

## **CHAPTER II**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT OF THE STUDY**

#### **II.1 General Description of the Grimms' Folktales**

##### **II.1.1 The Definition of Folktales**

Once, people need to explain the world to their primitive minds, so they created stories. It was storytellers' job to tell those same tales repeatedly. Their children told them, their children's children until the stories were as 'smooth and published as the roundest stories in the stream' (Huck, 1987:251). So, human created their folktales, legends, epics, myths, etc.

In many countries, we all aware that traditional tales are handed down from one generation to the next generation by word of mouth. It is known as oral tradition. There is no original author; he or she could not be identified. The Grimms' folktales are originally told through the oral tradition. From 1800s, they started to write down Germany tales.

Questions often arise about the originality of the text, which of the available print versions of tale is the authentic one. A tale is created everytime it is told and therefore every telling is correct in its own way. A great deal of variation is also acceptable in print versions. Readers of a story identified as recorded and

published by Grimms, for instance, have a right to find this tale and afterward published without major additions, omissions or distortions (Huck, 1987:254).

Bascom defined folktales as “Prose narratives which are regarded as fiction. They are considered as dogma or history, they may or may not have happened, and they are not taken seriously” (in Norton, 1983:197). It means that people have no consideration whether the stories told by their ancient from time to time are true.

Another similar definition on folktales was proposed by Huck, “All forms of narrative, written or oral, which have come to be handed down through the years” (Huck, 1987:254). Under such heading beside folktales are epics, ballads, legends, and folksongs as well as myth and fables.

We have no one word that encompasses all of the stories that are born of the oral tradition. They are most often grouped under the heading of folklore, folk literature or mythology. Generally, folktales, fairy tales and folklore are simple stories about talking beasts, woodcutters, and princesses who reveal human behaviour and beliefs while playing out their roles in a world of wonder and magic (Huck, 1987:256)

Folktales are also of special interest to scholars of narrative theory. Because of the way the tales are honed by many generations of telling, only the most important elements of the story survive. Close study of the patterns of action and character relationships show how language shapes a form we recognize as a story.

Researchers have used simplified folktales structures to develop models of children's story comprehension. Folktales seem to follow certain structural rules (Huck, 1987:252)

## **II.1.2 The Grimms' Folktales**

### **II.1.2.1 THE MOUSE, THE BIRD AND THE SAUSAGE**

Once upon a time a mouse and a bird and a sausage lived and kept house together in perfect peace among themselves, and in great prosperity. It was the bird's business to fly to the forest every day and bring back wood. The mouse had to draw the water, make the fire, and set the table. And the sausage had to do the cooking. Nobody is content in this world much will have more<sup>5</sup>. One day the bird met another bird on the way, and told him of his excellent condition in life. But the other bird called him a poor simpleton to do so much work while the two others led easy lives at home.

When the mouse had made up her fire and drawn water, she went to rest in her little room until it was time to lay the cloth. The sausage stayed by the saucepans, looked to it that the victuals were well cooked, and just before dinnertime he stirred the broth or the stew three or four times well around himself, so as to enrich and season and flavor it. Then the bird used to come home and lay down his load, and they sat down at table; and after a good meal they would go to bed and sleep their fill till the next morning<sup>10</sup>. It really was a most satisfactory life.

But the bird came to the resolution next day never again to fetch wood. He has, he said, been their slave long enough. Now they must change about and make a new arrangement. So in spite of all the mouse and the sausage could say, the bird was determined to have his own way. So they drew lots to settle it, and as the lot fell, the sausage was to fetch wood, the mouse was to cook, and the bird was to draw water and make the fire<sup>15</sup>.

Now see what happened. The sausage went away after wood, the bird made up the fire, and the mouse put on the pot, and they waited until the sausage should come home, bringing the wood for the next day. But the sausage was absent so long that they thought something must have happened to him, and the bird went part of the way to see if he could see anything of him. Not far off he met a dog in the road, who, looking upon the sausage as lawful prey, had picked him up and made an end of him. The bird then lodged a complaint against

the dog, but it was all no good, as the dog swore that he deserved to lose his life<sup>20</sup>.

The bird then very sadly took up the wood and carried it home himself, and related to the mouse all he had seen and heard. They were both very troubled, but determined to look on the bright side of things and still to remain together. And so the bird laid the cloth, and the mouse prepared the food and finally got into the pot, as the sausage used to do, to stir and flavor the broth, but then she had to part with fur and skin and finally with life!

And when the bird came to dish up the dinner, there was no cook to be seen. And he turned over the heap of wood, and looked and looked, but the cook never appeared again<sup>25</sup>. By accident the wood caught fire, and the bird hastened to fetch water to put it out, but he let fall the bucket in the well and himself after it, and as he could not get out again he was drowned.

### II.1.2.2 THE ELVES AND THE SHOEMAKER

There was once a shoemaker who through no fault of his own had become so poor that at last he had only leather enough left for one pair of shoes. At evening he cut out the shoes which he intended to begin upon the next morning, and since he had a good conscience, he lay down quietly, said his prayers, and fell asleep.

In the morning, when he had said his prayers and was preparing to sit down to work, he found the pair of shoes standing finished on his table. He was amazed and could not understand it in the least.

He took the shoes in his hand to examine them more closely<sup>5</sup>. They are so neatly sewn that not a stitch was out of place, and were as good as the work of a master hand.

Soon afterwards a purchaser came in and, as he as much pleased with the shoes, he paid more than the ordinary price for them, so that the shoemaker was able to buy leather for two pairs of shoes with the money.

He cut them out in the evening, and the next day with fresh courage was about to go to work. But he had no need to, for when he got up the shoes were finished, and buyers were not lacking<sup>10</sup>. These gave him so much money that he as able to buy leather for four pairs of shoes.

Early next morning he found the four pairs finished, and so it went on. What he cut out at evening was finished in the morning, so that he was soon again in comfortable circumstances and became a well-to-do man.

Now it happened one evening not long before Christmas, when he had cut out some shoes as usual, that he said to his wife, "How would it be if we were to sit up tonight to see who it is that lends us such a helping hand?"

The wife agreed and lighted a candle, and they hid themselves in the corner of the room behind the clothes which were hanging there<sup>15</sup>.

At midnight came two little naked men who sat down at the shoemaker's table, took up the cutout work, and began with their tiny fingers to stitch, sew, and hammer so neatly and quickly that the shoemaker could not believe his eyes. They did not stop till everything was quite finished. Then they ran swiftly away.

The next day the wife said, "The little men have made us rich, and we ought to show our gratitude. They were running about with nothing on, and must freeze with cold<sup>20</sup>. Now I will make them little shirts, coats, waistcoats, and hose, and will even knit them a pair of shoes."

The husband agreed. And at evening, when they had everything ready, they laid out the presents on the table and hid themselves to see how the little men would behave.

At midnight they came skipping in and were about to set to work. But instead of the leather ready cut out, they found the charming little clothes<sup>25</sup>.

At first they were surprised, then excessively delighted. With the greatest speed they put on and smoothed down the pretty clothes, singing:

"Now we're boys so fine and neat,  
Why cobble more for others' feet?"

Then they hopped and danced about, and leapt over chairs and tables and out the door. Henceforward they came back no more, but the shoemaker fared well as long as he lived, and had good luck in all his undertakings.

### II.1.2.3. THE QUEEN BEE

Two king's sons once started to seek adventures, and they fell into a wild, reckless way of living and gave up all thoughts of going home again. Their third and youngest brother, who was called Witling, had remained behind, and now he started off to seek them. When at last he found them, they jeered at his simplicity in thinking that he could make his way in the world, when they who were so much cleverer were unsuccessful.

But they all three went on together until they came to an anthill. This the two elder brothers wished to stir up, to see the little ants hurrying about in their fright and carrying off their eggs<sup>5</sup>.

But Witling said, "Leave the little creatures. I will not suffer them to be disturbed."

And they went on farther until they came to a lake where a number of ducks were swimming about. The two elder brothers wanted to catch a couple and cook them, but Witling again would not allow it.

He said, "Leave the creatures alone<sup>10</sup>. I will not suffer them to be killed."

And then they came to a bees' nest in a tree, and there was so much honey in it that it overflowed and ran down the trunk. The two elder brothers then wanted to make a fire beneath the tree, that the bees might be stifled by the smoke and they could get at the honey.

But Witling prevented them, saying, "Leave the little creatures alone. I will not suffer them to be stifled."<sup>15</sup>

At last the three brothers came to a castle where there were many horses standing in the stables, all of stone. The brothers went through all the rooms until they came to a door at the end, secured with three locks, and in the middle of the door was a small opening through which they could look into the room. There they saw a little gray-haired man sitting at a table.

They called out to him once, twice, and he did not hear, but at the third time he got up, undid the locks, and came out. Without speaking a word he led them to a table loaded with all sorts of good things, and when they had eaten and drunk he showed to each his bedchamber<sup>20</sup>.

The next morning the little gray man came to the eldest brother and, beckoning him, brought him to a table of stone in which were written three things, directing by what means the castle could be delivered from its enchantment. The first thing was that in the wood under the moss lay the pearls belonging to the Princess - a thousand in number. And they were to be sought for and collected; and if he who should undertake the task had not finished it by sunset, if but one pearl were missing, he must be turned to stone.

So the eldest brother went out and searched all day, but at the end of it he had found only one hundred. And just as it was said, so it came to pass, and he was turned into stone<sup>25</sup>.

The second brother undertook the adventure next day, but it fared no better with him than with the first: he found two hundred pearls and was turned into stone.

And so at last it was Witling's turn, and he began to search in the moss. But it was a very tedious business to find the pearls and he grew so out of heart that he sat down on a stone and began to weep. As he was sitting thus, up came the ant king with five thousand ants whose lives had been saved through Witling's pity, and it was not very long before the little insects had collected all the pearls and put them in a heap.

Now the second thing ordered by the table of stone was to get the key of the Princess' sleeping chamber out of the lake<sup>30</sup>. And when Witling came

to the lake, the ducks whose lives he had saved came swimming, and they dived down and brought up the key from the bottom.

The third thing that had to be done was the most difficult, and that was to choose out the youngest and loveliest of the three princesses as they lay sleeping. All bore a perfect resemblance each to the other, and differed only in this: that before they went to sleep each one had eaten a different sweetmeat – the eldest a piece of sugar, the second a little syrup, and the third a spoonful of honey. Now the queen bee of those bees that Witling had protected from the fire came at this moment and, trying the lips of all three, settled on those of the one who had eaten honey, and so it was that the King's son knew which to choose. Then the spell was broken<sup>35</sup>. Everyone awoke from stony sleep and took his right form again.

And Witling married the youngest and loveliest princess and became king after her father's death. But his two brothers had to put up with the two other sisters.

#### II.1.2.4 THE STRAW, THE COAL AND THE BEAN

Once there was a poor old woman who lived in a village. She had collected a bundle of beans and was going to cook them. So she prepared a fire on her hearth, and to make it burn up quickly she lighted it with a handful of straw. When she threw the beans into the pots, one escape her unnoticed and slipped onto the floor, where it lay by a straw. Soon afterwards a glowing coal jumped out of the fire and joined the others<sup>5</sup>.

Then the straw began and said, "Little friends, how did you come here?"

The coal answered, "I have happily escaped the fire, and if I had not done so by force of will, my death would certainly have been a most cruel one. I should have been burnt to a cinder."

The bean said, "I also have escaped so far with a whole skin. But if the old woman had put me into the pot, I should have been pitilessly boiled down to broth like my comrades<sup>10</sup>."

"Would a better fate have befallen me, then?" asked the straw. "The old woman packed all my brothers into the fire and smoke. Sixty of them were all done for at once. Fortunately I slipped through her fingers."

"What are we to do now, though?" asked the coal<sup>15</sup>.

"My opinion is," said the bean, "that, as we have escaped death, we must all keep together like good comrades. And so that we may run no further risks, we had better quit the country."

This proposal pleased both the others, and they set out together. Before long they came to a little stream where there was neither path nor bridge, and they did not know how to get over.

The straw at last had an idea and said, "I will throw myself over and then you can walk across upon me like a bridge<sup>20</sup>."

So the straw stretched himself across from one side to the other, and the coal, which was of a fiery nature, tripped gaily over the newly built bridge. But when it got to the middle and heard the water rushing below, it was frightened and remained speechless, not daring to go any farther. The straw, beginning to burn, broke in two and fell into the stream. The coal, falling with it, fizzled out in the water. The bean, who had cautiously remained on the bank, could not help laughing over the whole business, and having begun could not stop, but laughed till she split her sides<sup>25</sup>. Now all would have been up with her had not, fortunately, a wandering tailor been taking a rest by the stream. As he had a sympathetic heart, he brought out a needle and thread and stitched her up again, but as he used black thread all beans have a black seam to this day.

## II.2 The Autobiography of the Grimm Brothers

In the early 1800s, in Germany, The Grimm Brothers were known for their work in the folktales. The Grimms are of two German scholars. They are Jakob Grimm and Wilhem Grimm. Starting from the early 1800s, they became interested in collecting Germany folktales (Norton 1983). Such folktales reflected the ancient tradition of Germany. This research on the subject of compiling Germany folktales was conducted with listening to the tales told by many storytellers from throughout Germany.

Scholars have not found agreement in the accurate reproduction of the language in their tales. Hurrman described the language as simple; even the tales were written in the most simple, original form, that more or less as they had heard



them. He added, the tales were retelling in a new form concerning the children (Norton, 1983). He relied on the fact that Jakob was considered more scholarly than his brother, Wilhelm, who was more of a poet. Therefore, their tales would be the combination of their educational background. One covered the other and resulted in the wonderful stories we have been reading up to nowadays.

In 1812, they published their first volume of folktales. It contained 85 tales, including 'Cinderella', 'Hansel and Gretel', etc. this first Household Stories was not intended for children. Instead, the scholars studied the language and grammar of such traditional tales (Huck, 1987:253).

The next edition was published in 1815 and this second edition was widely known throughout the world of the Germany children. It was far more popular than the first one. It was also admitted by the scholarly affair (Norton, 1983).

Since it was only popular in German, there was an attempt to translate their work into English. It was published in 1823 and titled German Popular Stories. Eversince that very moment, the Grimes' tales were famous all over the world. And nowadays there are many versions of their translated stories. One of them is used in this study.

# ***CHAPTER III***

## ***PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS***

