



Logical Function in Selected English Nursery Tales: Systemic Functional Perspective

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Abstract. *This study investigated the logical function of clause complexes in two selected English nursery tales, Jack the Giant Killer and Jack and the Beanstalk, using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework. The research focuses on the realization of clause interdependency through the taxis system (parataxis, hypotaxis, and taxis combination) and logico-semantic relations (elaboration, extension, enhancement, idea and locution). The method employed is qualitative content analysis based on Krippendorff involving processes such as unitizing, sampling, coding, reducing, interpreting, and narrating. From 1,048 clauses analyzed, 341 were identified as clause complexes. The findings show that enhancement is the most dominant logico-semantic relation (164 cases), followed by extension (123 cases), elaboration (100 cases), locution (57 cases), and idea (22 cases). The findings show that parataxis is the most dominant taxis in selected English nursery tales. While hypotaxis relations mostly realized in enhancement, while extension appeared dominantly in parataxis. These results reveal that although nursery tales are intended for children, they often employ complex grammatical structure, therefore, balancing narrative engagement and linguistic accessibility is crucial to support children's language development and reading comprehension.*

Keywords: *Clause Complex; Logico-Semantic Relation; Nursery Tales; Taxis; Taxis System.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Nursery tales are one of the various types of children's literature in the form of stories, and general nursery tales contained elements of fantasy that are based on children's imagination and even the traditions and folk of the local community that are told in them. Initially, nursery tales were recognized and conveyed by the public only verbally, then as time progressed, these nursery tales were adopted in written form or children's story books and began to be introduced in schools. According to Izzati (2020), regarding the features of language appropriate for children's stories, the narrative presented is better if it is fitted to the child's everyday life, has an exciting storyline, has components of imaginative development, and employs language that children can understand.

According to Youvan (2024), certain nursery stories are also included in folklore since they have aspects that depict the people in each location. This reality should be considered by educators in order for them to properly assist youngsters in their search for ultimate truth and knowledge while also realizing their genuine nature via tradition.

Several children's fairy tales that have been popular with children and the British public for ages may be found in Edwin Sidney Hartland's collection English Fairy and Other Folk Tales. "Jack the Giant Killer" and the children's book "Jack and the Beanstalk" are the two chosen tales that will be discussed in this study. Because the main character in both stories is named "Jack," they have a lengthy history of being connected. However, the children's fairy

tale starring Jack and the Giant had elements of social customs in addition to the perceived political instability.

Clause analysis is one of the best methods for examining a novel or tale from a systematic functional standpoint in order to determine its logical meaning and the effect it has on young readers. So It is a connection that is evident from clause representation, because the clauses have a logical link or meaning and are experienced, depend on the social networks and context are taken into account to ascertain the meaning. According to Darong (2021), The three metafunctions, textual, interpersonal, and ideational, are how Systemic Functional Linguistics might aid students in comprehending texts. By elucidating language in real-world contexts and the relationship between text and context in social interactions, this analytical technique reveals thematic information and investigates meaning.

In systemic functional linguistics, clauses are divided into two types, there are simplex and complex clauses. Based on the relationship between clauses, the complex clauses are divided into two types: the first is taxis, and the second one is logico-semantic relation. According to Noviardari (2020), logico-semantic relation refers to the way how meaning is built between existing clauses. Riandini (2023) stated that besides logico-semantic, there are also taxis that refer to the dependency relationship between clauses.

The relationships in taxis clauses are dependency and interdependency, any two or more clauses that can stand alone but are connected and classified as parataxis, while hypotaxis is the opposite. Some clauses that cannot stand alone but are interconnected are hypotaxis clauses. Parataxis has a symbol in the form of numbers (1,2,3...), while hypotaxis has symbols from the Greek letter, such as (Alpha: α , Beta: β , Gamma: γ , Delta: δ , Epsilon: ϵ). Furthermore, the relationship contained in logico-semantic relation clauses is divided into two types, namely expansion and projection, which then projection is divided into three, namely elaboration marked with =, extension marked with +, and enhancement marked with X. There are also two types of projection, namely locution marked with ("), and Idea marked with ('). Here is the examples of logical function in a clauses :

Clause complex: Isabella cooks in the kitchen **and** she adds carrots to the soup

Primary Clause : 1 Isabella cooks in the kitchen

Secondary Clause : +2 She adds carrots to the soup

Even though simple clause structures are a common feature of nursery tales, it is vital to remember that many of them still primarily employ complex clauses rather than simplex clauses. The findings of this study will reveal the kinds of complex clauses that are included in the chosen stories, leading to speculation on the stories' suitability for young readers. Because

parataxis has a structure similar to a simplex clause that may stand alone, nursery tales with more parataxis clauses are more suited for young readers than others.

Problem Formulation

- 1) What are the types of Clauses found in English nursery tales?
- 2) How is the types the taxis found in English nursery tales?
- 3) How is the Logico-Semantic relation realized in English nursery tales?

Relevant Research

A study conducted by Erisyerico (2025), entitled “Exploring Clause Complexity: A Comprehensive Analysis of a Student’s Narrative Text on Central Kalimantan Folklore.” Examined the used of clause complexes in student’s narrative texts on central Kalimantan folklore by using the framework of systemic functional linguistics, focusing on the taxis and logico-semantic relations analysis. Although the study can contribute a more structured view of this study, the similarities in theory and aspects analyzed, there are several things that differentiate it from this study. The study only analyzed a single learning text and there was no in-depth understanding that focused on its cultural elements or phenomenon. Because the result from the findings for improving teaching strategies, developing linguistic teaching methods, and providing new perspective for linguistics study in the future.

In 2025, Muhammed published a study entitled “An Analysis of Logico-Semantic Relation (Enhancement) of Clause Combination Patterns in Robert Mugabe’s Death Report in The Sun Online Newspaper.” He analyzed how enhancement as one of the type of logico-semantic relations type. The study limited on the enhancement analysis of clause combination patterns in selected online news story, to see how is the enhancement can be realize in the data of the online newspaper. So theoretically that study contribute to provide the insights focused on the analysis of hypotaxis enhancement analysis in clause complexes.

“Logical Meaning in Islamic Prophet Story for Children” by Ulfida (2024) analyzed the logical meaning of clause complexes in islamic prophet story book for children entitled *Best Love Prophet Muhammad Stories*. The study investigates the interdependency relation (Taxis) and the logico semantic relations (Expansion and Projrction). The findings show that clause complexes (58.22%) are more dominant than the clause simplexes (41.78%), that shows the high level of complexity in the sentence structure of the story book. The research contributes in it is detailed framework of clause complex analysis using systemic functional linguistics frameworks, which provides a strong foundation. Thus, that study becomes a conceptual reference for analyzing how meaning and structre are built through clauses in selected English nursery tales.

A study by Fasya (2023), with the title “How Clause Relationships in Narrative Relieve Children from the Covid-19 Crisis” explores of how is the clauses relationship in narrative relieve children from the Covid-19 crisis. The data of that study is the *Hans Christian Andersen’s Tale The Little Match Girl*. However, the scope of the study limited to single literary work and emphasizes the psychological impact on children during the crises rather than the grammatical aspects in the literary data.

Research by by Pasaribu (2020) entitled “ The contributions of systemic functional linguistics to literary text analysis” examined how is the systemic functional linguistics can be used to analyzed various literary texts. By analyzing 20 scientific articles on literary texts using systemic functional linguistic theory, the study highlights how is the metafunctions are employed to understand the character roles, genre, emotion, social relation and thematic structure within literary narratives. The study contributed in its broad and foundation application of the systemic functional linguistics theory for exploring metafunctions in literature but the study is limited to the experiential function.

The researcher aims to identify the types of clauses found in English nursery tales, to explain the types of taxis found in English nursery tales, and explain the logico-semantic relation that used in the two selected nursery tales. These points are analyzed using systemic functional linguistics, which helps explain how meaning is built between clauses in narrative texts. By focusing just on taxis and logico-semantic relations, the study highlights how even children’s stories may use complex structure to shapes meaning. The findings contribute to linguistic research by enhancing the understanding of language use in children’s literature. Additionally, the study may inspire writers and future research on language in other children’s literature forms.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Halliday (2014), language offers a theory of human experience, and specific lexicogrammatical resources in each language are devoted to that role that is carried out in the field. Therefore, linguistics provides all language units (clauses, sentences, etc.) with an organic arrangement of functions. With this knowledge, analyzing a text requires concentrating on two things: first, the phrase or clause, and then the analysis to get results that can support the meaning of the text. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), as developed by Halliday, provides a framework for analyzing clause structures, helping this study draw significant conclusions on various contemporary issues. Systemic functional linguistics categorizes clauses into simplex and complex types, with complex clauses further distinguished

by logical connections (taxis: parataxis and hypotaxis) and logico- semantic relations (expansion and projection). These structures are essential for understanding meaning within narratives.

According to Halliday (1985), clauses and sentences are interchangeable in SFL since they occupy the same place in grammar. Sinar (2020) stated that meaning in systemic functional linguistic theory is constructed in three different levels covered in metafunctions (types of language function are ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Ideational is separated into two types are experiential/transitivity and logical, which examines complex clauses.

Wiratno (1993) also emphasized that the systemic functional linguistics view of each element of language can only be described concerning the function of that element in the overall linguistic system. Therefore, linguistics provides all language units (clauses, sentences, etc.) with an organic arrangement of functions. With this knowledge, analyzing a text requires concentrating on two things: first, the phrase or clause, and then the analysis to get results that can support the meaning of the text. The interdependent relationship between clauses, which ultimately forms a complex clause, is called taxis. From this, taxis are also divided into two types, namely Parataxis and hypotaxis. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) stated that the interdependency between clauses is bound by the equal status (Parataxis) and also by the unequal status (hypotaxis).

The table below shows the two levels of interdependence according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014):

Table 1. Primary and Secondary Clause.

	Primary Clause	Secondary Clause
Parataxis	1 (initiating)	2 (continuing)
Hypotaxis	α (dominant)	β (dependent/subordinating)

Logical relations in complex clauses in SFL studies are called logico-semantic relations. The logico-semantic relation is also divided into two types according to the role of the relationship that exists between the main clause and the second clause. Which is (1) expansion that have three types of relationships: Elaboration (=), Estension (+) and Enhancement (X), and (2) projection that consist of two main clause are 'Idea' and "Locution". Logical function concern of how clauses are connected to express the logical relations such as cause and effect, condition , etc. The life experience content of children's literature can be conveyed through multiple channels, all of which need to be chosen as a variety of character

value delivery. Several children's fairy tales that have been popular with children and the British public for ages may be found in Edwin Sidney Hartland's collection.

3. METHOD

Research Approach

This research used a qualitative approach to analyze the clauses taken from *English Fairy and Other Folktales Book* compiled by Edwin Sidney Hartland which consisted of 6 nursery tales titles. The data were limited to 2 selected nursery tales in the form of clause complexes. The number of clauses was 1.048 clauses with 341 clause complex. Besides that, the data analysis in this study was conducted with systemic functional linguistics framework by Halliday (2014). Which defined the relationships between clauses in clause complexes through taxis and logico-semantic relations.

Data Collection Technique

This study collected the data in form of literature because the data to be explained came from book or text document. Data collection was carried out using a sampling technique that selected representative clauses from the entire story text. This study chose clauses as the most suitable technique to describe the content and structure of the narrative conceptually. The researcher first read the contents of the story, understood the form of clauses in the story “Jack the Giant Killer” and “Jack and the Beanstalk”. Then proceeded to the analysis process. From the data collected, this study has 676 clauses in the story “Jack the Giant Killer” and there are 372 clauses in the story “Jack and the Beanstalk”. Then, the complexes clause were further explained in the results and discussion section.

Data Source

The data of this study were the clause complexes sourced from selected *English nursery tales in the English Fairy and Other Folktales Book* compiled by Edwin Sidney Hartland. The data used were selected using a sampling technique to determine the clause complexes. In the main analysis of this study, the unitizing process was carried out by identifying the form of clause in selected English nursery tales entitled “Jack the Giant Killer” and “Jack and the Beanstalk”. Each clause was viewed as an independent and dependent clause, so the information analyzed came from the collection of clauses to reveal the relationship between the clauses. Thus, these clause complexes became the main data source that was processed to answer the research questions (RQ) or it called by research problem that related to the realization of logical functions in the stories.

Data Analysis Technique

After the data collection was completed, the data was analyzed using content analysis technique by Krippendorff (2018). The analysis process included six steps, unitizing (Separating texts into clause), sampling (Selecting suitable clauses for analysis), recording and coding (selected clauses were recorded in the table, then each clause was coded), reducing data (summarized the data to make it easier to analyze), abducting inference (Interpreted more deeply), the final process was narrating (writing the findings clearly).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of Taxis Relationships

Taxis relationship describes how is the interdependence relationship is realized in clause complexes in selected English nursery tales. Taxis consist of two main types, one of them is parataxis which connected the clauses by equal position with coordinating conjunction between the primary clause and the secondary clause such as “But, then, and, or”. Besides that, the hypotaxis which connected the main clauses and subordinate clauses with subordinating conjunction such as “While, Who, When, If, Because, and Whereover”.

The research found 162 data contained in parataxis clause and 116 data contained in hypotaxis clause. Moreover, there were 63 clause complexes that combined the types of parataxis and hypotaxis, So the total number of taxis data are 341 clause complexes.

Parataxis

Table 2. Type of Parataxis.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause
He lived in a cave in the midst of the Mount,	and would not suffer anyone else to live near him.
1	2

Hypotaxis

Table 3. Type of Hypotaxis.

Dominant Clause	Subordinate Clause
When the magistrates heard of this,	they made a declaration.
β	α

The Taxis Combination Type

Table 4. The Taxis Combination Type.

First Clause	Second Clause	Third Clause	Fourth Clause
While he was enjoying his repose,	the Giant coming for water	there discovered him,	and knew him to be the far-famed Jack, by the lines written on the belt.
β	α	γ	4
Then he came to a window barred with iron,	through which he looked	and beheld a vast of miserable captives,	-
1	β	3	

Types of Logico-Semantic Relations

Expansion

Expansion can be divided into three types: elaboration, extension, and enhancement. The function of expansion is to map how a clause is logically connected by paying attention to words in the clause that expand the meaning, add meaning, and re-explain the meaning contained in the main clause.

Elaboration (=)

1) *Parataxis Elaboration*

Table 5. Parataxis Elaboration.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Logico-Semantic Relations
He lived in a cave in the midst of the Mount,	and would not suffer anyone else to live near him.	2 = Elaboration

2) *Hypotaxis Elaboration*

Table 6. Hypotaxis Elaboration.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Logico-Semantic Relations
He lived in a cave in the midst of the Mount,	and would not suffer anyone else to live near him.	β = Elaboration

Extension (+)

1) *Parataxis Extension*

Table 7. Parataxis Extension.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Logico-Semantic Relations
So he furnished himself with a horn, shovel, and pickaxe,	and went over to the Mount in the beginning of a dark winter's evening	2 + Extension

2) *Hypotaxis Elaboration***Table 8.** Hypotaxis Extension.

Dominant Clause	Subordinate Clause	Logico-Semantic Relations
this monster lived in a den under yonder mountain,	with a brother inore fierce and fiery than himself.	β + Extension

Enhancement (X)1) *Parataxis Enhancement***Table 10.** Parataxis Enhancement.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Logico-Semantic Relations
Then strewing a little mould upon it,	it appeared like plain ground.	1 X Enhancement

2) *Hypotaxis Enhancement***Table 11.** Hypotaxis Enhancement.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Logico-Semantic Relations
Oh faith, you are gotten now into Lob's Pound,	where I will surely plague you for your threatening words:	X Enhancement

Projection**Idea**1) *Parataxis 'Idea***Table 12.** Parataxis 'Idea.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Projection
The next morning Jack laughing in his sleeve,	gave him hearty thanks for his night's lodging.	2 'Idea

2) *Hypotaxis 'Idea***Table 13.** Hypotaxis 'Idea.

Dominant Clause	Subordinate Clause	Projection
At the dead time of the night in came the welsh Giant,	who struck several heavy blows on the bed with his club, thinking he had broken every bone in Jack's skin.	γ ' Idea

Locution1) *Parataxis Locution***Table 14.** Parataxis Locution.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Projection
"Then let me undertake it."	Quoth Jack,	2 "Locution

2) *Hypotaxis Locution*

Table 15. Hypotaxis Locution.

Dominant Clause	Subordinate Clause	Projection
His terror was not yet begun	for on entering the castle, he saw the ground strewed with human bones, the giant telling him his own would ere long increase them.	γ " Locution

Combination Types of Expansion and Projection

1) *Parataxis Expansion Combination*

Table 16. Parataxis Expansion Combination.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Relations
Satisfaction I will have,	and this it shall be, I will take you whole and broil you for breakfast,"	2 = Elaboration 4 + Extension

2) *Hypotaxis Expansion Combination*

Table 17. Hypotaxis Expansion Combination.

Dominant Clause	Subordinate Clause	Relations
which he had no sooner uttered,	than tumbling into the pit, he made the very foundations of the Mount to shake.	α = Elaboration β X Enhancement

3) *Parataxis Projection Combination*

Table 18. Hypotaxis Expansion Combination.

Primary Clause	Secondary Clause	Relations
"How have you rested?"	"did you not feel anything in the night?" quoit the Giant;	2 'Idea 3 "Locution

4) *Hypotaxis Projection Combination*

Table 19. Hypotaxis Projection Combination.

Dominant Clause	Subordinate Clause	Relations
Jack had not ridden more than a mile and a half,	when the cave mentioned by the knight appeared to view, near the entrance of which he beheld the Giant sitting upon a block of timber, with a knotted iron club by his side, waiting, as he supposed , for his brother's return with his barbarous prey.	β X Enhancement " Locution γ = Elaboration ϵ ' Idea

The Realization of Taxis and Logico-Semantic Relations

The Realization of Taxis

Table 20. Type of Taxis Retionship.

Type of Taxis	Total of Clause
Parataxis	162
Hypotaxis	116
Taxis Combination	63
Total	341

The Realization of Logico-Semantic Relations

Table 21. The Number of Logico-Semantic Relations.

Logico-Semantic Relaions	Elaboration	Extension	Enhancement	Idea	Locution
Parataxis	11	111	42	14	41
Hypotaxis	59	6	91	8	10
Taxis Combination	30	6	31	0	6
Total	100	123	164	22	57

Discussion

Based on the data analysis, it can be conclude that this study shows that the most dominant type of logico-semantic relationship in selected English nursery tales is Enhancement (164), followed by Extension (123), amd Elaboration (100). The Enhancement relationship is mainly realized in the form of hypotaxis, indicating that many clauses in folk tales are used to convey time, cause-effect, conditions, and manner in a subordinate manner. This aligns with the narrative nature of the fairy tale genre, which requires a coherent timeline and detailed explanations of character's actions and settings. Additionally, the Locution (57) and Idea (22) relations are also quite prominent, reflecting the important role of dialogue and character's thoughts in conveying moral values or emotions within the story.

The results of two previous studies with similar discussions differ from the results in this study. The study by Erisyerico and Luardini (2025) shows that narrative texts written by students use more parataxis or parallel relationship between clauses, accounting for 77%. The most common types of relationships were extension, enhancement and elaboration were more prevalent in the form of hypotaxis or hierarchical relationships. This indicates that the fairy tale texts in this study have more complex and diverse sentence structures compared to student texts, which tend to be simpler for easier readability.

Meanwhile, research by Muhammed (2025), which analyzed the news of Robert Mugabe's death in The Sun Online Newspaper, also showed different results. The study found

that hypotactic enhancement was very dominant in news texts. Clauses in new texts were often connected with words such as “because”, “when”, and “while” to explain cause and effect of events clearly. Although both are dominant in enhancement is used to clarify the story and atmosphere, including imaginative elements.

In conclusion, these differences indicate that text type or genre significantly influences how clauses are combined. Nursery tales tend to use a richer and more complex clauses structures because the story requires plot, emotion, and dialogues.

5. CONCLUSUION

The nursery tales should use simple language that is easy for children to understand. However, the selected English nursery tales analyzed in this research are found to be dominated by clause complexes, but it is still appropriate for children because the selected nursery in this study are dominated by parataxis where each clause can stand alone. So that the structure in each parataxis clause is classified as a simple structure. A total of 341 clause complexes groups were identified, indicating the use of various types of clause structures within the texts.

- 1) In the taxis system, clause relations are divided into parataxis, hypotaxis and a taxis combination. Based on the data, parataxis occurred in 162 clause complexes, with 116 hypotaxis clauses, and 63 clauses of taxis combination. This shows that while equal (pparataxis) structures are more commonly used, there is still a significant presence of subordinate clauses, reflecting structural complexity in the texts.
- 2) In the logico-semantic system, both parataxis and hypotaxis are used to form different kinds of semantic relationship. The most dominant type found is enhancement, with a total of 164 clause complexes (91 in hypotaxis, 42 in parataxis, and 31 in combination). This is followed by extension with 123 clauses complex (mostly in parataxis) and 100 elaboration clause complexes (mostly in hypotaxis). Meanwhile, locution appeared in 57 cases and idea in 22 cases. This suggests that nursery tales not only focus on narrative actions but also use complex structures to express time, cause, condition, speech, and thought.
- 3) Based on the realization, they are:
 1. Realization of taxis:
 - (i) Parataxis: coordinating conjunctions like “and”, “But”, “So”.
 - (ii) Hypotaxis: subordinating conjunctions like “because”, “when”, “while”, “which”.
 2. Realization of logical-semantic relations:
 - (i) Elaboration: “which”, “who”, “that”, “what”

- (ii) Extension: “and”, “but”, “while”.
- (iii) Enhancement: “then”, “because”, “until”, “after”, “when”, “so that”.
- (iv) Idea: “think”, “suppose”, “wish”, “hope”.
- (v) Locution: “said”, “replied”, “asked”, “told”.

After analyzing the data, researchers suggest that nursery tales should ideally use simple language to support children’s better understanding the story. However, this study finds that the nursery tales analyzed are dominated by clause complexes, which contribute to sentence complexity. Eventually, for writers or publishers, researchers suggest that this research can offer valuable insights into systemic functional linguistic in children’s texts, especially in terms of taxis and logico-semantic relations. Attention should be given to the choice of conjunctions and the overall sentence construction to ensure the language remains appropriate for young reader’s cognitive levels.

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