

THE EVIL JUDGE: A HAUSA FOLKTALE INSIGHTS FROM STRATIFICATIONAL GRAMMAR

Tim Goring
Summer Institute of Linguistics

0. INTRODUCTION

The text of The Evil Judge has the form of an anecdote and a comment, much like a fable with its moral. This construction is typical of the Hausa folktale, as can be seen from examination of the texts in the Appendix. In this particular case, a character in the story provides the comment ('The barber doesn't like the razor,' parallel to the English 'getting a taste of your own medicine'). This has the interesting effect of making the comment a part of the chronological sequence of the story. We see this pattern also in 'Squirrel and Porcupine', 'Jackal and Heron', 'The Hyena and the Drum', 'The Blindman with the Lamp', and 'The Gwari and the Teacher'. Other tales ('Two Frogs', 'Tortoise and Vulture', and 'Bat and the Land Tax') have a moral provided by the narrator; in each of these cases the particle *toò* introduces the comment.

'The Evil Judge' is a tightly written tale, with few extraneous details and with a very economical system of participant reference. Referent ranking plays an important part in this system. In this paper we will look at skewing between the morphemic and semantic mainlines, semantic to morphemic realization patterns, referent identification, and referent ranking. A stratificational analysis, as developed by Fleming (1988), will be applied (an attempt will be made to avoid jargon as much as possible).

1. MORPHEMIC MAINLINE VS SEMANTIC MAINLINE

The morphemic mainline of the text (i.e., the independent clauses and the central clauses of sentences) is characterized primarily by the relative completive aspect in the verb phrase, with the progressive used only in line 10 (see charts below).

The semantic mainline is characterized by events and conversation blocks arranged in chronological order, realized by the relative completive aspect. Line 10 represents skewing between the morphemic and semantic mainlines: it is pulled off the semantic mainline by the particle *daà* 'earlier' and by the use of the progressive. This sentence is out of chronological order (hence *daà*); it would be simultaneous with lines 3 and following. It is a cognition event, and serves as necessary background information for understanding the judge's reaction in this scene. Together with line 9, it forms a contrastive logical arrangement, contrasting the actual bribe with the expected bribe. This then forms the prior condition explaining the events that follow: the judge confronts the man, curses him, and sends him away.

2. MORPHEMIC CONSTRUCTIONS AND THEIR SEMANTIC REALIZATES

The mainline morphemic constructions used in this story are clauses and sentences. We will look below at the semantic constructions and functions realized by the various positions within the morphemic constructions. In interpreting the discussion to follow, it is important to note that in stratificational terminology, constructions are broken down into their linear constituents, labeled according to their position relative to the central constituent of the construction. For example, **Clause.P1** refers to the position

immediately preceding the central position (the verb phrase) of the clause. Similarly, **Noun Phrase.F2** is the second position following the head noun of a noun phrase. This notation is used throughout this paper and its charts.

The text under consideration here is presented in chart form at the end of the article. In this text, the **Sentence.P** position is filled by clauses introduced by the conjunction *dà* 'when'. Line 7 is the first such instance; in **Sentence.P** the judge sees the defendant's behavior. The particle *sai* 'then' links this clause to the main one in the sentence, showing (in this instance) a logical arrangement between them: what the judge saw (prior condition) led him to make his decision in the case (subsequent action). Lines 9 and 14 look similar to line 7, with a subordinated clause in **Sentence.P** introduced by *dà*. However, in these cases the subordinate clause simply provides the temporal (and spatial) location for the action of the main clause, so *sai* is not used: 'When he got home, he sent.... When he got outside, he said....' These subordinate clauses also indicate changes of scene at the discourse level; the story includes a courtroom scene, a confrontation scene, and an epilogue, with the locative clauses providing the transitions between them.

The **Sentence.F** position in this text is filled by clauses introduced without a conjunction. In lines 4, 6, 13, and 14 they are quotations; in lines 3 and 10 they describe what the judge sees or thinks, a function very similar to quotation. The aspect used is different from that used in the mainline of the text; most of these clauses use the negative progressive or the negative completive aspect. This can be explained by looking at the semantic constructions realized by the clauses. While the clauses in the mainline realize primarily events and conversation blocks, most **Sentence.F** clauses realize attribution (lines 3 and 4), identification (lines 10 and 13a), cognition events (line 6), or reaction events (line 14). The only use of the relative completive in **Sentence.F** is an activity event (line 13b: 'You cheated me!'), which follows the pattern we see in the mainline of the text.

The **Clause.P2** position is used only twice in this text, for the particle *sai* 'then' and for *daà* 'earlier'. *Sai* is used here (line 7) as a logical relational tying the **Sentence.P** clause to the main clause, as we have seen above. A glance at other texts in this connection reveals that elsewhere it also functions as a logical and/or temporal relational, in most cases relating independent clauses rather than parts of a sentence as it does here (see 'Two Frogs', 'Squirrel and Porcupine', 'Jackal and Heron', 'The Hyena and the Drum,' etc.). Its discourse functions need further research. *Daà* provides a temporal location for the clause it introduces, and also serves to pull it off the semantic mainline, since the event realized by the clause is out of chronological order. Unfortunately, the other folktales do not include any instances of this particle. However, the novel *Magana Jari Ce* 'Talk is Wealth' also uses *daà* at a critical point in the text to introduce background information essential for understanding the conflict in the plot (see K. Cain in this volume for a summary of the novel):

Daà, duk àbí-n nan guri-n wàzírìì.
earlier all thing-def here place-of vizier
'Earlier all this pertained to the vizier.

Tun dà sarkí-n nan baà shi dà ɗaa namíjìì,
since chief-def here neg he with son male
Since the chief had no son, if he died, he, the

in yaa mutù, shii yaà ci sàrautàà.
 if C die he F2 eat spear
 vizier, would become chief.'

This statement establishes the setting for the subsequent conflict between the vizier and the chief's son to be born, which forms the theme carried out throughout the novel.

The uses of noun phrases in Clause.P1 and of pronouns in Clause.F1 serve important function in marking referent spans. See the discussion below regarding referent identification for full discussion.

The Clause.C position (filled by a verb phrase or progressive) serves several important discourse functions. The person-aspect markers help to identify participants, since they indicate gender and number. They also differentiate semantic mainline and off-mainline propositions, as we have seen. The -oo ending on the verbs (glossed as 'here' and indicating 'action toward the speaker') in lines 9, 11, and 12 function to link the author's perspective with the judge. This is discussed further below when participant ranking is considered.

The sequence of two noun phrases in line 1 (Clause.F2,F3)¹ is very interesting. The second noun phrase *wuri-n àlk'aalii* 'place of judge' realizes location, although we would normally expect a prepositional phrase to have this function. It may be that location is expected to co-occur with the verb *kai* 'bring'; this would mean that location is a primary constituent of the event and not an additional constituent. In 'Bat and the Land Tax', the verbs *àiki* 'send' and *koomàà* 'return' likewise are followed by noun phrases including the noun *wuri* 'place' realizing location. However, line 9 of the text considered here includes the verb *aik-oo* 'send (toward speaker)' followed by a prepositional phrase *wà àlk'aalii* 'to judge', not by a noun phrase as in the other cases. My tentative interpretation is that *wuri* is one of a class of nouns that tend to serve locative and positional functions in Hausa and need not be preceded by prepositions.

The Clause.F3 position is in most cases filled by a prepositional phrase, realizing such function as location, recipient, accompaniment, and instrument. It is interesting that in line 9 what appears to be the patient of the activity (the pumpkins sent to the judge) is realized by a prepositional phrase in Clause.F3, rather than as a noun phrase in Clause.F2. 'Bat and the Land Tax' again gives us a clue: the chief of the animals sends his agent to collect the tax from the bat. Apparently the verb *àiki* 'send' refers to messengers, not to gifts. The messenger is not mentioned in line 9 since he is extraneous to the story; the bribe is the important thing.

3. REFERENT IDENTIFICATION

In most of the texts in the collection considered in this volume, referent spans are initiated by a noun or noun phrase in Clause.P1 (the subject position); subsequent clauses use only the person-aspect marker to indicate that the same referent is being referred to. In a few cases, however, a pronoun in Clause.F1 will indicate the end of a span. For example, in 'Tortoise and Vulture', most changes in referents are marked by a noun in Clause.P1: *kùnkuruu* 'tortoise' or *ùngùluu* 'vulture.' However, line 2 of that text has *haushii* 'jealousy' as the referent:

¹ I have arbitrarily chosen to use semantic function rather than morphemic construction as my charting criterion in this case. It would also be possible to chart this noun phrase in Clause.F2 based on morphemic criteria, and order the sequence of semantic functions (1.PATIENT 2.LOCATION) realized by the two noun phrases that would then occupy that position.

Rân nan sai haushii ya kaamàà shi.
 day here jealousy RC seize him
 'One day he was overcome by jealousy.'

The following line (3) refers again to Tortoise, but no noun is used:

Ya cèè, 'Kai, dàà naa iyà taashì...
 RC say if C be-able flying
 'He said, "Man, if only I could fly..."'

In this case, the change in referents is marked by the pronoun *shi* in the Clause.F1 position of line 2.

Referent identification in 'The Evil Judge' follows the first system closely for the highest-ranked referent. The defendant's referent spans are indicated more economically, usually with the Clause.F1 pronoun marking the switch, and in one case using only contextual or semantic clues to indicate the change in referent.

The plaintiff, who is referred to only by indefinite person-aspect markers, disappears after line 2; s/he is only a prop to set up the situation. The judge is introduced in a locative noun phrase in the first line: *wuri-n àlk'aalii* 'place-of judge'. The defendant is introduced in Sentence.F of line 3, as a pronoun *shi*. Contextual clues and some cultural knowledge of court cases are necessary to infer the role of this character and disambiguate him from the plaintiff: because the judge asks this man for a defense, we assume that he is not the plaintiff but the defendant.

Referent Spans

Line	Referent	Indicators	Comments
1	Plaintiff	PA*:3SUnspecified	Prop or tertiary character (disappears
2	"	"	after this)
3	Judge	Cl.P1:àlk'aalii,PA	introduced in line 1, Cl.F3: <i>wuri-n àlk'aalii</i>
4	"	PA Span ends: Cl.F1:ma-sà	
5	Defendant	Cl.P1:mùtumì-n,PA	introduced in line 3, Sent.F:shi
6	"	PA	
7	Judge	Sent.P:[Cl.P1:àlk'aalii], PA,PA	
8	Both	PA	
9	Defendant	PA,Cl.F4:àlk'aalii	<u>Judge is recipient so man is agent.</u>
10	Judge	Cl.P1:àlk'aalii,CP*	
11	"	PA Span ends: Cl.F1:shì	VP.C: <u>call</u> (to judge)
12	Defendant	PA	VP.C: <u>come</u> (to judge)
13	Judge	Cl.P1:àlk'aalii,PA Span ends: Cl.F1:ma-sà	Sent.F: <u>Leave!</u> <u>Go!</u>
14	Defendant	PA	Sent.P: <u>exit outside</u>

*PA = person-aspect marker, CP = progressive aspect

As the chart above shows, all spans in which the judge is the referent are introduced with a noun *àlk'aalii* 'judge' in a Clause.P1 position. The defendant's first span is introduced with a noun *mùtumì-n* 'the man', but thereafter the defendant is not referred to by nouns; Clause.F1 pronouns are used to mark the end of the judge's spans (lines 4, 11, 13) and to signal that the referent has changed. In line 9, we must rely entirely on contextual clues to infer that the defendant is the referent: we decide that he is the agent because the recipient of the pumpkins is the judge.

There are semantic clues in lines 11-14 that provide a bit of redundancy in signaling the defendant's referent spans (lines 12, 14). The action in line 12 is a response to the judge's command in line 11, so the agent must be the defendant. Likewise in line 14, the action of exiting is a response to the judge's command in 13. In general, however, overt reference to the defendant is extremely economical. A possible reason for this is the ranking of referents in this text (see discussion below).

It is often useful to treat clauses in Sentence.F as a subtext; they may have a different but coherent structure of their own (Fleming, personal communication). In this text, the clauses in Sentence.F exhibit patterns of reference similar to those of the mainline of the story:

Referent Spans (Sentence.F)

Line	Referent	Indicators	Comments
3	Defendant	Neg.CP	Contextual/cultural info needed to identify role
4	"	CP	Addressee (judge is speaker) Cl.F4: <i>màganàà</i>
6	"	Cl.P1: <i>shii</i> ,Neg.RC	Speaker (indirect quote) Cl.F2: <i>màganà-r</i>
10	Proposal	Cl.P2: <i>kwatanci-n-sà</i>	Defendant appears in possessive phrase
13	Defendant	Cl.P2: <i>kai</i> PA <i>Allàà wada-n-kà</i> 00,Imperative 00,Imperative	Addressee Object of curse Command Command
14	Judge	Cl.P1: <i>wàanzaamù</i>	Metaphorical (in proverb)

In these Sentence.F clauses, the defendant appears only as a pronoun or as part of the verb phrase. When other referents are introduced (lines 10, 14), they are realized as nouns in a Clause.P position. Lines 3 and 4 are linked semantically by their reference to *màganàà* 'word (defense, alibi)', much as lines 13 and 14 above are linked by the relationship between command and action; this provides some redundancy to the referent span. In general, however, this subtext exhibits the same economy in reference to defendant as the main text.

4. PARTICIPANT RANKING

The judge is clearly the primary participant. His rank is indicated in a number of ways. Throughout he is referred to by his social title, never by a pronoun (even in line 14, after he has been outwitted, he is referred to metaphorically by an occupational title (*wàanzaamù* 'barber')). The story title and the locative in line 1 (Clause.F3) suggest that the author's perspective is linked with the judge. Likewise, the -oo ending on the verbs

aik-oo, **kiraw-oo**, and **zoo**, indicating ‘action toward the speaker’, shows that the author’s perspective is associated with the judge. We are given glimpses into the judge’s mental processes. Line 3 is an experience event, in which the judge perceives that the defendant is untruthful. The clause in Sentence.P of line 7 is also an experience event, with the judge as the experiencer. Line 10 is a cognition event, in which we see what the judge understood the proposed bribe to be. The judge is quoted directly twice in the text. He never appears overtly as the addressee (i.e., as a pronoun in Clause.F1), even though the defendant speaks to him in line 6.

Reference to the defendant, on the other hand, is handled quite differently. He is introduced as a pronoun in line 3 (Sentence.F). We must rely on cultural knowledge (about court cases) and contextual information (the judge asks him for his defense in line 4) to deduce what his role is. He appears as a pronoun in all Sentence.Fs thereafter except the final one. His only realization as a noun is in his first referent span (line 5), where he is referred to generically as **mùtumi-n** ‘the man’ (cf the judge’s social title). Thereafter he is realized as agent only by the person-aspect marker, and his spans are marked primarily by the end of the judge’s spans (signaled by a Clause.F1 pronoun). He is realized as the addressee (pronoun in Clause.F1) every time the judge speaks. When he speaks to the judge (line 6), he is quoted indirectly. The only time he is quoted directly is in the final line, after there has been a shift in status between the characters as the judge admits that he has been outwitted.

5. CONCLUSION

The Evil Judge is a simple but elegant folktale. Only essential information is given; context and cultural knowledge play an important part in understanding the text. Economy in participant reference is closely tied to referent ranking. Aspects, particles, and subordinate clauses play important parts in indicating the semantic structure of the text.

Log.Arr(SEQ) = Event(ACTIVITY) = Event(EXPER) = EXPERIENCER, Event(COGNITION)=	Log.Arr.PRIOR	LOGREL	Logical Arrangement. SUBSEQUENT	
	TEMPOR. LOCATION	TEMPLOC	AGENT EXPERIENCER PROCESSOR	1. AGENT, PROCESSOR 2. ACTIVITY, EXPERIENCE
Conversation Blk =			QUOTATIVE:Event SPEAKER	(EXPRESSION) 1. SPEAKER 2. EXPRESSIVE
	Sent.P:1.dà 2.Cl.			
		Cl.P2: particle	Cl.P1:NP,n	Cl.C:VP,CP
1.Event(ACTIVITY)				akà kai 3uRC bring
2.Event(ACTIVITY)				akà yi 3uRC do
3.Event(EXPERIENCE)			àlk'aalii judge	ya ga 3mRC see
4.Conversation Blk=				ya cèè 3mRC say
5.Event(ACTIVITY)			mùtumi-n man-def	ya kwatàntà 3mRC signal
6.Event(EXPRESSION)				ya cèè 3mRC say
7.Event(ACTIVITY)	dà àlk'aalii ya ga hakà when judge 3mRC see thus	sai then		ya yankè 3mRC give
8.Event(ACTIVITY)				sukà taashì 3pRC leave
9.Event(ACTIVITY)	dà ya tàfi gidaa, when 3mRC go home			ya aik-oo 3nRC send
10.Event(COGNITION)		daà earlier	àlk'aalii judge	ya-nàà 3m-CP
11.Event(EXPRESSION)				ya kiraw-oo shì 3mRC call 3sm
12.Event(ACTIVITY)				ya zoo 3mRC come
13.Conversation Blk			àlk'aalii judge	ya cèè 3mRC say
14.Conversation Blk	dà ya fita wàjee when 3mRC exit outside			ya cèè 3mRC say

	PATIENT COGNITION	SPATIAL LOCATION 1. RECIPIENT 2. ACCOMPANIMENT INSTRUMENT	STIMULUS PHENOMENON
ADDRESSEE			QUOTATION
Sentence.C:Clause Cl.F1:pn	Cl.F2:Np,n,num	Cl.F3:PP,NP	Sent.F:Cl.
(1)	wani k'aaraa a complaint	wuri-n àlk'aalii place-of judge	
(2)	shàrii'àà. law		
(3)			baà shi dà gàskiyaa neg 3sm with truth
(4) ma-sà 3smIO			"Ka-nàà dà máganàà?" 2sm-CP with word
(5)	ukù 3	dà hannu-n-sà. with hand-of his	
(6)			shii bà-ì san máganà-r ba. 3sm neg-C know word-def neg
(7)	shàrii-àà. juddgment		
(8)			
(9)		wà àlk'aalii to judge dà kàbeewaa gùdaa ukù. with pumpkins unit 3	
(10)	tsàmmanii thinking		kwatanci-n-sà awaakii ukù nee. proposal-of-his goat 3 be
(11)			
(12)			
(13) ma-sà to-him			"Kai, dai, munaafùkii nèè. 2sm hypocrite be Kaa cùùcee nì! 2smC cheat me Allàà wada-n-kà! Tààshi! Tàfi!" God wealth-of-you leave go
(14)			M, wanzaamii baa yàà sô-n jàrfaa barber neg 3mCP liking-of razor