

Decoding the Typologies and Structural Patterns of Folktales in the Eastern Visayas Region, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses a critical gap in Philippine folklore research by applying Vladimir Propp's morphology of the folktale (1968) to a corpus of oral narratives—locally known as *susumaton*—collected from Eastern Visayas. While Propp's structural framework has been extensively applied to Western folktales, its application to Philippine contexts remains limited. This study argues that theoretical models originating from Western traditions such as Propp's narrative morphology can be applied to local oral narratives in ways that preserve and respect their distinct cultural meanings. Through a folkloristic ethnographic approach, the study conducted semi-structured interviews with 35 elders across selected barangays and validated the collected narratives against secondary sources, resulting in the documentation and analysis of seven folktales. These narratives were categorized typologically and mapped using Propp's 31 narrative functions. Results show that Eastern Visayan folktales span diverse genres, reflecting a rich and varied oral tradition. The analysis reveals both structural alignments with Propp's classical sequence and notable deviations, such as non-linear plots, reordered functions, and open-ended conclusions. It supports the idea the Eastern Visayas folktales are fluid and responsive to cultural values. More broadly, the study affirms that folktale structures vary across cultures and highlights the importance of culturally contextualized narrative analysis in comparative folklore studies.

Keywords: Folklore studies; Propp's Morphology; Philippine Oral Tradition; Waray Culture; Structural Analysis

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines has rich and varied repository of folk stories. Due to its geographical location, being an archipelago comprising of more than 7641 islands, its numerous ethnolinguistic groups found in it and the historical events that have shaped the destiny of its people probably account for this richness and variety. Famous folklorist Dean Fransler (1937) once said that “a glance at the map and at the history of the islands reveals the archipelago as a veritable ocean center of the streams of story.”

One archipelago that is known for its history and culture and bearing unique stories rooted in local communities is Eastern Visayas Region located in the eastern seaboard of the country. The region is popularly acknowledged as the gateway to the Philippine history – making it an entry point for the colonization of Spaniards for more than 300 years. Here in Eastern Visayas, folktale is loosely referred as *susumaton* which derived from the word “sumat” which means to tell, inform or command. *Susumaton*, as Binisaya term, is equivalent to story-telling and that means “the story told, whether informally during social gatherings, or when one is narrating a tale of more formal provenance such as a folktale” (Alunan, n.d). The *susumaton* is part of what UNESCO classifies as intangible cultural heritage (ICH) which is a broad category of cultural expressions and traditions that are transmitted from generation to generation. These include oral narratives, performing arts, social customs, rituals, festive gatherings, ecological knowledge, and traditional craftsmanship, all of which embody the living cultural memory of communities (UNESCO, 2003, Art. 2.2). The *susumaton* belongs to the oral traditions. Many stories embody traditional lore about places, things, and mythical creatures that are so much part of traditional beliefs (Alunan, n.d.)

The entire Visayan regions have numerous folktales, which could be found in literatures such as in books, journals and on the web, yet, many remain undocumented particularly on the side of Eastern Samar. The work of Western scholars such as Donn Hart and his wife in 1960s, who visited in the Eastern Visayas Region may had been an answer to this dilemma as they have collected more than 454 tales just in Borongan, Eastern Samar Province, alone. However, according to Eugenio (1985) from this rich harvest, they published the texts of only three Cinderella tales and that Harts have not published the rest of their collected tales. This gap in documentation represents a missed opportunity for preserving and understanding the unique cultural heritage of the region.

In addition, there is a noticeable gap in the literature when it comes to systematic research that examines the structural elements and narrative patterns of Eastern Visayas folktales specifically using established formal narrative analysis frameworks such as Vladimir Propp's morphology (1968). Most existing works on Philippine folktales (e.g., those by Eugenio, 2007; Hart & Hart, 1966; Ali, 2019; Constantino, 2020) either present the tales as raw documentation or group them based on general themes, looked into the moral lessons, or folkloric value of local tales without dissecting the compositional logic or internal narrative mechanics. This study addresses that gap by applying a typological classification alongside a Proppian structural analysis, thus offering a formal and systematic lens to decode the underlying narrative architecture of Eastern Visayas' folktales. Propp's model has been a foundational tool in folklore studies and has been widely applied to various cultural contexts around the world.

While Propp's structural framework may have been widely used in the study of Russian and European folktales, they have rarely been applied to Philippine materials. This study aims to bridge that gap by using Propp's framework to analyze *susumaton*, or Waray folktales. This study puts forward a proposition that theoretical frameworks developed in Western settings—such as Propp's model—can be meaningfully adapted to local oral narratives without stripping them of their cultural significance. The analysis brings to light how folktales from Eastern Visayas mirror the region's social values, customary roles, and collective memories. As such, the research does not only enhance our appreciation of regional oral traditions but also contributes to ongoing conversations in comparative folklore studies. More importantly, it positions Philippine folktales within the broader spectrum of world literature, asserting their relevance and richness on a global stage.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a folkloristic ethnographic approach, integrating community-based fieldwork with the close examination of narrative structures and symbolic elements. Beyond simply recording the folktales of Eastern Visayas, the research sought to explore the deeper social meanings these stories convey, the cultural settings in which they are performed, and their role in shaping and preserving community identity. It has strategically chosen Borongan, Eastern Samar being part of the larger Eastern Visayas Region as the location of the study, since it is one of the towns in the Visayan Island to have been fully explored and documented by historians and scholars such as Fr. Francisco Alcina, Cantius Kobak and William Scott during the early years of Spaniards down to American colonization period. Their ethnographic accounts about this town may offer insights into how the cultural environment of people of Eastern Samar located the east of the Visayas may have influenced the development of Waray folktales as a whole.

Data Collection

Several steps were made to collect the data. The primary method of data collection used in this study was a semi-structured interview conducted with elderly community members recognized for their deep knowledge of local oral traditions. Prior to the interview, the author started by gathering information from the internet using the search engine Google to obtain existing literature about the folktales in Borongan to avoid duplication of data once the interview part will commence. Once exhausted, it compiled all the materials and studied the completeness of the tales published in various sources particularly from print journals and online journals. Other materials such as books, magazines, clippings and web articles were considered, reviewed and analyzed to see if further investigation or retelling of the stories is necessary or not. If one finds it insufficient, it was the time for the researchers to proceed to the interviews to gather a more elaborate and comprehensive narration of the

tales. The folktales analyzed in this study were gathered through purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews with a total of 35 elders aged 60 and above across selected barangays in Borongan, Eastern Visayas based on pre-determined criteria. During the interviews, participants were specifically asked to narrate folktales they had heard or inherited, drawing from their personal recollections and oral tradition. The interviews were conducted in the local Waray language, audio-recorded with consent, and subsequently transcribed. Data collection was guided by the principle of saturation where interviews continued until no new folktales or narrative patterns were emerging. To support the accuracy and richness of the gathered narratives, the researcher also referred to archived collections and existing written sources of local folktales, using them to compare and validate the accounts shared by participants.

Data Analysis

This study employed a narrative textual analysis, combining typological classification and structural mapping using Propp's morphology, an approach validated in recent Philippine folklore research (Dionaldo 2021; Casibual 2022). To begin the analysis, the collected folktales were grouped according to familiar genres in folklore studies using on well-established frameworks from folkloristics (Dundes, 1997; Eugenio, 2007; Thompson, 1955), which continue to serve as foundational references in typological and structural analysis. However, to align the study with contemporary discourse in folklore scholarship, the author also engaged more recent perspectives that emphasize the performative, contextual, and evolving nature of folk narratives (Tangherlini, 2013; Ben-Amos, 2020). This combination allowed the study to be both rooted in classical taxonomy and responsive to emerging scholarly insights.

The next phase of analysis drew on Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*, a structuralist framework that identifies 31 recurring narrative functions and seven typical character roles found in traditional tales. Using this model as a guide, the researcher manually reviewed and coded the transcribed interviews to trace the sequence, presence, and variation of these functional elements. In addition, motifs that emerged from the narratives were noted and organized using a combination of open and axial coding techniques, making it possible to examine both the structural patterns and culturally distinct features embedded in the stories. To ensure trustworthiness, member-checking and peer debriefing procedures were implemented, alongside cross-referencing with archived folktale versions, analogous to triangulation strategies used in Eslit (2023).

RESULTS

Typological Classification of Folktales

Table 1 presents the analytical classification of the seven folktales collected from elders in various barangays in Borongan City, Eastern Visayas. The classification system draws from classical folkloristic frameworks (Thompson, 1955; Dundes, 1997; Eugenio, 2007) and integrates contemporary criteria such as narrative function, key character types, the presence or absence of supernatural elements, and the broader cultural function of each tale. This integrative approach enables a more nuanced folktale classification that does not only maps structural form but also interprets culturally embedded meaning. The purpose of which is to situate the Eastern Visayas narratives within its local tradition and in dialogue with broader comparative folklore discourse as suggested by Ben-Amos (2020).

Table 1. Narrative Typologies and Thematic Roles of Selected Eastern Visayas Folktales

Title	Genre	Narrative Function	Key Characters	Supernatural Element	Cultural Function
Maka-andog	Myth	Explains natural origins and heroic exploits	Superhuman ancestor-hero	Yes (divine strength)	Foundational myth of Eastern Samar

Juan Pusong	Trickster Tale	Entertainment and moral ambiguity	Clever but lazy peasant	No	Satire of social behavior; reward for wit
Siling-siling ha Tabi	Miscellaneous/Composite	Place origin, moral lesson, supernatural being	Young girl and unknown entity	Yes (supernatural being)	Preserves knowledge of Loom River and local ecology
Maria Cabel	Legend	Explains name of mountain, tragic love story	Spirit-woman, villagers	Yes (shapeshifting, haunting)	Oral history; ties identity to topography
Crocodile in Barrio Boloso	Animal / Moral Tale	Warns against cruelty; rewards kindness	Anthropomorphic crocodile	No	Moral instruction through animal behavior
Serpent Twin of Apoy Colita	Animal / Moral Tale	Explores betrayal and revenge	Twin serpents	No	Commentary on human emotions via animals
Twin Brothers and Dragon Slayer	Novelistic / Heroic Tale	Human struggle and triumph through wit	Brothers, dragon	No	Cross-cultural motif of heroism without magic

From the table above, the researchers were able to document seven (7) folktales which can be classified as follows: one (1) mythological tale, one (1) trickster tale, one (1) legendary tale, two (2) animal tales, one (1) novelistic tale and one (1) composite/miscellaneous tale. By mythological tale, it is a story that

The mythological tale, represented by the story of Maka-andog, describes the origin of the place and features a supernatural being, in this case, the beginning of Eastern Samar. It features a supernatural ancestor-hero, named Makaandog, whose feats are credited with shaping the natural landscape of the province. Culturally, this type of tale serves not only to explain the physical environment but also to affirm ancestral ties and sacred history, reinforcing collective identity and spiritual worldviews within the community.

The trickster tale, such as *Juan Pusong*, focuses on a clever character who uses wit and trickery to get what he wants. These stories are often funny but also offer insights into social values, especially the idea that intelligence can sometimes be more important than power or wealth. In the local context, trickster figures also reflect the people's capacity for resilience and survival, often in the face of structural hardship or authority.

The legendary tale, *The Lost Love of Maria Cabel*, mixes facts and fiction. Set in a real location, it talks about a well-known local figure with magical abilities. Legends are usually rooted in actual or recognizable places and center around notable individuals who are often portrayed with supernatural or extraordinary qualities. Culturally, this genre helps preserve a community's shared memory, transform local figures into iconic or mythical personas, and provide explanations for place names and traditional beliefs.

Two stories were identified as animal or moral tales: *The Crocodile in Barrio Boloso* and *The Serpent Twin of Apoy Colita*. These narratives depict animals exhibiting human traits such as loyalty, betrayal, emotion, and agency. While non-magical, they serve as moral allegories, conveying lessons about justice, empathy, and the consequences of human actions. Within the cultural fabric, such tales are often used in intergenerational education, especially among children, to transmit values and social expectations in a symbolic yet accessible manner.

The novelistic tale, also known as novella in Stith Thompson's typology, is represented by *The Twin Brothers and the Dragon Slayer*. Unlike magical stories, this tale doesn't rely on supernatural powers. Instead, it highlights

human strength and cleverness, and it shares common themes with stories found in other countries, showing how cultures can be connected through similar storytelling patterns.

Lastly, *Siling-siling ha Tabi* was categorized as a composite or miscellaneous tale. This genre label is used when a story does not neatly fit into a single folkloric classification due to its blended elements — in this case, myth, legend, moral parable, and supernatural conflict. The narrative includes the origin of a land formation, a moral dilemma, and the presence of a powerful, otherworldly figure. Its layered storytelling reflects the community’s belief that spiritual, historical, and moral aspects of life are closely connected. In this way, *Siling-siling ha Tabi* acts as both a record of local culture and a teaching tool, helping preserve traditional knowledge while remaining relevant to present-day issues.

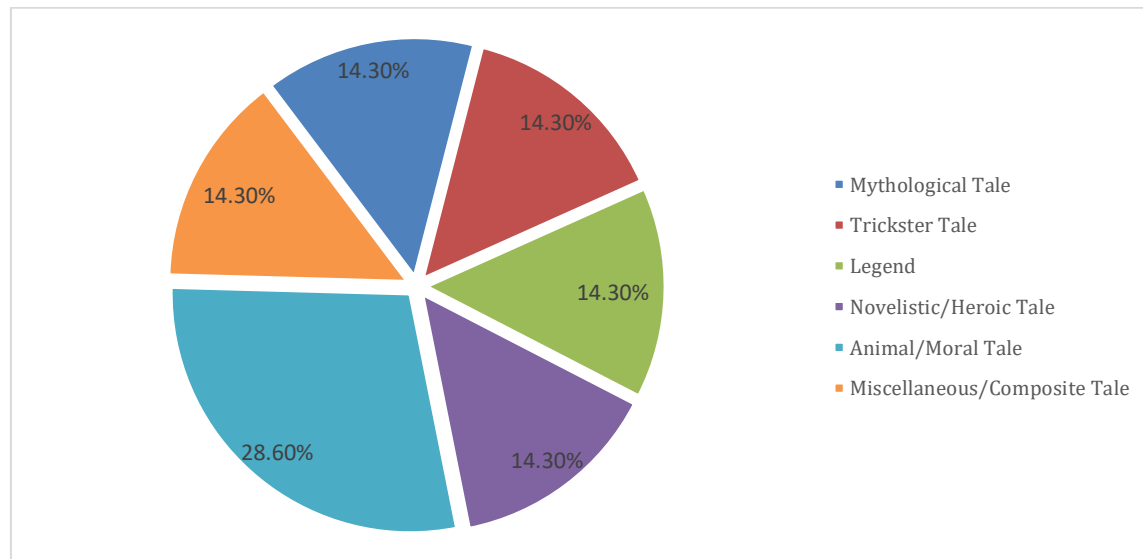


Figure 1 Distribution of Selected Eastern Visayas Folktales based on Genre

Figure 1 illustrates the proportional distribution of the seven collected folktales in terms of their assigned genre types. Each genre’s representation was computed based on the frequency of tales per category, visually summarized to complement the analytical classification presented earlier in Table 1.

As reflected in the pie chart, Animal/Moral tales account for the largest share at 28.6% (2 out of 7 tales), highlighting the prominence of anthropomorphic storytelling in the oral tradition of Borongan, Eastern Visayas. These tales often serve dual functions: moral education and cultural reflection, wherein animals act as proxies for human values such as loyalty, vengeance, compassion, and reciprocity. This supports Eugenio’s (2007) claim that animal tales in the Philippines frequently transmit ethical lessons in accessible forms for both adults and children.

The remaining genres such as Myth, Trickster, Legend, Composite, and Novelistic comprise 14.3% each of the total collection. This even spread points to a typological diversity in Borongan’s oral tradition. The presence of a mythological narrative (*Maka-andog*) suggests that cosmological themes remain relevant in contemporary storytelling, especially those linked to place origin and heroic ancestry. The inclusion of a legendary figure (*Maria Cabel*) and a composite tale (*Siling-siling ha Tabi*) indicates that local narrators frequently combine real-life geography and social memory with imaginative elements, producing hybrid forms that resist strict categorization.

Interestingly, there was a relatively even distribution among the lesser-represented genres, emphasizing that no single narrative type holds dominance in the local storytelling landscape. This points to a diverse and well-rounded oral tradition in Borongan, Eastern Visayas. Such variety may reflect both the richness of stories circulating within the community and the conscious choices made by the elders during the interviews—sharing those tales they felt were most meaningful or worth preserving. It also highlights how storytelling in this context

serves multiple purposes at once: to pass on knowledge, provide entertainment, reinforce cultural memory, and anchor local identity.

Narrative Structure of the Selected Folktales in Eastern Visayas

This section examines the internal structure of selected Borongan in the Eastern Visayas folktales using Vladimir Propp's morphological framework, originally developed from Russian wonder tales. Although Propp's model was designed for a specific narrative tradition, scholars have since applied it to diverse oral literatures across cultures (Ugwuoke, 2023; Lwin, 2009; Ben-Amos, 2020). By using this approach, the study explores how Eastern Visayas narratives align with or deviate from Proppian functions, and what these patterns reveal about local values, beliefs, and storytelling traditions.

The table below provides a cross-comparison of structural features among the folktales collected from Borongan, Eastern Visayas Region. It highlights the number of Proppian functions identified in each tale, unique functions that stand out, and the key structural deviations from Propp's sequence.

Table 2 Narrative Structures of Eastern Visayas Folktales According to Propp's Morphology

Folktale	No. of Propp Functions	Unique/Key Functions	Structural Deviations
Makaandog	11	Initial Situation, Magical Agent, Villainy	<i>Follows heroic-quest structure; Hero dies; no reward or wedding function</i>
Juan Pusong	9	Trickery, Exposure, Victory by deception	<i>Multiple trickery episodes without an overarching quest; Functions are reordered; lacks magical donor</i>
The Lost Love of Maria Cabel	10	Departure, Villainy, Rescue, Recognition	<i>Departs from the conventional Proppian structure; No return, reward, or wedding (Propp's final functions); Emotional/spiritual closure replaces literal resolution; the tale ends in remembrance, not victory.</i>
Siling-siling ha Tabi	8	Lack, Mediation, Supernatural Challenge	<i>Non-linear sequence; composite genre Cautionary structure; ends with a moral prohibition rather than resolution</i>
Crocodile in Barrio Boloso	7	Villainy, Punishment, Reward	<i>No hero journey or magical element</i>
Serpent Twin of Apoy Colita	7	Villainy, Revenge, Punishment	<i>No magical agent; lacks mediation</i>
Twin Brothers and the Dragon Slayer	13	Departure, Task, Struggle, Victory	<i>Nearly complete sequence; no magic involved; Complex linear quest; hero faces multiple stages of challenge, deceit, and recognition</i>

For reference, there are 31 narrative functions used by Propp to describe the sequence of plot event in a folktale. The functions within a tale are the structural units in Propp's theory. In his study of 100 Russian folktales, Propp identified 31 functions although the functions do not necessarily appear all in a tale. Propp, however, argued that events in the folktales must follow a fixed and logical sequence of the story. That is, certain events must come before or after others (e.g., a hero receives a task before facing a challenge).

As can be gleaned from table 2, the number of functions identified in each tale ranges from seven (7) to thirteen (13), suggesting significant differences in narrative complexity and depth. Among these collected folktales, the *Twin Brothers and the Dragon Slayer* generated a near-complete sequence of Proppian core functions (13 out of 31 functions). Its storyline progresses in a linear fashion which starts from the hero's departure, through a series of challenges and obstacles, to eventual triumph and closure. The storyline unfolds in a unified and organized manner, following a heroic pattern that aligns with the traditional structure (and that of Propp's sequential events) which is typical of classical adventure tales.

Other tales, such as *Makaandog* and *The Lost Love of Maria Cabel*, exhibited partial alignment with Propp's schema (with available 11 and 10 functions, respectively) but deviate in notable ways. While both tales present central conflicts and character roles consistent with traditional hero or legend narratives, their resolutions diverge from the usual expectations. For example, *Makaandog* follows a heroic path that ends not in triumph or reward but in the protagonist's death. This kind of ending does not fit the typical "happily ever after" structure often found in European fairy tales or Propp's morphology, where the final functions usually include victory, recognition, and reward. Similarly, *Maria Cabel* introduces familiar elements of story such as conflict, rescue, and recognition, which are part of Propp's traditional narrative functions. However, unlike typical folktales that end with tangible resolutions like marriage, reward, or a triumphant return (which are part of Propp's final functions), *Maria Cabel* ends differently. Instead, it concludes with spiritual transformation wherein *Maria Cabel* may turn into a spirit, guardian, or immortal presence.

Meanwhile, unlike traditional quest stories that build toward a single transformative resolution, *Juan Pusong's* story (with 9 functions) leaned towards a more episodic fashion. Instead of following a single, goal-oriented quest, the tale progresses through loosely linked events where cleverness takes the lead in solving problems or escaping trouble. This type of storytelling departs from the more linear and structured pattern seen in Propp's morphology, offering instead a fluid and playful narrative that leans into satire and light social critique.

The animal-focused tales, *The Crocodile in Barrio Boloso* and *The Serpent Twin of Apoy Colita*, were structurally simpler and more focused. These stories contained a limited number of 7 functions each and emphasized moral instruction over adventure or transformation on its plot. They lacked traditional donor figures or magical helpers and were driven primarily by acts of villainy and subsequent punishment or revenge. These more compressed structures serve to heighten the tale's cautionary message, allowing them to be easily remembered and transmitted.

Finally, *Siling-siling ha Tabi* demonstrated a hybrid or composite narrative form. It incorporated elements of myth, legend, and moral tale but did not follow a coherent Proppian sequence. Instead, its plot unfolded in a non-linear fashion wherein multiple narrative styles are mixed in a single story. The structure was circular rather than progressive which means that the plot didn't build up to a dramatic change or resolution, but instead it returns to a similar state or message as where it began often to repeat the central idea or reinforce a warning. It's ending was atypical from Propp's final functions because no reward or victory happened but rather concluded with providing lesson or warning, consistent with its role as a cautionary tale.

DISCUSSION

Based on the structural analysis, the Eastern Visayas folktales generally fall into two categories: those that follow the traditional sequence of narrative functions, and those that deviate from this established order. Guided by Propp's model, it is evident that Eastern Visayas' folktales exhibited both linear and non-linear narrative patterns. According to Propp, folktales unfold in a fixed sequence of functions, consistently organized in a specific order. A closer examination of the local tales reveals that while many stories adopt the conventional structure—typically composed of an introduction, central body, and resolution—there are notable deviations from this linear format.

In *The Twin Brothers and the Dragon Slayer*, for instance, functions like villainy, donor interaction, and victory occur early—contrary to their expected placement later in the tale. Even with this altered sequence, the story still retains a clear and coherent flow—from its opening, through the central tension, to its eventual conclusion. This kind of rearrangement reflects a flexible storytelling approach that keeps the listener attentive and involved.

Studies on narrative structure show that unpredictable story progressions can enhance audience focus and promote deeper emotional and mental involvement (Reagan et al., 2016; Kremm, 2024).

A unique structural feature in several Borongan folktales and which departs from Propp's function is the reappearance of the interdiction function at the end of the story. In Propp's model, interdiction—typically a warning issued by a figure of authority—occurs early, catalyzing the hero's journey when violated. However, in tales such as *Siling-siling ha Tabi* and *The Crocodile Story in Barrio Boloso*, this narrative device is echoed at the conclusion, effectively reframing the story as a cautionary tale. This is not without precedent. In *Little Red Riding Hood*, for instance, the mother's warning is repeated in the moral, reinforcing the story's ethical message. Similarly, Eastern Visayas' folktales use interdiction not just to introduce risk, but to reinforce cultural norms and behavioral expectations. This repetition affirms the tale's function as a vehicle for moral instruction, not merely entertainment. While other Philippine folktales like *Juan Tamad* or *Alamat ng Pinya* also deliver lessons, Eastern Visayas' folktales stand out for their symmetrical structure—embedding the same moral injunction at both the beginning and end of the narrative.

Another deviation from Propp's model lies in the nature of the story's resolution. In several local tales, the resolution is ambiguous or unconventional. Two key observations stand out. First, some narratives lack a clearly defined protagonist or central conflict. For example, in "Siling-siling ha Tabi," it is unclear whether Siling-siling or the general should be viewed as the hero, or whether the conflict centers on capturing the creature or lifting a curse. Second, many tales do not conclude with a "happily ever after." Characters often face tragic or unresolved endings. In "Siling-siling ha Tabi," "The Crocodile Story in Barrio Boloso," and "Maria Cabel," protagonists meet their end through death or loss rather than triumph. This contrasts with the Western narrative model, where the hero is typically rewarded, vindicated, or welcomed home. Instead, the local tales frequently adopt bittersweet, open-ended, or cautionary conclusions that highlight moral and spiritual dimensions over individual success.

Lastly, in Propp's model, many narrative functions appear in binary pairs—such as interdiction followed by violation, or struggle followed by victory. However, although Eastern Visayas' folktales sometimes adhere to a recognizable sequence, many of the stories usually skip or rearrange these expected pairs, leaving some conflicts unresolved or only symbolically addressed which allow for more nuanced or bittersweet endings. This open-endedness reflects a storytelling tradition more concerned with conveying moral, spiritual, or emotional truths than with achieving narrative closure.

The deviations from Propp's linear morphology as presented above suggest more than just structural differences. It also reflects localized narrative strategies shaped by the cultural beliefs and storytelling practices in the Visayas Region. As Ben-Amos (2020) explains, folk narratives do not function solely as plot-driven texts but as symbolic systems that encode a community's worldview. The presence of non-linear sequences, disrupted function orders, and open-ended closures in the Eastern Visayas folktales aligns with the idea that oral traditions are fluid and responsive to cultural values. Rather than following a fixed heroic pattern, these stories emphasize moral ambiguity, collective memory, and emotional or spiritual consequences. Such flexibility illustrates what Dundes (1965) referred to as "functional substitutions," wherein certain narrative elements are restructured to better reflect the social and ethical concerns of the community.

CONCLUSION

The folktales collected in Eastern Visayas though limited in number, reveal a vibrant and diverse storytelling tradition. The presence of multiple classifications suggests the richness of the local's oral heritage. It is embedded in a well-rooted narrative culture that continues to transmit local values, beliefs, and cultural memories across generations.

Despite being localized in origin, the Eastern Visayan folktales show thematic and structural parallels with stories from other Philippine regions and even international traditions. This parallelism is an indication of the universality of certain archetypes and themes. It suggests that folktales, while they are shaped by local experience, also tap into shared human narratives that transcend geographic and cultural boundaries.

Structurally, Eastern Visayan folktales display both alignment with and departure from classical narrative models. Several of the stories follow a basic sequence familiar in folk literature: an introduction presenting the characters and setting, a central conflict or climax, and a resolution that offers closure or reflection. But upon reflecting other local tales, through the lens of Propp's 31 narrative functions, it becomes apparent that these tales only partially conform to his sequential model. The limited presence of certain narratemes indicates a preference for simpler, more streamlined storytelling structures, adapted to the community's cultural and mnemonic needs. The findings above further reinforce in the study of Song (2017) which highlight that schematic and patterns of folktales differ across cultures, reflecting the cultural orientation of their respective audiences.

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