

Kingsley's view that the sinner within the child could be redeemed through a mixture of love and punishment, while the fantastical aspects of genre attempted to reconcile the conflicting views of science and faith. Fantasy went by the notion that "children needed to be given a dose of goodness with every taste of imagination" (Cullinan, 1981: 55). Lewis Carol's *Alice in Wonderland* is often credited as the first fantasy story, however, the characteristics of fantasy are evident in the colonial views of moral and educational instruction (Cullinan, 1981). At the time of colonialism book-making was still a slow and costly process, so the didactic instruction into civility that colonialists propagated often took the form of storytelling. While many of the stories involved the memorization of passages from the bible they were soon adapted to be more accessible for children, hence the heavy moral teaching still evident in classic fairy tales (Cullinan, 1981).

In recent times, since the invention of cinema, the retelling of classic fairy tales and stories of fantasy have been dominated by Disney (Hurley, 2005). Disney has cornered the market on the contemporary fantasy story and with globalization the themes of fantasy seen in stories like *Alice in Wonderland* have travelled across the globe. The impact of textual and visual exposure on the structuring of children's narratives have been dramatically demonstrated in a study conducted by Yeoman (1990). Yeoman read a Cinderella-type tale to a 4/5th grade classroom and found that during retellings children imposed the qualities of Disney's Cinderella even when it contradicted aspects of the story. This study demonstrates that children internalized the fantasy storytelling style of the classic fairy tale into their own narrative framework for understanding and reproducing other pieces of literature. In the passage below it is evident that the Nigerian children also possessed a strong fantastical narrative framework:

"Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess that lived in a castle and she had a

prince and the beautiful princess had a prince and there was a dragon that protected the castle...”

The story here, narrated by a 4-year-old female, clearly possess features found in a traditional European fairy tale such as the setting of a castle and the presence of a mystical creature; the dragon. It also encompasses aspects of Disney in that the protagonist is a princess and she has a prince by her side. The inclusion of an entire genre category for fantasy is unsurprising when we consider Paley’s (2007) three Fs; fantasy, friendship and fairness. Paley identified fantasy as a specific space for which children explored the concepts and logic of the school classroom. The inclusion of a medievalist setting is also consistent with Jirata and Simonsen’s (2014) study which found that the children of the Guij of South West Africa actively incorporated aspects of modernity into their storytelling, which may or may not translate intergenerationally. The inclusion of fantasy rather than coming from Nigerian culture may represent an aspect of childhood culture which Disney has cultivated. For a list all theme occurrences in the category of Fantasy see *Table 12*.

Popular Culture

Fantasy nicely leads into the category of popular culture as many of the movies and television shows made for children make use of the fantasy genre. Increasingly children have become consumers in regards to their socialization in modern societies (Brusdal & Frønes, 2014). The children in Nigeria are no different, the majority of students attending the private school in Abuja come from affluent homes and thus have access to television and movies that reproduce children’s stories for consumption. Exemplifying another feature of childhood culture, popular culture provides another narrative structure that may have universal relevance for children. Langer (2004) describes the process of consumerism as more than just brand

enchantment but an intimate connection between culture and identity, particularly childhood culture. Media characters provide this connection for children through emotional identification. Disney effectively bridges products with values producing an image or character that children can identify with. This example of attachment fits well with Campbell's (1987) concept of the "new hedonistic consumer" which describes a person who consumes experiences. The objects of consumption thus make their way into the everyday experiences of children and ultimately become examples of cultural and social capital (Brusdal & Frønes, 2014). Children's television and movies continually made appearances in the children's stories as both a category of storytelling (or retelling) and as characters within the story. Consistent with narrative elements found in Binder's (2014) study, children relied on retellings as a narrative structure and as a representation of their particular interests. Children exemplified the performativity of contemporary film and television by either retelling or adapting the specific climax building storytelling techniques when presenting their own stories (Stein, 2001). The passage below exemplifies the heavy influence children's popular culture has on the child's interest and experience of narrative:

"My story is Elsa. Elsa was a girl, little girl she lives with Ana. So once she grew up she went up the mountain with snow. So now Elsa started singing "Let It Go." So she built a castle made of ice, ice. So she froze her sister so a man wanted to cut the sister's finger. He dropped the knife. So Elsa now saved her sister. So they went into the boat and when the man into the boat they pushed him into the water. And he swim back to his own ship and Elsa and Ana and the reindeer lived happily ever after."

This story, narrated by a 4-year-old-female, provides an example of a quick retelling of

the movies *Frozen*. The girl describes the parts of the movie she found relevant, even providing the title of the movie's main song. Below is another example of how popular culture can creep into the narratives of children's day to day lives:

“My mommy used to buy a laptop for me. My mommy used to buy lights. My mommy used to buy fine my used to buy a charger for me. My mommy used to buy *Frozen* clothes for me.”

The 3-year-old boy who narrated this story, provides a list of items that his mother buys for him when she is out shopping. Along with popular technological devices is the products of consumerism which Disney has built its empire around. The movie *Frozen*, which is one of Disney's more recent films, appeared repeatedly throughout the children's stories in all age groups. The film obviously represented social capital in that in order to understand the stories the children told or the clothes they wore outside of school one must have seen the film. The children illustrated the use of storytelling as a means of community building and group membership similarly to the children in Wright, Diener, and Kemp's (2013) study. The plots and characters of popular movies and television shows flooded the classroom whether during socio-dramatic play or co-narrations (own observations). This further supports the notion of children residing in more than one cultural community and being influenced by the particular social practices of the group (Khimji & Maunder, 2012). For a list all theme occurrences in the category of Popular Culture see *Table13*.

Biography/Script

Realistic fiction or biography is often considered the mirror or window of story because they both reflect life and show us what is attainable (Cullinan, 1981). It has been argued that this type of story repeatedly appears because it helps prepare the teller for reality, creating

expectations, and a space in which to rehearse the reactions and experiences we might someday have (Cullinan, 1981). This genre of storytelling illustrates nicely, Bruner's (1991) theory of narrative construction of reality. The child uses the narratives of the culture to navigate through the real and potential experiences of life. This is where Schank and Abelson (1977), notion of cognitive scripts clearly comes into play. Biographies reflect children's experiences in the world – and as such are not surprising to see in cross-cultural contexts – cognitive scripts, then, provide the narrative in which these experiences occur. The biographies the children told included the familiar whether they were told as biographies of another or autobiographies. In the two passages below the children while using different narrative structures in regards to perspective speak about experiences they are familiar with and knowledgeable about based on the scripts they have created for such scenarios:

“When they went to school they brought their homework and they were the first person to write. Then when they went to the dining hall to eat their food they were the first person to eat their food. And they were eating school food. When they were in their class they were writing 1 to 77.”

The first story, narrated by a four-year-old girl describes her script for school, she outlines the timeline that occurs in a typical day with lunch occurring in the middle and presents the expected activities she would engage in. She also illustrates the expectations of school and the importance of being number one. She conveys all of this through a third person perspective of “they” which refers to the boy and girl characters of her story.

“One day when my sister beat me yesterday because she said I should pack my clothes.

Then when my sister said, she said I shouldn't just pack my clothes and just go to church. My sister give me food yesterday because, because mother said I should colour my motor car because I have it in my house.”

The second story also describes the events of experience, however, in this case it is in the first person. Consistent with Csak's (2002) work the most common temporal frame used in biography/script stories was events that had just happened. In the story above the young girl describes the interactions she had the day before with members of her family. Whether or not these events actually occurred yesterday, it is clear that this narration is relying on her memory of past events and the reliance on this particular temporal frame for children may be consistent across cultures. Paley's (2007) original use of the story-telling/story-acting exercise the biography/script genre explicitly states children's understanding and use of classroom logic. Both girls incorporate specific classroom tasks (counting and colouring) into their stories and subsequently expand the classroom activities to the home sphere. For a list all theme occurrences in the category of Biography/Script see *Table 14*.

Folklore

Theories about the origins of folklore come from social anthropologists, who study the customs and traditions of a culture. One such anthropologist, Ruth Sawyer (1962), described the beginning of storytelling as; “a simple chant, set to the rhythm of some daily tribal occupation such as grinding corn, paddling a canoe or kayak, sharpening weapons for hunting or war, or ceremonial dancing” (Sawyer, 1962: 45-46). These forms of storytelling often involved a fascination with the natural world and the potentially supernatural forces behind it. The roots of folklore exist in all societies and demonstrate the power of imagination to explain the unexplainable and teach the next generation of the values of a community (Cullinan, 1981).

Africa has a rich history of oral traditions in which storytelling always took the form of speech rather than writing, in this regard, the aspects of folklore have remained present and informative for the child's narrative. West African stories have been called spider tales and the origins of this name illustrates the regions longstanding history with folklore (Barker & Sinclair, 2007). The story tells the tale of Anansi a conceited, but clever spider, who wanted to possess the stories that belonged to Nyankupon, the chief of gods. The chief told Anansi that if he were to bring him a jar full of bees, a boa constrictor, and a tiger he would grant him the stories. Anansi used his clever mind to trick each and every one of the animals into proving themselves and ultimately revealing their vulnerabilities. One by one Anansi presented Nyankupon with the animals, and having promised Anansi the stories if he were to obtain each animal, Nyankupon gave Anansi the stories. This is how the stories of West Africa became known as the spider tales (Barker & Sinclair, 2007). This story possesses many of the hallmarks of folklore, it includes; personified animals, a lesson on morality, an origin, and the presence of gods. The Nigerian children told many stories that included elements of this traditional West African folklore. Below are two examples of the children's folklores:

“My story is about the fish and the fire. One day the fish did a contest with the fire. They decided to go one by one to each house. The fish was the first to come to the fire's house. As he came the fish was scared. Anywhere the fish goes fire would burn it down, then as the fire entered the water the fire quench and that is how the fish had another friend and they all lived happily ever after.”

“There was a boy who was not patient. He lived in the Great Wall of China. The father said robbers are coming to fight the Great Wall of China. He told the boy to stand on the walls. He was waiting and waiting and waiting, then the boy said, “If the robbers don't

come I'll go away." Then when he went away the robbers came. The first person the robbers killed was his father. That is the end of my story."

Jirata (2014) argues that children's stories reflect the morals of former generations while simultaneously incorporating elements of their current environment. The first story, narrated by a 5-year-old male, tells the story of how the fish ended up living in the water. Certain elements from his childhood culture can be found in the traditional folklore; friendship and heroics. The characters of the story exemplify personification, and demonstrate themes common in other studies (Binder, 2014). Friendship is an important theme in kindergarten and one that occupies the mind of many children (Paley, 2007). Heroics is a theme commonly seen in popular culture and a theme that repeatedly emerged in the children's stories. The second story, narrated by a 5-year-old boy, acts as an important lesson in patience. The lesson in patience found in traditional West African stories (P. Falope, personal communications, September 28, 2016) is paired with an exotic location the child took interest in. The reoccurring presence of folklore in the children's stories demonstrates that the tradition is still alive and well for these children. The structure and content reflects the narrative structure of the past while certain content elements demonstrate the children's integration of important themes occurring in their day to day (Jirata, 2014). The combination of narrative elements from tradition and modernity reflect the bicultural experiences for Nigerian children. For a list all theme occurrences in the category of Folklore see *Table 15*.

Books

Traditionally books were not written for children, however, with the emergence of child-centered education books were appropriated. The first books created for children portrayed polite, dutiful children, centered around a plot in which an adult would spew a flow of factual information or provide didactic instruction to the little child character (Cullinan, 1981). Fairy

tales and other imaginative literature did not appear until later, when parents and educators alike, stumbled upon the effectiveness of moral instruction in the guise of entertainment. The first of these books designed for young people included *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passe avec Moralites* (Stories or Tales of Times Past with Morals). The collection included the works of Sleeping Beauty, Little Red Riding Hood, Blue Beard, Puss in Boots, Cinderella, and Tom Thumb (Cullinan, 1981). With the recent effects of globalization, discussed above, and the global aim of child education many of these stories have made their way around the world. Contemporary children's literature has also gained international status with the goal of achieving multiculturalism in the classroom and books providing a resource in order to achieve this. The stories that Nigerian children told included reference to both traditional European fairy tales as well as contemporary international children's books. Below are two examples of children telling or retelling the stories from children's literature:

“Story, Story ... Once upon a time ... There was a little girl called Little Red Riding Hood and she was very. One day her mom called her Little Red Riding Hood. She saw a Big Bad Wolf. He said “Where are you going?” She said “I’m going to my grandma’s house. She’s not feeling fine.” He said “Why don’t you pick some flowers for your grandma?” And the Big Bad wolf came to Little Red Riding Hood’s grandma’s house. “What big ears you have grandma. What big teeth you have grandma.” And the Big Bad Wolf swallowed Little Red Riding Hood and her grandma and the farmer killed the wolf’s stomach and Little Red Riding Hood and grandma slid out and they had a tea party.”

“There’s a lion came to tea. Once upon a time there was a lion who was very hungry. He

went to someone's house and finished everything. And the little girl couldn't bathe because the lion swallowed everything. And the dad came back home and the dad have an idea. He said, "Let's go to the restaurant." And they went to the market for the tiger food. And the tiger was not hungry again. Done."

The first story, narrated by a 3-year-old female, tells the story of Little Red Riding Hood a popular European fairy tale. Here she accurately recounts the chronological order of events by including direct quotations by the characters and provides her own variation of the ending with Little Red Riding Hood and grandma having a tea party. The children's retelling of books is a perfect example of the bicultural experience of reappropriation of narrative structuring similar to the study conducted by Allen and Lalonde (2015), in which the children transformed the original stories' cultural patterning to resemble that of their own. The second story, narrated by a 5-year-old male, is a retelling of the children's book *A Tiger Who Came to Tea* by Judith Kerr. The boy briefly summarizes the story; beginning the story with a lion that eventually reverts back to the original character of the tiger. Tiger's do not live on the African continent whereas lions do, as such it may have been a more natural cultural patterning to use the term lion before reverting make to the original tiger. For a list all theme occurrences in the category of Books see *Table 16*.

Other

Children's imagination know no bounds and the structuring of narrative allows them to test the bounds of reality (Bruner, 1991), as well as the boundaries of narrative. It is unsurprising, then, to find that within the many stories collected there were a number that did not fit any story type category. Below are two examples of children who redefined the storytelling space and told stories that broke the typical rules of narrative:

"He jumped on the place up there. He jumped the water goes up. He hit up here on the

tide. He's not dead. It died. He hit a tree but the frog not dead. Then he start running again and they're fighting. The frogs are fighting on the floor. The floor their fighting. The tree not die. It not died. The frogs are dead. They not die on the floor. The frog enter on the mountain. The frogs enter on the on the floor. They enter the floor like that."
 "Caterpillar. He beats somebody. The caterpillar comes in your bed and caterpillar in your hair and you wash the caterpillar and come to school and throw it in there and close it. When the caterpillar come to the flower I say, "Get out of my flower!"

In the first story, narrated by a 3-year-old male, the story contains little temporal structuring and much of the story was accompanied with actions. The child dramatically played out the verbs he used in his story as he told. He performed elaborate death scenes and used the porch floor as his stage. The second story, narrated by a 3-year-old female, involves a caterpillar sneaking into your bed. While this story follows a much more structured narrative the child included a drawing in her storytelling to further illustrate what she was narrating (see Appendix C). The spontaneous desire for the one child to include performance and the other child to accompany her story with a drawing is an excellent example of Binder's (2014), multimodal expression of meaning. Storytelling exists in multiple forms and these children demonstrated the ease in which they could transition their stories between forms and the importance of multimodal of expression in relying meaning. For a list all theme occurrences in the category of Other see *Table 17*.

The story genres used by these Nigerian children when paired with pervious literature demonstrate the prevalence and transfer of storytelling across cultures. Through colonialization and globalization many story structures across the globe are entering the child space. The story types can be grouped based on Khimji & Maunder (2012) idea of multiple cultural community

membership. Based on previous literature some of the categories can be thought of as universal including; fantasy, popular culture, biography script and other. Based on the unique positioning of Nigeria as a colonized country and the prevalence of globalization the rest of the story categories can be seen as bicultural including; folklore and book. It has also been made clear that the stories told by the children help them to explore their identity, relationships and world (Binder, 2014). While we have seen consistencies in story style across cultures the next section will explore the specific elements of Nigerian culture that children are incorporating into their storytelling.

What About Culture?

In constructing their narratives many themes emerged from the children's stories. Consistent with the work done by Nicolopoulou (2008), who has collected over 6000 children stories over her career, the children drew characters, images, plots, themes and other elements from a wide range of sources, including television, movies, fairy tales, other children's literature and their own experience. The themes that emerged consisted of formal story markers, violence, family characters, home scripts, school scripts, friendship, supernatural, moral values and famous characters. This section of the discussion will examine only the themes where reference to specific cultural elements were able to be made. The themes explored include; formal story markers, violence, supernatural and moral values.

Formal Story Markers

Bruner's (1991), theory of narrative construction can be thought of in linguistic terms. By this I mean that a semantic discourse structure of a particular narrative exists in the brain with relation to a specific phonological pattern, as in 'once upon a time' (Taylor, 2002). If we think of the genre of a story as a script similar to Schank and Abelson's (1977) cognitive scripts, then

there are certain expectations that are expected in a particular genre, as noted in the definitions of each story type provided in Chapter 3. The hearing of ‘once upon a time,’ then awakens this script in the mind of the listener preparing them for the story they are about to hear (Taylor, 2002). In the stories told by Nigerian children, ‘once upon a time’ was the most reoccurring formal story marker and this makes sense if you think of the script of the traditional fairy tales these children have been exposed to and the globalization of the Disney fairy tale narrative. The children also used a formal story marker unique to the West African storytelling style, which took advantage of the call and response nature of storytelling (Finnegan, 1982). Storytelling in Africa frequently includes song in some kind of antiphonal form. That is to say, there is some kind of dialogue between soloist and chorus, or storyteller and listener. The call and response is used to create a participatory atmosphere and indicate to the potential audience that a story is about to begin (Finnegan, 1982). In the Nigerian context the children used such a call and response pattern to mark the beginning of their stories. The pattern consisted of the narrator beginning with “Story, story” where upon the listener would respond with “Story,” and the narrator would continue with “Once upon a time, time,” which the listener would respond to with “Time, time.” The specific phonological pattern represents a cultural specific semantic discourse structure that signals the introduction of a story narrative. The inclusion of this culturally specific patterning in the retelling of North American stories and movies is consistent with Allen and Lalonde’s (2015) acculturation of story form. These children adapted the stories to their own cultural patterning suggesting that their social and cultural context provided frameworks for their imaginary and narrative capabilities (Khimji & Maunder, 2012).

Violence

Often found in children's storytelling and fantasy play is aggressive acts of violence and disturbing subject matter (Bacigalupa, & Wright, 2009, Wright, et al. 2008). According to Bruner's narrative theory, violent themes typically occur during the engine or action stage of storytelling, acting as the vehicle for disruption or the means for resolution (Monteagudo, 2011). As mentioned earlier children use stories to make sense of the world (Bruner, 1991; Binder, 2014), and living in a world with a media culture obsessed with violence, storytelling creates an environment in which they can explore themes that concern them and disrupt the canonical state or further their understanding of the effects of violence as an action towards resolution (Levin, 2006). Children understand the difference between stories and real-life; this differentiation allows the storytelling realm to become a consequence-free environment in which to play out scary material (Engel, 2009). One particular reoccurring violent theme was related to the word "beat." In the Nigerian context beat does not refer to a severely violent act exercised on someone but rather a quick, relatively painless act of punishment, such as slapping on the hand or backside (P. Falope, personal communications, September 28, 2016). One of the many challenges teachers face in the classroom is controlling the antisocial behaviour of their students. A fairly typical punishment response in the early years classroom in North America involves the threat of removal or exclusion (Skiba & Knesting, 2001). It is not unusual to hear a teacher warn a child that "if you don't stop that the toy will be taken away," or "if you continue to misbehave you will have to go sit by yourself." These threats of punishment are intended to allow the child the opportunity to correct their behaviour on their own. In Nigeria the word 'beat' is used by teachers to indicate to a child that a behaviour is inappropriate (own observations). If a child is misbehaving the teacher will say something along the lines of "if you keep doing that I will beat

you.” The word ‘beat’ is commonplace for the children and as such it is not unusual to hear them saying it to each other and hearing it in the children’s stories. Here are two examples of children using the word ‘beat’ in their storytelling:

“Cinderella her friend bought her a new dress. From her friends she was so proud and her stepmother beat her and tear her dress and she cried in her garden and she now went to the ball in a beautiful dress and her stepmother disappeared and she came to the ball and her prince was dancing with her and she was looking for him and that is the end of my story.”

“Her stepmother beat her and beat her and beat her and locked her in her room. Her mice friends open the door with her key. The end.”

In both stories Cinderella is the object of beating and while Cinderella receives no physical punishment in either the film or literary version of the story, the children equate the verbal abuse and demeaning tasks the stepmother places on Cinderella as a form of punishment. Here the children’s social and cultural context provided a framework for their imagination and interpretation of the traditional fairy tale (Khimji & Maunder, 2012). Consistent with Paley’s (2011) observations the children incorporated a concept used by adults into their storytelling and social interactions with each other to gain a better understanding of its term and use in their environment.

Supernatural

West Africa, unlike other areas, possesses a large body of folklore that includes references to supernatural beings (Finnegan, 1984). The Hausa of Nigeria, have many stories about the *bori* spirits, while the Yoruba sing songs and tell stories of *orisha* deities such as, Ogun the god of iron. Ogun appears in the stories of warrior, hunters and blacksmiths (Finnegan,

1984). In exploring the supernatural elements of South and West African folklore, Felicity Wood (2015), looked at the supernatural representation of the marketplace. She discovered a powerful body of folklore that has survived into modernity. She used Pels (2003), theory of magical modernity to explain the occult aspects ascribed to the marketplaces of both African and Western free-market capitalist societies. Wood's (2015) study, illuminates supernatural elements common in many West African folklores and the tradition's ability to survive time. The appropriation of the supernatural into contemporary storytelling is strongly demonstrated in the stories collected from the children. Supernatural elements occurred across all story types. Below are supernatural excerpts taken from their stories:

“Story, story... Once upon a time... Ajujupapa put blood cut his self and die and start killing and snake make him die and lion make him die and horse make him die and the ajujupapa.”

“Now the mother walk, walk, walk to the pig and said “sorry” and cursed the pig and the pig was dead...”

In the first story, narrated by a 3-year-old-female, the character ‘Ajujupapa’ refers to Ojuju Calabar who is often used as a sort of bogymen character to scare children into performing appropriate behaviour (P. Falope, personal communications, September 28, 2016). The second story, narrated by a 4-year-old female, describes a mother placing a curse on a pig, which causes its death. Khimji & Maunder (2012) have argued that children use the beliefs and practices of their culture to mediate their construction of meaning through storytelling. The children incorporated the traditional theme of supernatural to overcome their fears and explain the concept of death. Their exposure to traditional West African storytelling provided them with a tool to mediate their fears and complex ideas.

Moral Values

Children learn moral values and moral behaviour from the social interactions they have with the people most present in their lives. A primary source of this learning comes from storytelling (Peck et al., 1960). As demonstrated by Banda and Morgan (2013) among the Chewa culture of Zambia, the telling of traditional folklore is used to promote moral and intellectual knowledge in supporting cultural identity. The presence of moral values as a category in and of itself speaks to the influential nature of the traditional folklore on these children's narrative frameworks. Below are two examples of such values:

“My story is about the little tortoise who was happy. One day he saw a dog talking to somebody. Then the dog now saw the tortoise. Then after the tortoise was sad, he said, “Please talk to me.” And the dog said, “No I will not talk to you.” Then the tortoise now said “Please wait. Stop going away from me.” Then the little tortoise saw a little fox coming, he saw his brother coming. Now the tortoise now went to the fox to talk to him. And the fox didn't look at the tortoise and and the tortoise was too sad. And after the little tortoise he was shouting, “Fox! Fox talk to me!” and the fox didn't hear him. And they were still going and they were going to their home and the tortoise now came to their house. The fox said, “Go! Go Tortoise!” the tortoise went home. Nobody talked to the tortoise except the fox and the dog. He so wanted a friend to talk to and he saw a mouse coming through and he had somebody to talk to. The mouse. That is the end of my story.”

I'm talking about a boy and a girl. The boy and the girl were on a road and a man saw

the boy and the girl and he brought out a gun to shoot the girl and they said, “Sorry” and the man with the gun saw a big man with a gun and the big man shot the man with the gun and saved the boy and the girl...”

In the first story, narrated by a 5-year-old male, the moral of the story stress the importance of friendship and the need for interpersonal relationships in order to be happy. This is consistent with Banda and Morgan’s (2013) research, which found that many of the Chewa folklores were concerned with the value of working with others. The second story, narrated by 4-year-old female, demonstrates the integration of the themes of popular culture into traditional storytelling. The theme of heroics is a common one in both classic European fairy tales and more recent children’s literature and entertainment. Relating back to Campbell’s (1987) concept of the “new hedonistic consumer” and Bruner’s (1991) theory of narrative construction, the combination of moral teachings and the heroics of rescue, act as an example of the child’s ability to incorporate their experiences with media into their constructions of a narrative. The two narratives also demonstrate Khimji and Maunder’s (2012) argument that children reside in more than one cultural community. The children incorporate the moral structure common in West African storytelling while also involving the themes of friendship and heroics. These stories are examples of the children’s membership in a cultural group and peer group.

Vivian Gussin Paley’s story-telling/story-acting exercise provides a method in which the child’s voice is for fronted and their interest are the topic of discussion. In answering the questions of what aspects of culture do Nigerian children incorporate into their storytelling the method offers a space in which children can freely and naturally access the narrative structures and themes they have at their disposal. From the data is clear that many of the narrative structures Nigerian children employ transcend culture and are used by children in other cultures

(Binder, 2014; Nicolopoulou, 2008; Paley, 2001), while many of the themes specific to Nigerian culture can be traced back to the oral tradition of West African storytelling and the social and cultural practice of the country.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

This study attempted to explore children's stories through a cultural lens by using the data collection methods of Vivian Gussin Paley (1991) and the theory of narrative construction of reality by Bruner (1991) in order to answer the question of; What aspects of culture do Nigerian children incorporate into their storytelling? Stories were collected from children between the ages of 3-5 years in a Nigerian private school. This data collection method was designed with a sociology of childhood perspective in mind, which influenced the child-centered approach and stressed the agency of the child during the research process. The stories were analyzed using a social constructivist framework, focusing on the larger societal and environmental forces at play in the children's narrative production.

From the children's stories the genres in which they chose to structure their narratives, can be traced back to the history of storytelling in Africa and the storytelling styles that have been brought to the region through colonialism and globalization, creating both universal and bicultural experiences of narrative. Each of the categories of story style presented in this study contributes to the child's narrative construction of reality and participation in their culture. The themes within the stories are consistent with the themes that have emerged in the stories of children collected by Paley (2007), Binder (2014) and others. As demonstrated, however, the aspects of specific themes are dependent on the unique cultural context of Nigeria.

The ideas presented here based on the data can be thought of in relation to the concept of global childhood (Woodhead, 1997). The question of whether there is a global childhood is a tricky one. The social constructivist understanding of childhood is that the particular form in which the period of a life-course takes is dependant on the particular local context, however, at the same time it has to be acknowledged that childhood does have some more or less universal

features. One way to approach this dilemma is offered by Wells (2009), who suggests we think about the 'global' as a structure shaping the lives of children at the local level. By this she means we can begin to think about global structures such as the family, the school, and work as influencing all children but differently in different societies. Storytelling can also be thought of as a global structuring activity that can change in form and purpose based on the culture and social sphere in which it is performed. The idea of global childhood can also be understood in terms of globalisation itself and how it has influenced children's everyday experiences (Katz, 2004). In her comparative ethnographic study, Katz (2004), illustrates the ways that the same global economic processes shape the lives of both children living in New York and Sudan. Just as the popular television and movies of the West become prominent features in the stories of Nigerian children.

In thinking of where to move forward it would be interesting to apply Wells' (2009) theory of the global childhood structure to Bruner's (1991) theory of narrative construction. Storytelling is a universal phenomenon and following Bruner's theory, the narrative construction of reality is also a universal phenomenon. Exploring Bruner's theory as it applies to children's global meaning making might prove to be an invaluable exploration in understanding childhood culture, in particular.

Limitations

As mentioned earlier, there were serious limitations to my ethnographic research design. The means in which I collected the stories was in an artificial setting, in that the storytelling did not occur naturally but was rather elicited by direct request. This manufactured style of communication means that the great deal of storytelling that occurs for children in informal settings was missed. Whether the stories produced resemble stories that would have occurred

naturally during conversation or only represented stories that would be told during a formal storytelling session is unknown. In addition to this problem was the position I held as outsider. My outsider status was twofold, on one level I come from an entirely different culture which is evident by the colour of my skin and the accent of my voice. This means that the children may have tailored their stories to allow for easier accessibility on my part. They may have removed elements that they thought I would not have the cultural knowledge to understand and include themes they thought I would have shared knowledge about. On an additional level, I was an outsider in my status as adult. I was not a member of their childhood culture, and this was regularly reinforced as the children referred to me as Ms. Jenna. My adult status impacted the storytelling session as the children saw the activity as something separate from everyday experiences. Rather than storytelling being incorporated in their daily interactions with peers, the storytelling sessions were seen as a component of the school day in which they interacted with a teacher-like figure. This may have resulted in the more formal structuring of the stories and a potential curving of story topics.

A limitation of the data analysis also pertained to my outsider status. Having been raised in North America my cultural knowledge of Nigeria is limited as such my interpretation of the data may have overlooked important aspects. To overcome this limitation, I obtained guidance from Patricia Falope, a Nigerian citizen, who helped me to situate my data within the Nigerian context and provided me with invaluable information of Nigerian traditions and customs.

While the work conducted here is still in its infancy, with regards to both the research method and analysis, I believe it contributes to the recent works in narrative cognition and provides a cultural context in which to explore Paley's (1991) story-telling/story-acting technique. The world of children is vast and complex, but with the right tools and attitudes,

adults may yet get to re-experience the concepts and ideas that define this culture and explore the many variations that exist between cultures.

TABLES

Table1

Story Type Categories and Frequencies

Category	Frequency
Fantasy	5
Popular Culture	8
Biography/script	12
Folklore	11
Books	6
Other	4
Total:	46

Table 2

Frequency in Which Themes Occurred in Each Story Type

	Fantasy (5)	Popular Culture (8)	Biography/ Script (12)	Folklore (11)	Books (6)	Other (4)
Formal story	5/5	8/8	11/12	11/11	6/6	4/4
markers						
Violence	5/5	5/8	6/12	7/11	5/6	4/4
Family	4/5	4/8	10/12	3/11	4/6	3/4
Home (script)	4/5	6/8	11/12	1/11	2/6	3/4
School (script)	1/5	0/8	5/12	0/11	0/6	2/4
Friendship	1/5	2/8	2/12	2/11	1/6	0/4
Supernatural	2/5	7/8	2/12	1/11	1/6	2/4
Values	4/5	6/8	3/12	7/11	4/6	0/4
• Heroics	3/4	4/6	1/3	4/7	2/4	0/0
Famous	0/5	8/8	3/12	0/11	5/6	1/4
Characters						

Table 3

Formal Story Markers Across Story Types

Formal Story Markers	
Beginning	Once upon a time
	One day
	My story is...
	So once
	Name the topic of the story at the beginning
	Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time)
	I'm talking about...
	There was a...
Ending	Its about
	I have story
	Now the story goes...
	Lived happily ever after
	I'm done The end, that's the end of my story
	That's all

Table 4

Violent Themes Across Story Types

Violence	
Arguing	Throw somebody
Screamed	Flogged
Kill, killed, killing	Shoot, shot
Fight, fighting, fought	Dying, dead, dies
“Take them away!”	Beat
Stole, took, steal	Kicking, step on
Eating (someone)	“burn it down”
Biting (someone)	“take one of the turtle’s nerves”
Cut	Tore, tear
Pushed	Blood
Capture	“break the window”
Destroy	Slap

Table 5

Family Characters Across Story Types

Family Characters	
Princess	Brother
Prince	Daughter
King	Husband
Queen	Wife
Mother	Auntie
Father	Grandmother
Baby	Stepmother
Family	Stepsisters
Sister	

Table 6

Home Scripts Across Story Types

Home Script	
mommy and daddy were arguing”	Praying, going to church
Dad/Mom and office/work	Bathing
Eating, preparing food	“they hanged their bags”
Sleeping/bed	Christmas
Living	Wedding
Cleaning, sweeping	Punishment/permission
Hugging	Playing
Praising	Doing homework/chores
Warning to be safe	Gardening
Sent home	Reading
Lives with	Watching TV
Went back home	“mommy phone another mommy”
Dressing	Going to the bathroom
Shopping	Storytelling
Father and work	

Table 7

School Scripts Across Story Type

School Script
“ran to the playground”
Learning
Writing
Reading
Sports day
Going to and from school
Homework
Eating
Playing
Exam

Table 8

Friendship Themes Across Story Type

Friendship
“Where is my friend the ant?”
“Even the reindeer who doesn’t have legs but they still gave him a skating shoe”
“...gecko and Catboy was great friends once more time.”
Friends at school
“He so wanted a friend to talk to and he saw a mouse coming through and he had somebody to talk to.”
“...fish had another friend”
“Cinderella her friend bought her a new dress”

Table 9

Supernatural Themes Across Story Type

Supernatural
Magic wand
Magic castle
Shrinking
Freeze powers (Elsa from Frozen)
Transform into something (Ben 10)
Fairy forest home
Flying car
Flying
Talking toys
Giant man
Cursed
Magic mice
“...her fairy godmother and she disappeared a big blue dress and the fairy godmother turned the mouse into horse.”
Ajujupapa
“The mountain dance on the tree.”

Table 10

Moral Value Themes and Heroic Themes Across Story Type

Values
Mediating conflict
Be kind
A good friend helps someone in need
Be the first
Correct your mistakes
Be patient
Don't be too proud
Be clever
Don't talk to strangers
Be friendly
Heroics
"The fish was the first to come to the fire's house"
"farmer killed the wolf's stomach"
Protecting
Fighting off monsters
Save the day/save someone

Table 11

Famous Characters Across Story Type

Famous Characters
Elsa and Ana
Ben 10
Rescue Rangers
PJ Max, Romeo
Gecko, Catboy, Owlet
Simba
Cinderella
Spiderman
Arrowman
The gingerbread man
Little Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Wolf
Mickey Mouse
Barney
Superman
Finn

Table 12

Themes Present in Fantasy and Frequency of Occurrence

	Fantasy	Frequency
Formal story markers	Once upon a time	5
	The end	5
	One day	2
Violence	Arguing	1
	Screamed	1
	Die(d)	3
	Kill(ed)	2
	Fight(ing)	2
	“Take them away!”	1
	Stole, took	1
	Eating (someone)	1
	Biting (someone)	1
Family	Prince and princess	2
	Princess and Queen	2
	Princess and King	1
	Daddy	2
	Mommy	4
	Baby	1
Home (script)	“mommy and daddy were arguing”	1
	Dad/Mom and office/work	2

	Eating	3
	Sleeping/bed	2
	Living	2
	Cleaning	1
	Hugging	1
	Praising	1
	Warning to be safe	1
	Sent home	1
School (script)	“ran to the playground”	1
Friendship	“Where is my friend the ant?”	1
Supernatural	Magic wand	1
	Magic castle	1
	Shrinking	1
Values	Mediating conflict	1
Heroics	Protecting	1
	Fighting off monsters	2
Famous	0	0
Characters		

Table 13

Themes Present in Popular Culture and Frequency of Occurrence

	Popular Culture	Frequency
Formal story marker	My story is...	4
	So once	1
	Lived happily ever after	3
	I'm done	1
	The end	4
	Name the topic of the story at the beginning	4
	One day	2
Violence	Cut	1
	Pushed	1
	Fight	1
	Capture	1
	Steal	1
	Destroy	1
	Biting (someone)	1
Family	Sister	3
	Family	2
	Brother	1
	Daughter	1
	Baby	1
	Mom	1

	Dad	1
Home (script)	Lives with	2
	Went back home	4
	Sleeping/bed	1
	Eating	1
	Dressing	1
School (script)	0	0
Friendship	“Even the reindeer who doesn’t have legs but they still gave him a skating shoe”	1
	“gecko and Catboy was great friends once more time.”	1
Supernatural	Freeze powers (Elsa form Frozen)	2
	Transform into something (Ben 10)	1
	Fairy forest home	1
	Flying car	1
	Flying	1
	Talking toys	1
Values	To be kind	1
	A good friend helps someone in need	1
Heroics	Save the day/save her sister	4
Famous	Elsa and Ana	3
Characters	Ben 10	1
	Rescue Rangers	1
	PJ Max, Romeo	1

Gecko, Catboy, Owlet	1
Simba	1

Table 14

Themes Present in Biography/Script and Frequency of Occurrence

	Biography/Script	Frequency
Formal story markers	Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time)	5
	The end, that's the end of my story	4
	I'm done	1
	I'm talking about...	1
	There was a...	1
	That's all	2
	One day	2
Violence	Kill	1
	Throw somebody	1
	Fight(ing)	3
	Flogged	1
	Steal, stole	2
	Shoot, shot	1
	Dying, dead, dies	1
	Beat	1
Family	Mother	8
	Sister	5
	Brother	4
	Father	6
	Husband and wife	1

	Baby	2
	Family	1
	Auntie	2
Home (script)	Shopping	4
	Eating, preparing food	6
	Father and work	2
	Praying/ going to church	2
	Bathing	2
	“they hanged their bags”	1
	Christmas	2
	Dressing	1
	Wedding	1
	Punishment/permission	2
	Playing	5
	Bed/sleeping	5
	Doing homework/chores	2
	Gardening	3
	Reading	3
	Watching TV	1
School (script)	Learning	1
	Writing	3
	Reading	1
	Sports day	1

	Going to and from school	4
	Homework	2
	Eating	2
	Playing	3
	Exam	1
Friendship	Friends at school	2
Supernatural	Giant man	1
	Cursed	1
Values	Be the first	2
	Correct your mistakes	1
Heroics	Saved	1
Famous	Cinderella	2
characters	Spiderman	1
	Arrowman	1
	Frozen	1

Table 15

Themes Present in Folklore and Frequencies of Occurrence

	Folklore	Frequency
Formal story marker	My story is...	4
	One day	5
	That's the end of my story, the end	6
	Its about	2
	That is all	1
	I have story	1
	Lived happily ever after	1
Violence	Eating (someone)	2
	Biting (someone)	1
	Fight(ing)	3
	Kill(ed)	2
	Died	2
	Beat	1
	Kicking, step on	2
	"burn it down"	1
	"take one of the turtle's nerves"	1
Family	Father	2
	Mother	2
	Brother	1
Home (script)	Sweeping	1

	“mommy phone another mommy”	1
School (script)	0	0
Friendship	“He so wanted a friend to talk to and he saw a mouse coming through and he had somebody to talk to.”	1
	“fish had another friend”	1
Supernatural	Magic mice	1
Values	Be patient	2
	Be friendly	1
Heroics	“The fish was the first to come to the fire’s house”	1
Famous	0	0
characters		

Table 16

Themes Present in Books and Frequency of Occurrence

	Books	Frequency
Formal story marker	That's the end of my story, the end	3
	Once upon a time	1
	Done	1
	Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time)	3
	One day	1
	Its about...	1
	Now the story goes...	1
Violence	Eating (someone)	3
	Biting (someone)	1
	Tore, tear	2
	Beat	2
	Blood	1
	"break the window"	1
Family	Father	1
	Mother	1
	Grandmother	1
	Stepmother	2
	Stepsisters	1
Home (script)	Bathing	1
	Eating	2

	Sleeping	1
	Going to the bathroom	1
School (script)	0	0
Friendship	“Cinderella her friend bought her a new dress”	1
Supernatural	“her fairy godmother and she disappeared a big blue dress and the fairy godmother turned the mouse into horse”	1
Values	Don’t be too proud	1
	It’s important to be clever	1
	Don’t talk to strangers	1
Heroics	“farmer killed the wolf’s stomach”	1
Famous	The gingerbread man	1
characters	Little Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Wolf	1
	Cinderella	2
	Mickey Mouse	1
	Barney	1

Table 17

Themes Present in Other and Frequency of Occurrence

	Other	Frequency
Formal story marker	Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time)	3
	My story is about...	1
	Name the topic of the story at the beginning	1
Violence	Beats	3
	Blood	1
	Cut	1
	Die	2
	Kill	1
	Shoot	1
	Tear	1
	Slap	1
	Fight	1
	Throw	1
Family	Father	2
	Mother	3
Home (script)	Storytelling	2
	Praying	1
	Going to the bathroom	1
	Playing	1
	Watching TV	1

	Bathing	1
	Eating	1
School (script)	Writing	1
	Playing	1
	Going to and from school	1
Friendship	0	0
Supernatural	Ajupapapa	1
	“The mountain dance on the tree”	1
Values	0	0
Heroics		
Famous	Cinderella	1
characters	Superman	1
	Finn	1

APPENDICES

Appendix A



School of Early Childhood Studies
Faculty of Community Services

Appendix A Assent Agreement

Learning and Play

We are from a university in Canada and we are here to learn how a new way of teaching works, and what you think of it. Your teachers will be trying out some new ideas for learning using playing, and we want to hear what you think of it, and watch you while you learn in this new way. So we hope to do some different activities:

1. Watch you while you learn and play, and take pictures, videos and other recordings of you and your teacher and classmates
2. Talk to you about stories, read you books and ask what you think of them, tell stories to us, and record your stories to listen to later
3. Talk to you about your favourite games to play, let us play games with you, videotape and take pictures of you while you play
4. Talk to you one-on-one and ask you some questions and get you to do some activities before and after you have the new teaching. These will involve answering some questions and doing a bit of writing and drawing. CHECK

These activities will happen for a few weeks, and then we will visit you one more time in many weeks from now to see how you are doing, and to talk to you one-on-one again.

If you don't want to have us watch you, videorecord you and take pictures of you, or talk to you one-on-one or in your groups of friends who you play with, you do not have to do so. You can just tell us "no, I don't want to be in the study" and that is fine. Nobody will be upset or disappointed. If you start to do the study and you change your mind, that's ok too – you can stop at any time.

Do you have any questions?

Do you want to participate in the study?

Child response: Yes ☐ No ☐

Your name: _____

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

350 Victoria Street
Office: KHS350D
Toronto, ON, Canada M5B 2K3

t: 416.979.5000, ext. 7646
f: 416.979.5239
kpeets@ryerson.ca

ryerson.ca/ecs

Appendix B

Formal story markers

Violence

Family

Home (script)

School (script)

Friendship

Heroics

Values

Supernatural

Famous Characters

Fantasy

1. **Once upon a time** there was a beautiful princess that lived in a castle and **she had a prince** and the beautiful **princess had a prince** and there was a **dragon that protected the castle** and there was **a mother who said she was going out** and the **queen** said the **daddy should stay** with the princess and the **daddy said he wouldn't stay** with the **princess and the mommy and daddy** were **arguing with together** and the princess said "Stop arguing!" and the **daddy said he would stay and not go to the office** and the princess said, "Don't make trouble again." **The end.**
2. **Once upon a time** there was a beautiful **princess that lived in a castle. The princess was eating,** the **prince was sleeping.** A monster now came to the castle. The **princess screamed** and **the prince now killed the monster.** He showed the monster with his head. **The princess had a dream** that the monster came to the castle **and she woke up**

and said “what a bad dream”. The prince said he didn’t dream of anything because he didn’t have dreams. The princess said “Why the prince don’t have dreams?” The monster now came to the castle another time and **the princess screamed. The prince now killed him with his sword. The monster died** and the princess said. “What a good dream” and the prince said “It was me that **killed this**” and the monster said, the monster woke up and asked for **his mommy**. The mommy said “**did you fight again?**” The monster said no and the princess said, he went to the castle mommy and the mommy said “**did you give the monster food?**” and the princess said “no”. And the **princess used a magic wand** to the monster and the snake said “Where is the monster’s house?” and the monster told him. Teeboo. And the princess said This is monsters at Teeboo. And the prince now saw them and **the prince killed them.** And the princess said “**Take them away.**” And the **queen** said, the queen came and that was good and the queen said “What happened?” and the princess said, “There was a monster in the castle” and the mommy said, the queen said “**Who fight them away?**” **The princess said “It was the prince”** **And the prince now said “it was the princess.”** The **king** went to the princess and said “The monster made the castle into a house” and the king said this house was built and they lived there for awhile and the sword was inside the house and they went inside the castle and the princess now has the **magic castle** back and the castle was good **and they saw the kitchen inside the castle and the princess said what they want for food** and the princess now got a crown from the queen and the queen gave her the crown and shouted “that is my crown!” and the queen said “it’s okay it’s from the floor, I dropped it” The monster found it on the floor and the queen said “this is a girl crown” The queen give the crown back to the boy and she went and took another crown from the

shop and the princess said “I want a crown” and she gave the princess a crown. And the princess said “Yah I got the crown” **Someone stole the crown** from her. The mother said “who took your crown?” It was somebody. The princess said, “**It was somebody who took it** “. **The prince took it.** The **mother** said, the queen said Because **you stole the crown the princess sleeps and had a dream that she doesn’t like crowns.** **The end**

3. The dinosaur was big. **Once upon a time** there was a big dinosaur. He had a **baby dinosaur** that was **eating the mommy dinosaur**. The mommy dinosaur went to the **daddy dinosaur** who went to the baby dinosaur **who brought his food.** **The mommy went to speak to the cleaner and the cleaner cleaned up the food.** The mommy said “who cleaned up the food?” and the daddy said “it was the baby”. **The mommy was happy with the baby. The baby now hugged his mommy. The mommy said “What a wonderful baby.”** The baby shouted. **The mommy said “go to sleep!”** The baby go and the mother said and **the daughter** said, baby go to sleep. **The baby woke up and was awake all day.** She went to bachu house and the daddy didn’t want to and the baby saw the light and she always saw the light. The door was locked to go outside so she took her key and put it in the door and she still wanted to go to bachu. The mommy said “it’s in your hand” and now she gave it to the baby and the baby said, why did you give it to your hand? The mommy said why did you do itchy top? Because because the baby dinosaur was hungry. The mommy dinosaur took out the bachu’s and the baby dinosaur put it inside the lights and the lights they were working and the dinosaur said **that’s the end.**

4. **Once upon a time** there was a **princess** and **she lived in a castle**. And the **queen** said to the **prince**. **Daddy** now said to the prince. And **one day** the princess went to a scary forest. And the **mother** saw her in the scary forest and **she now said the princess to go away from the scary forest. And the daddy ran to his work** and now saw a big mosquito. The mosquito was **biting everybody** and **the daddy just ran away from the office. And one day** the daddy fleet the walk. The mosquito ran away and that time the **mother went to the office** and the prince was coming back from where he was and he now saw the princess in the castle and nobody was there and she couldn't do nothing and she wanted to open the door and the door now opened and **she ran to the playground** and **the mother said to her, "Go home and eat!"** And **one day the princess died. The end.**
5. **Once upon a time there** was a big dinosaur, he lived where a lot of insects were. And **one day** a big ant came and he was **fighting everybody so badly**. And when there was a **little girl that came and she saw the ant and she took a big sword and she used it to kill the ant**. And that time **and the ant now became small** and the ant missed being small. And the girl saw the ant crawling on the floor with no food to eat. **And that time the ant died**. And the ant came to a big castle and the princess now saw a ant and the ant said "I want food to eat" and the princess said "No." And the time they were going out and the ant saw food on the floor that they dropped and that time he ate it. And **one day** they to a giant store that they used to see food on the floor and the ant took the food and went back home and that time the princess said **"Where is my friend the ant?" The end.**

Popular Culture

1. **My story is Elsa.** Elsa was a girl, **little girl she lives with Ana.** **So once** she grew up she went up the mountain with snow. So now Elsa started singing “Let it go.” So she built a castle made of ice, ice. So she **freezed her sister so a man wanted to cut the sister’s finger.** He dropped the knife. **So Elsa now saved her sister.** So they went into the boat and when the man into the boat **they pushed him into the water.** And he swim back to his own ship and Elsa and Ana and the reindeer **lived happily ever after.**
2. **Ben 10. Ben 10 transform into a type of alien** and then and then Ben 10 and another alien and **then Ben 10 transform.** There’s an alien he now **transform into the lion** and then Ben 10 now went back and he **transform into giantasorous** and then he **now went back home. The end.**
3. **Elsa.** So **Elsa** had a **sister** so Elsa and her **family were living happily.** Elsa and her family **went back to her home.** Elsa made the floor slippery and they begun to skate and they was having fun. Everybody got skating shoes and they started skating. **Even the reindeer who doesn’t have legs but they still gave him a skating shoe.** So they started the reindeer was skating, skating everybody was skating then they went back inside. Because they went inside because of the rain. **So when it was night they went to bed.** **So everybody went to sleep and they woke up in the morning** all the ice was gone. **So they went to Elsa now gave them a new ice so they started skating.** The rain fell one more morning in the same morning. So they didn’t go outside. Water now came. So everybody swim inside the **house.** They now close the door and lock it. So they went to. The next morning they went to a **fairy home forest to stay there forever.** So **they went back home** and the night their **home** was filled with some crocodiles and cobras and some sharks and some elephants. So and some whale, a big fish, bigger than a whale, a

shark, a big whale shark. That is the great white shark in the water. **They didn't go to the house again they went to a new house** and they started having fun. **They put some drinks, some food, some rice and stew and meat and dessert and they lived happily ending. The end.**

4. **My story's about ChiChimadill Rescue Rangers.** ChiChimadill Rescue Rangers are here to save the day. **They fight bad guys they they capture bad guys** and they have **flying car.** They use it to save the day and **get back home. I'm done.**
5. **Ana. Ana** had a **sister** who lived in a castle and she wouldn't allow her sisters and **brother** to live in the frozen castle. So **she freeze her sister** so her sister was like a statue. **She saved her sister** and they went happily so **they went back home** in a big ship where they explained to their **family** that they're going to China. Where she explained, "How do you get in my ship?" So when the mom kept her in **the doll room** she **frozen** that place and she **freezed the man.** **So they went back happily to back home. They went back home happily ending. The end.**
6. **My story is about PJ Max.** they used to wear costumes and they used to **save the day** in the night. Anywhere there's trouble PJ Max is on the way to **save the day.** And **anytime Romeo steals people's things** PJ Max is on the way to **save the day. I'm done.**
7. **My story is about gecko. One-day gecko called Catboy and Owllet and they became great friends. One day the bad guys** were looking for Catboy because **Catboy destroyed their ship and they want to kill Catboy** so gecko was sad and Owllet. **The Owllet flied to their ship and fix their ship** so they release Catboy and **gecko and Catboy was great friends once more time. That is the end.**

8. **Simba. One day** the king went to see his **daughter**. **He was talking to his daughter.**

Then monkey carried a new **baby** and then all of them were looking for him and they **carried him up into the sky**. The **mom go and tell the daughter to come and daddy** said, “Go change your clothes,” and she said, “Okay I’ll go change my clothes.”

Then the girl was **eating the fly** to help herself. She want to vomit. Then the momma told the **baby daughter** to go and take the daughter away. **The dog wanted to bite his leg** and the **toy was talking and the toy was sleeping**. He wanted to colour and somebody take his hand. The turtle went to the bath. The fish wanted to catch the carrot.

Biography/Script

1. **Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) there was a dog and little children.** Then the **mother taken them to Shoprite and she called her sister, Princess and she called her brother**, Devine. **Then they went to their house they were eating food** and when **they killed the fly** their momma was going to walk and when the **father** and the mother were back in the house the **princess went to change** they they when **the father went to work** when the children followed daddy to work then the children liked to follow everybody. **Then then when they went to school they were learning. When they gave them homework they were the first person to write. Then when they were reading their work they made a mistake and they start from the beginning again.** So then when they saw a spider in the class their sister **killed it. Then when they were in the house they when they were praying in the lights. When it was morning they bathed themselves, they hanged their bags** and they stopped going to school. **When they were in school they forgot to wear their stockings. Then they were doing sports day they throw somebody from the slide. Then when they finished sports they went**

to the class to start reading books. Then when they were writing. When they finished writing and then they went to their house and they were fighting. They were fighting that they said, "The bother should leave the girl alone!" They stopped fighting then they went to swimming pool then they were happy and then when they stopped fighting they went to bouncing castle. Then when it was Christmas day their sister went to her house to dress after she finished dressing the brother went to where the sister was on Christmas day. When they went to their house they said. "I want to go to Shoprite." They went there. They went to Shoprite. When they brother was calling the sister the sister said, "I'm not going to come." They were doing a wedding and they were husband and wife when they grow old. They were eating food. They went to pick their momma and daddy perfume out and they poured it on the floor. The momma and daddy flogged them. Then they were crying.

2. **Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) there was a boy and a girl.** They lived in the forest and they they cried and the girl gave birth. Then the man was angry to see the baby that she gave birth and they was a giant man who steal the baby and she cried again to see the baby that she gave birth to a baby girl. And everybody was happy to see the baby and the baby was still happy and she grew up. She was 10 years and that's the end.
3. **Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time)** there was a boy and a girl they were eating food. Then when they went to Christmas they went to swim in the swimming pool. Then when they went to their house they they said, "I want to go to Shoprite! I want to go to Shoprite!" When their mom and daddy took them to Shoprite in Lagos. When they was in their house they went to go and play with their

toys. Then they went to Shoprite to go and buy toys for themselves. When they went to school they brought their homework and they were the first person to write. Then when they went to the dining hall to eat their food they were the first person to eat their food. And they were eating school food. When they were in their class they were writing 1 to 77. Then when they were back they wanted to cut some flowers at their home. When they were home they went outside to cut their flowers. Then the mother see the brother and the sister. The end.

4. The bird he was flying. The girl catch the bird and she went to party and she went to her bed to go and sleep. In the morning she went out. When it was night she climbed out and bye. That's the end of my story.
5. There was a princess named Lucy and she went to the castle to see her father. She told her father that she wants to go and eat. She told her father to make a plate for her and she went to go and play. Then told her father, "I'm going outside." And the father now said, "Wait!" Then said, "Did you ask me?" I'm done.
6. I'm talking about a boy and a girl. The boy and the girl were on a road and a man saw the boy and the girl and he brought out a gun to shoot the girl and they said, "Sorry" and the man with the gun saw a big man with a gun and the big man shot the man with the gun and saved the boy and the girl. And the man that shot the man took them to the swimming pool and the pool was too hot and the man jumped out from that swimming pool and and they saw a leaf on the grass and they carried it and when they carried it they saw another man with a gun to shoot the leaf and when he shoot the leaf and the leaf scattered and they just looked at the leaf and ran and they saw plenty of things to do to the garden and they saw a man and they didn't have anything to eat. And

they went to the other garden and they was feeding the pig. And the people who was **saving the pigs** went to London and when they went to London they saw the pigs. **And the pigs was dying coz he didn't eat.** And he saw them and said **"Ah my pigs is dead!"** And he now said "Somebody help me!" and nobody helped him and somebody came and said "Let me take your pigs to the hospital." **And they cut them pigs and they ate them** and they was lying that they was going to treat them. And he said, "No! You ate my pigs!" Then the **mother** now said, "Good for you, they ate your pigs." Then he was walking in his own garden, he saw pigs and rats and he shouted, "Yay! I don't have to go and buy another pig!" And **now my rats will be dead** and he ran to his mother. And mother said, "Go away this boy." Now the mother walk, walk, walk to the pig and said "sorry" and **cursed the pig** and **the pig was dead** and he said "No! My pig is dead!" He opened the gate and **stole things and now said, "You do your homework."** He now said he's not going to live in his mother's house again and he moved to another state and he said he will never come to that state again.

7. **Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time)** there lived a girl who live in a forest. She had a **daddy** flower and **she out on her garden shoes** and after then then they the man put on his garden shoes then they after the man put the flowers in the garden and the princess says, "No one should go into the garden flowers." Then the man put the flowers into the bicycle then after they now put on the garden then after the man came then he
8. **One day** the land. **I just swim in the water with my sister** and I was playing in there. **I just play in it because there's slide like that because,** because this when we went to wonderland yesterday afternoon and I bought balloon with stick. I just hold the balloon

with stick and I bought ice cream there. **When I come out I go to the shop and buy some fun toys and a drink** because there's gloves coz this **one day** a tree fell down. He cut it down with a knife because. **Because I went when I come to school I went to that playground.** When I heard the start of **Cinderella** because I have it in my house coz because when I come to home I just play with my toys there because it's far away because I just then I just saw Sienna. **She's my friend.** Then I just play with my **brother** because I play with his toys. **One day** my **mom** said **I'm going to Sienna's house tomorrow** because their fixing the handle on the playground. **Then that's all.**

9. **They want to play with their friends and they told them to sit down.** They tell their **moms** something. They **fighting their friends.** **They go to 9 o'clock. They go at 9 o'clock to the dining hall. They feed themselves. They need to don't talk and and they finish eating and they go to the play. When they finish playing they go to my class. Then closing time our dad will come.** My **daddy** drive me home. I will sleep and I will wake up. I'll play downstairs. Today is not school, I'll play and colour upstairs. Then I will, my **family** do something. My mommy goes to do something. My daddy used to travel. He travel to office. He used to travel. He used to talk and come back. He used to eat. Then everybody will sleep. Then momma and the dada, if they sleep, if they sleep we will take our snacks. If it's closed, we go home and eat our food. **And we finish and we go back to school. If they finish they will go out. If they do something and they finish they go to the class. Once they finish they'll go to the house. Once they finish they'll come to the house to play and if they do something else they'll come with their mommy and they will play and draw. I used to draw number 3, number 4, number five, number 6, number 7, number 8, number**

9. They do something when they finish. If they finish they go to their house and they finish and go to their mommy. If they finish with mommy, they go to daddy to see. First they finish eating they got to bed and come to school and if they finish that people something. If they finish and they told their mommy and their daddy they'll call their mommy to see and our baby father.

10. Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) I watch Spiderman. I watch it in the parlor. I watch it with my sister. My mommy catch sports to hit it. Watch Spiderman in my daddy's car and Spiderman can fight Arrowman because my mommy go to hospital. They give her injection. Mama she washes my clothes and my mommy use a bar soap. My mommy used to buy laptop. My mommy buy food. My mommy buy charger, my mommy buy plates for me to eat rice. My mommy used to cook indomay. My daddy used to sleep in his room. My daddy used to sleep with pillow. My, my, my auntie used to cook (arich?). my, my, my auntie used to, to put egg in the plates. My, my daddy used to buy your birthday card. My daddy used to buy cupcakes for me and my mommy used to buy pizza. My mommy used to buy orange. My, my, my mommy used to buy indomay for me. My daddy used to buy milk for my brother. My mommy used to cook food for my baby brother and my mommy used to cook biscuits for him. My mommy used to buy yogurts for me. My mommy carry bucket of tap water and fresh water. My mommy drew a bath in the bathroom, she just finished not water and pressed my leg. My daddy will buy plates. My, my, my, my mommy will buy milo for my brother. My mommy used to buy (habuda?) for my brother. My, my, my mommy buy biscuits for my brother. My used to buy. She'd go to the Shoprite and buy ice cream for me. My, my, my, my

mommy used to buy dog treat and carry it in the car. My mommy buy race car for me. My mommy buy book lion for me. My mommy used to buy drum for me. My mommy used to buy basket for me. My mommy used to buy books for me. My mommy used to buy a pant suit for me. My, my, my mommy used to buy ice cream in the shop. My mommy used to buy fire chalk. My mommy used to buy car. My mommy used to buy chalk for me. My mommy used to buy indomay. My mommy used to buy... em... go and buy fray. My mommy used to buy a laptop for me. My mommy used to buy lights. My mommy used to buy fine my used to buy a charger for me. My mommy used to buy **Frozen** clothes for me.

11. **Cinderella** she's a princess. She plants seeds. **She went to go to school.** She went to go upstairs and she went to read a book and she went to go home and sit down and went in bed and was sleeping and it was bedtime and she woke up and to. **He did an exam** and he wanted to drink water and **that's the end of my story.**

12. **One day** when my **sister beat me yesterday** because she I should pack my clothes. Then when my sister said, she said I shouldn't just pack my clothes and just go to church. My sister give me food yesterday because, because **mother** said I should colour my motor car because I have it in my house. **One day** I was singing with my sister; her name is Nana. Then when mommy said I should collect my food and eat. I was eating yesterday. **One day** my sister said **auntie** GiGi is going to sleep in my house today, this morning. Then Nana was saying it's time to sleep and **that's all.**

Folklore

1. **My story is about** the fish and the lion. **One day** the lion decided to come to the fish house and **the lion wanted to eat the fish** and the lion didn't eat the fish and the lion left

his home. And the fish was angry. The lion was hungry then the lion was hungry and he went for hunting and the lion hunted a buffalo. The lion was only him. **That's the end of my story.**

2. **One day** the fish and the fire were doing something. The fish came out to reach the fire in his house. The fish went to visit the fire. The fire wanted the fish to come out of the water and at that time he went to meet the fish in the water. The fire was so scared to come out. Anyways he came to light the fire then he came to the water and went out. The fire skished and **wanted to eat the fish, that's why the fish lives in water and that's the end of my story.**
3. **There was a boy who was not patient.** He lived in the Great Wall of China. The **father** said **robbers are coming to fight** the Great Wall of China. He told the boy to stand on the walls. He was waiting and waiting and waiting, then the boy said, "If the robbers don't come I'll go away." Then when he went away the robbers came. The first person **the robbers killed** was his father. **That is the end of my story.**
4. **It's about** king lion. **One day there** was a lion called king lion. He saw a tiger and told the tiger, "Can you please come to my house." The tiger said yes. And the king lion met a leopard. The king lion said, "Can you please come to my house." The leopard said yes. And the leopard now said he cannot stay there longer and the leopard said he only sleep one time. **That is all.**
5. **About animals.** Tiger, puma, lion and **they was fighting. The tiger died.** Lion and puma alive. **They was fighting. Puma died** and something happened to him. He was awake and he saw the lion and the tiger and he saw what happened to the tiger. He was awake.

6. **I have story.** A super day there was Ronald and **Ronald beat Dave. Hoden beat Hannah. Kevin beat Hannah. I use my leg and kick Hoden.** Connor and Kevin and Chuck. Destiny and Angel. **I was fighting and kicking my leg like this** (kicks leg). My **mommy** is watching with Jesus and she wear a necklace. David and Goliath. **David fight Goliath** on his bum bum. **He kick Goliath** in the jecture. Somebody Goliath fell. **Jesus beat Goliath** and my mommy stand up and eat her clothes and went up and she gave herself to somebody else. **Sweeping that and my mommy phone another mommy.**
7. **My story is about** the little tortoise who was happy. **One day** he saw a dog talking to somebody. Then the dog now saw the tortoise. Then after the tortoise was sad, he said, “Please talk to me.” And the dog said, “No I will not talk to you.” Then the tortoise now said “Please wait. Stop going away from me.” Then the little tortoise saw a little fox coming, he saw his brother coming. Now the tortoise now went to the fox to talk to him. And the fox didn’t look at the tortoise and **and the tortoise was too sad.** And after the little tortoise he was shouting, “Fox! Fox talk to me!” and the fox didn’t hear him. And they were still going and they were going to their home and the tortoise now came to their house. The fox said, “Go! Go Tortoise!” the tortoise went home. Nobody talked to the tortoise except the fox and the dog. **He so wanted a friend to talk to and he saw a mouse coming through and he had somebody to talk to.** The mouse. **That is the end of my story.**
8. **There was a boy who was patient.** They wanted to give him a present. He was waiting for a long time. He waited on Friday. He waited on Saturday. He waited on Sunday. He waited on Monday. He waited on Tuesday until they came to give him the gift he wanted. **The end.**

9. **My story go** to Jesus. Jesus love us and Jesus needs his water and Jesus go to the water. **Fish bite Jesus. He die.** Jesus put tongue to water. Jesus turn to water. Jesus went to somewhere to fish. Jesus go to his **brother** and Joseph tell him to **kick, kick, kick** and Jesus put his hand on his water and Jesus read about, about Pastor Quiz. Jesus put his hand on water. **He died on the cross** and Jesus he brought to his home and **Jesus he step on his mother** and his **father** is married. Jesus went to his home. **He die** and Jesus went to, to cottie. **He caught his mommy on his foot and mommy die.** Jesus came to his mommy, he colour and he...
10. There was 7 cats that liked hunting mice. Then on their mice hunt they saw a turtle. The turtle says, "Can I join you?" The cats said yes. The turtle was with a long neck. Then one cat said pretend to the cats **pretend to die.** So when the **magic mice** came they **raised up and killed the magic mice.** Then they went to the place with the turtle. Then the king asked the cats to **take one of the turtles nerves.** Then they took one and the turtles neck was shaky. **They took another one** then the turtle's neck was no more shaky. So they built something with the nerves. **That is the end of my story.**
11. **My story is about** the fish and the fire. **One day** the fish did a contest with the fire. They decided to go one by one to each house. **The fish was the first to come to the fire's house. As he came the fish was scared.** Anywhere the fish goes fire would **burn it down,** then as the fire entered the water the fire quench and that is how the **fish had another friend and they all lived happily ever after.**

Books

1. "Somebody calls help me, help me! Look at me!" and then the **gingerbread** man jumped out and they said "Who is going to catch him?" And he saw a cow and said "Who is

going to catch me?” He said, **“No, no you can’t catch me!”** And he ran away and he saw a fox and the fox said he **look very good to eat** and he said, **“Stop I want to take a bite!”** But the gingerbread man said, “No, you will never catch me...and the gingerbread man decided to take a rest and he came to a river. The fox came very fast in the water. **The fox said, come and he slide down his head into his mouth. That’s the end of my story.**

2. There’s a lion came to tea. **Once upon a time** there was a lion who was very hungry. He went to someone’s house and finished everything. **And the little girl couldn’t bathe** because the lion swallowed everything. And the **dad** came back home and the dad have an idea. **He said, “Let’s go to the restaurant.” And they went to the market for the tiger food.** And the tiger was not hungry again. **Done**
3. **Story, Story ... Once upon a time ... There was a little girl called Little Red Riding Hood** and she was very. **One day** her **mom** called her **Little Red Riding Hood**. She saw a **Big Bad Wolf**. He said “Where are you going?” She said “I’m going to my **grandma’s** house. She’s not feeling fine.” He said “Why don’t you pick some flowers for your grandma?” And the Big Bad wolf came to Little Red Riding Hood’s grandma’s house. “What big ears you have grandma. What big teeth you have grandma.” And **the Big Bad Wolf swallowed Little Red Riding Hood and her grandma and the farmer killed the wolf’s stomach** and Little Red Riding Hood and grandma slid out and they had a tea party.
4. **Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) there was a young princess called Cinderella and her stepmother called... I don’t know her stepmother’s name... and her stepsisters called Anastasia and Presella. They tore Cinderella’s dress** and she

went outside to the garden **and saw her fairy godmother and she disappeared a big blue dress and the fairy godmother turned the mouse into horse** and her step and she gone to the ball in a pumpkin. She saw Cinderella, the stepmother and stepsisters saw Cinderella. The prince ran away and they were dancing and in love and Cinderella ran after the boy. **Her stepmother beat her and beat her and beat her and locked her in her room. Her mice friends open the door with her key. The end.**

5. **It's about Cinderella and little Red Riding Hood. Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) there was a little girl called Cinderella,** she had a **stepmother.** **Cinderella her friend bought her a new dress. From her friends she was so proud and her stepmother beat her and tear her dress and she cried** in her garden and she now went to the ball in a beautiful dress and her stepmother disappeared and she came to the ball and her prince was dancing with her and she was looking for him **and that is the end of my story.**
6. **Now the story goes now. The story goes now.** And look at the garden and the doggie go now and the doggie fell down. **Blood was coming out. Blood was everywhere. Blood now come out. Blood was coming and** frog fell down and the chicken was still going and the banging was still going. And the dog fell down and look at the **mickey mouse** fell down. And look at the brand new bunny was alive. And look at the chicken was going around. And the chicken was still walking. And look at the frogs fell down. And look at the chicken was going around. And look at the bunny was going around. And look at him as he was going around. And look at the bunny was going around. And look at the bear it was going around. And look at the chicken it was still going around. And look at the chicken **want to go home. And look at the chicken wants to sleep. Look at the**

chicken want to go home. And the chicken want to go and sleep. And look at the chicken want to go and lie down, and look at the chicken wants to go and climb the mountain. And look up the mountain and look at the bear want to eat the apple. **And look at the frogs want to eat chicken.** And look at the chicken want to eat orange. Chicken want to eat apple. **And look at the chicken want to eat fox. And look at the fox want to eat the chicken.** And look at the chicken he was running away. Chicken want to go to house. Chicken want to go and poopoo. And chicken want to go and lie down. And chicken want to go wee wee. Look chicken want to go and lie down. Look chicken want to go and lie down. **The fox want to eat the chicken.** The fox want to go and wee wee. **The fox want to break the window.** And look at the fox want to go weewee. And look at the fox want to go poopoo. And look at the fox want to go poopoo. Look at the fox want to go sleep, and look at the fox want to go weewee. And look at the fox want to go weewee. Look at the fox want to go home. Look at the fox want to go sleep. And the fox want to go home. Chicken want to go meet the **Barney.** Chicken want to go and weewee. And look at chicken want to go home. And look at chicken want to go lie down.

Other

1. My **daddy** do stories for me. **Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time).**

Today is my birthday. Jumping, jumping we are jumping. Jumping, jumping we are jumping. Dancing, dancing we are dancing. My daddy **says nobody beats me.** I can see the caterpillar house. Caterpillar is there, he's going like this (moves hand) I'll show you (moves hand). He goes down stairs like this (wiggles down the stairs). I'll show my **mom.** Caterpillar like this I'll write. Write this word. (Draws caterpillar).

2. **Cinderella**, ant, superhero. **The story come to the TV** and Kelsey becomes somebody.

I'm going to do my birthday. I'm going to do my birthday. **My story is about Cinderella. Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) a little girl called Cinderella. Cinderella** her **mother** was very angry with her and **her mother beat ajujupapa. Yes the story about ant Cinderella. Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time)** a little ant called ant and Ms. Cinderella and **superman** and **ajuju**papa. **Story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) ajujupapa put blood cut his self and die and start killing and snake make him die and lion make him die and horse make him die and the ajujupapa die and servant die** and the boy is his birthday and the boy marry somebody and the boy kiss somebody. **Kiss and somebody die. The police station kill him. The police shoot somebody and the police die** and the boy drinks somebody's water. **Cinderella** come with clothes and her mother was angry with her. **Tear her clothes and her mother kill somebody and her mother beat a police and police kill the prince** and the king was very angry with her and the police went to her house. Makeup, makeup, makeup. The king was very angry with him. **And Chuck killed the police and my friend superman killed the police** and I'm a bad girl. **Connor killed somebody** and the king was very angry with him. **There was a house and he wanted to play ball and** the boy was very angry with him and the **boy killed police, the boy killed police.** Somebody came and they all fall down and his **mother was carrying the girl** and the boy gets Cinderella and **Cinderella dies** and the king was very angry with her and the **boy was poo pooing. The boy was pooing poopooing and saying his prayers. Pray every day, pray every day, pray every day, use your bible**

to pray every day, use our bible to pray every day, pray every day, pray every day.

The boy looks like him. The boy was washing his hands. Kill somebody and he drove and hurt himself and my sister run away and my sister played game and my sister was very die. My sister run away and my sister was very angry with me. My shoe was very dirty. The girl kill somebody and the girl write numbers. The girl was very angry with the boy. The boy was very angry with the little girl and mother called her to eat. Pray every day and the girl go to school and the girl was playing football and the girl was very, very kill and the girl was dead and the girl was asking somebody to pray every day and learn to go and the girl was very angry and the boy was kissing somebody and the boy was watching cartoon and the boy was watching Finn. The boy was very sleepy. The boy was going to his class and the boy take a slap on his face and the boy looked very angry. The mommy was carrying him home. The boy was washing with his mommy.

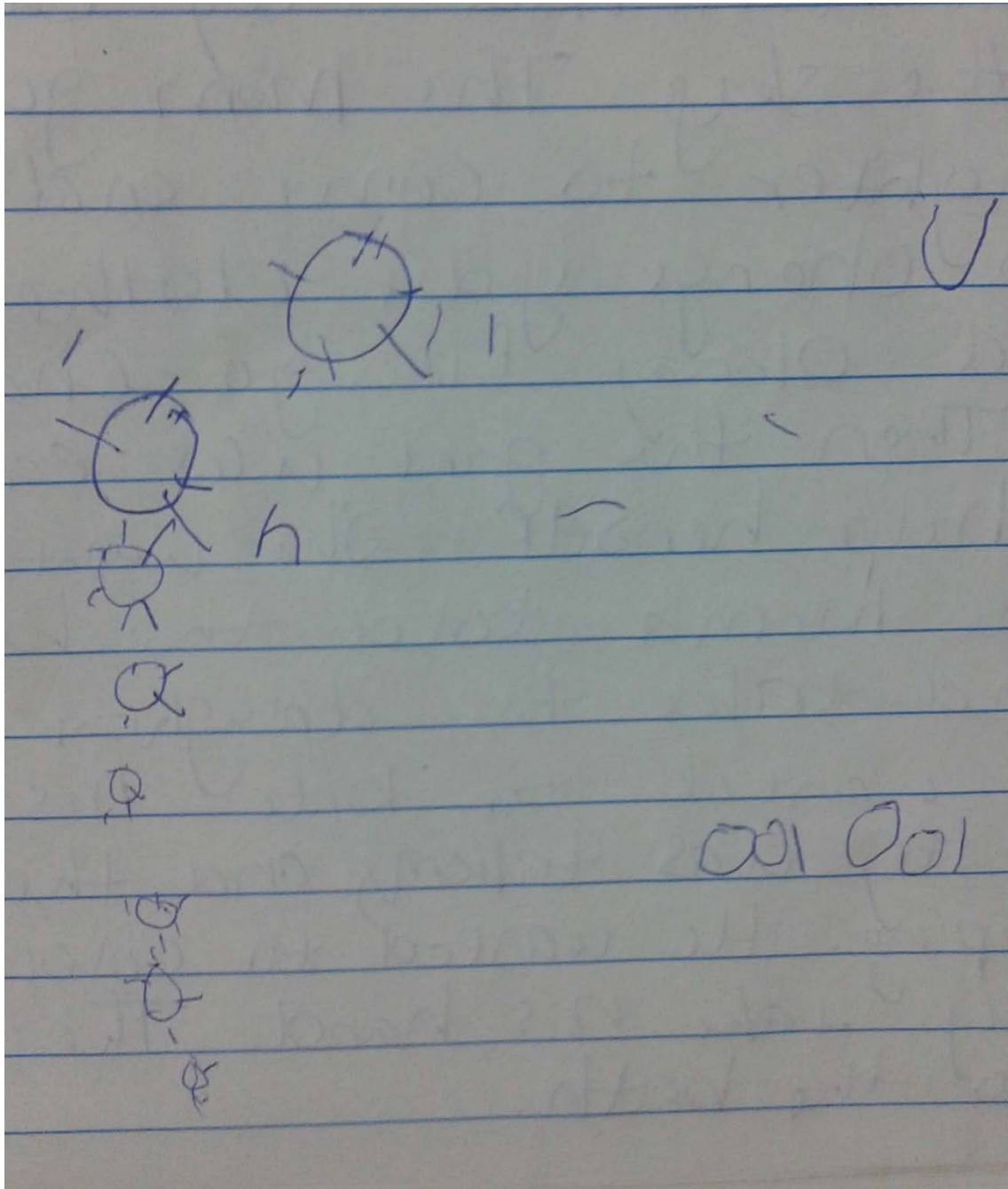
3. My daddy said told me the one on the bull on the water, he jump up there. He jumped on the place up there. He jumped the water goes up. He hit up here on the tide. He's not dead. It died. He hit a tree but the frog not dead. Then he start running again and they're fighting. The frogs are fighting on the floor. The floor their fighting. The tree not die. It not died. The frogs are dead. (Dramatically plays dead). They not die on the floor. The frog enter on the mountain. The frogs enter on the on the floor. They enter the floor like that. (Slides on the floor). They now on the tree and the tree now fall down. The, the, the, fall on the tree. Now they don't go on the tree again. The mountain not dance, he dance on the tree. My daddy tell me story. My daddy says story, story (story). Once upon a time (time, time) a man found a monkey. Monkey not die and

monkey hit the head on the tree and the monkey not die. The monkey jump on the tree on the tenth floor and the elephant and the giraffe jump on the floor and **they died.**

(Dramatically plays dead). **The monkey die on the tree and frog died on the floor. The flower died and the frog died. All of them died on the puddle.** I send a parrot on the water. I ate the parrot because the ant died on the floor. I not eat the robber. **The mountain dance on the tree** and the mountain goes up, up, up, up. I not wear my glasses. I no eat the ant. My **mommy** not do ant but my daddy

4. **Caterpillar. He beats somebody.** The caterpillar comes in your bed and caterpillar in your hair and you wash the caterpillar **and come to school and throw it in there** and close it. When the caterpillar come to the flower I say, “Get out of my flower!” (draws picture)

Appendix C



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