

THE STRUCTURE OF WOLOF SUFI ORAL NARRATIVES: EXPANDING THE
LABOVIAN AND LONGACREAN MODELS TO ACCOMMODATE WOLOF ORAL
TRADITION

By
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To my wife Maguette

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

subj.	Subjet
obj.	Object
v.	Verb
n.	Noun
proper.n	Proper name
imperf.	Imperfective
perf.	Perfective
rel.	Relative
adv.	Adverb
vfoc.	Verb focus
sfoc.	Subject focus
ofoc.	Object focus

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
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This dissertation investigates Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure and its relationship with the context of production of the narratives. The findings of this study indicate that the structure of these narratives is characterized by (1) the salience of the complicating action, (2) the presence a pre-story stage, which announces the general topic, and (3) the presence of a closing evaluation stage, which is different from the internal evaluations within the complicating action.

My data come from recorded audio-video materials featuring Sufi gatherings, which are attended by adepts of Sufi orders in Senegal, and during which Sufi narratives are used as basic form of communication.

A complete Sufi oral story is composed of a pre-story, abstract, complicating action, which may include a dialogue, monologue, praise, or genealogy, and a closing evaluation. The speaker usually announces the general topic of the selected story before beginning the narration. In addition, he gives special preeminence to the complicating action or *peak* by means of various linguistic mechanisms both at discourse and syntax levels. Finally, the story ends with a closing evaluation, featuring the speaker's assessment of the significance of the story that has been told.

Although aspects of the Labovian and Longacrean models were helpful in analyzing the forms of Wolof Sufi oral narratives, additional concepts were necessary to more fully explain some particular structures and their cultural functions in the narratives.

The contribution of this study is the identification of a pre-story and a final evaluation, which have a significant function in Wolof Sufi oral narratives. By expanding the study of narrative and narrative structure to Sufi narratives, this study also contributes cross-cultural and cross-linguistic approaches to study oral narratives.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Is narrative structure universal, or do narrative structures differ cross-linguistically and cross-culturally? Labov's narrative theory and Longacre's plot structure both posit six narrative units. Labov (1967, 1972) refers to the six stages of a narrative as abstract, orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution and coda, while Longacre talks about aperture, stage, peak, denouement, conclusion, and finis. Given the widespread tendency to apply these two theories to other texts, including literary narratives (Prat 1977), other disciplines such as anthropology (Bruner 1984, Bauman 1986), and other languages such as Catalan (González 2004), it becomes a challenge for students of narrative structure, especially those working with narratives coming from non-Western cultures, to confront these models.

The narratives examined in this study are Wolof Sufi narratives. They are narratives about Sufi shaykhs, both living and dead, who serve as exemplars to the faithful, and they are recounted at various Sufi ceremonies throughout the Muslim calendar year in Senegal. As this dissertation will show, while these narratives generally conform to the basic structure outlined by both Labov and Longacre, there are nonetheless some crucial differences that, I will argue, are the consequence of the function and context of the Sufi narratives.

Both Labov and Longacre's models apply to Wolof oral narratives, if one considers the impact of the audience on the structure of such narratives as well as the West-African Sufi cultural setting¹ in which they are anchored. Indeed, some of the Labovian and Longacrean stages are made use of in different ways due to several factors, which include the context of the

¹ See Robinson, *Muslim societies in African history* (2004:18-20) for Sufism and Sufi orders; Babou, *Fighting the greater jihad* (2007:5-9). Glover (2007:46) defines Sufism, *tariqa* in Arabic, as 'a set of practices or exercises by which a Muslim could achieve a personal understanding or a unity with God.'

narrative performance, the speaker's goals, the audience's expectations and West-African Sufi oral culture. As Tannen (1979) and Polanyi (1978) demonstrate, cultural expectations shape the way people construct stories. Moreover, in Wolof Sufi oral narratives, the evaluation stage serves as a conclusion. There is no resolution and coda, but a different stage, a pre-story stage, in which the speaker states the topic of the forthcoming story. In this Sufi communicative setting it is common to verbalize everything so that the listener knows the purpose of the story, although the latter is stated in the abstract.

This structure of Wolof Sufi oral narratives differs from that of other Wolof stories whose structure is similar to the Labovian and Longacrean models. The two stories below show the difference between Wolof Sufi narrative genres and other genres: the non-Sufi narrative genres include the six stages of the Labovian model (abstract/aperture, orientation/stage, complication/peak resolution/denouement, evaluation/conclusion, and coda/finis) while the Sufi narrative genres consist of a pre-story, abstract, orientation, complication, and evaluation. Both the non-Sufi and the Sufi narratives below were told in a Sufi setting respectively, by El-Hajj Ibou Sakho, a disciple of the Tijaniyya Sufi order² in Senegal, and Moustapha Abdoul Khadre, a grandson of Amadu Bamba, founder of the Muridiyya Sufi order. El-Hàjj Ibou Sakho was giving a lecture in the Great mosque of Dakar, on the life of the Prophet Muhammad while Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre was talking about the history of the city of Touba, in Touba during the Great *Màggal* of Touba³. Both lecturers were surrounded by adepts of their respective Sufi orders, the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya orders:

² There are four major Sufi orders in Senegal: The Tijaniyya (18th century), the Muridiyya (19th century), the Qadiriyya (11th century), and the Layenes (19th). The disciples of these orders are called respectively the tijans, murids, qadirs, and layenes. For more information on Sufi orders in Senegal, see Mbacke, 2005, *Sufism and religious brotherhoods in Senegal*

³ The major event of the Muridiyya order

(1)

Abstract

1. Caay-caay ga rey na waaye lay wi dafa rafet

Orientation

2. Gisoo buur bi ma waa ji doon nettali,
3. dafa def inwitasijon bu rëy,
4. dafa wex, ku wex nak na,
5. njaboot gi yépp ko ragal,
6. waa ji ñow di versi, di serwi di serwi ba tollook buur bi,

Complication

7. manto bu weex bi mu sol, tuuti ci neex mi tax ca,
8. mu dal ci kowam tiim ko ni ko : “danga dof?”
9. daldi woo ñaari sandarma ni nan ko rendi
10. ñu génne waaji pur reyi ko ñépp ni tekk,
11. bam ko wóore ni ci dee la jëm ,

Resolution

12. mu ni wëlbit fap li desoon ci ñeex mi sotti ko buur bi
13. jallaabi baak manto baak karawaat yaag lépp a tooy nak faf.
14. “Waaw yow danga dof xanaa?”
15. mu ne déédéet dama la bëgg rekk te bañ ku la xas,
16. soo ma reye ngir toq bu bon, toq-toq sii rekk,
17. ñepp ni danga soxor waaye bu ma la sottee ñeex mi yépp,
18. ku ko dégg ni moo yey,
19. bañal la xay rekk, banal la noon rekk, ay reewu noon rekk,
20. bañal la ko rekk, moo tax ma def jëf jii,

Coda

21. mu ni ko yaa rëy tooñ te rafetu lay, bayyi leen ko mu dem (laughs from the audience).

Translation

Abstract

1. *The action was bad but the justification was beautiful*

Orientation

2. *Don't you see the king that the guy was telling a story about?*
3. *he invited people to a big party*
4. *he was severe, he was very severe*
5. *his family feared him*
6. *A guy came to serve and serve until he got to him*

Complication

7. *the white robe that he wore (the king) is dirtied by the food*
8. *he shouted him: “Are you crazy?”*
9. *he called the guards and ordered them to kill the waiter*
10. *they took him out to slaughter him, everybody was quiet*
11. *when it was clear to him that he would die*

Resolution

12. *he turned around and got the rest of the sauce and threw it over the king*
13. *The caftan and the robe and the tie all became wet*
14. *“Are you crazy?”*
15. *he said to him : “no, I just like you and do not want you to be criticized*
16. *if you kill me for this little drop*
17. *all the people would think you were mean but if I throw the whole sauce on*
you
18. *whoever hears that would agree with you*
I just do not want you to be criticized, I don’t want you to have enemies,
19. *enemies that would laugh at you*
20. *I just don’t want that to happen, that’s why I did such a thing”*

Coda

21. *He said to him: “what a great offense but what a great justification? Let him go.*

In contrast, the Sufi narrative below, ‘The Lion Chasing the Warthog’, includes a pre-story, abstract, orientation, complication and evaluation. It does not include a resolution and coda.

(2)

Pre-story

1. Fii jumaa ji ne, gayndee ngi fi woon

Abstract

2. Waaye mel na ni nak bam ko fakkee
3. Fakkub yërmande la ko def

Orientation

4. Ndax fii kër Sëñ Saaliw gi ne
5. Sëñ Saaliw dégg naa ci làmmiñam mu ni
6. Sëñ bi toog na fii di bind
7. ci garab gii mu taalife⁴ *mat la bul fawseeni*
8. lu mel nig dimb la woon
9. mu toog fii

Complication

10. ag ngara gaynde di ko daq
11. ba fekk Sëñ bi ci gott bi ba ñów
12. waaye ngara gi daldi yewwu
13. daldi fap tank yi aj daadi koy taxaw teg ko ci kaw Sëñ bi
14. Ñaari tanki kanam yi
15. Gaynde gi di ko xool
16. Ba yàgg mu ne waññit

⁴ It is the name given today to the hospital of the city of Touba, the headquarters of the Muridiyya order

17. Mbaam àll laa wax mbaam àll
Evaluation
 18. Léegi nak ci ngay daadi xame ni kon
 19. Moom bi mu fakkee dëkk bi rekk
 20. Ci la ko def muy dëkkub yërmande
 21. Nga xam ne rabi rabi njaay àll yiy fàdde sax
 22. Bu ñuy fàdd ba agsi fii taxaw
 23. Loolu nga ciy daldi dégge

Translation

Pre-story

1. *Here where the mosque is, there was a lion*

Abstract

2. *But it seems like when he (Amadu Bamba) cleared up the place*
 3. *he did for compassion*

Orientation

4. *Because here where the home of Sëñ Saaliw is*
 5. *I heard Sëñ Saaliw say that*
 6. *the shaykh sat here to write*
 7. *Under this tree, where he wrote his poem mat la bul fawseeni (Arabic)*
 8. *It was something like a pear tree*
 9. *He sat here*

Complication

10. *A lion was pursuing a donkey*
 11. *Until he found the shaykh, in the bush, he arrived*
 12. *But the donkey was smart*
 13. *He then raised his feet, stepped on the shaykh*
 14. *His forward feet*
 15. *The lion looked at him*
 16. *And after a moment, returned back*

Laughs...

17. *I am talking about a wart-hog, a wart-hog*

Evaluation

18. *Now, you know,*
 19. *As soon as he created the city,*
 20. *He made it a city of compassion*
 21. *So that, you know, even predators*
 22. *When they come here, they stop*
 23. *That is what you learn from this story*

The difference between the two stories above lies on the fact that the first one does not include a Sufi element even if it was told at a Sufi event. In contrast, the second story contains a Sufi element as it features a Sufi shaykh, Amadu Bamba. The structure of the second is shaped

by a combination of factors, which include the Sufi cultural context of the narrative performance, the audience's expectations, and the speaker's intention to highlight the shaykh or Sufi master and his extraordinary and miraculous deeds.

The Sufi narrative, as I define it here, serves the purpose of highlighting the role of one shaykh as a spiritual leader and exemplar.

Therefore, this dissertation aims to answer the four questions below:

1. What are the structure of Wolof Sufi oral narratives and the formal characteristics of the units of that structure?
2. What is the function of each unit?
3. To what extent do the context of the narrative performance, audience, and speaker's goals determine the choice of a given narrative and its structure?
4. What linguistic strategies are used within the peak or complicating action of Wolof Sufi oral narratives for highlighting the Sufi shaykh and his miraculous deeds?

Wolof Sufi narratives consist of five stages: a pre-story, the first stage before the actual storytelling. This is the step where Sufi narrators announce the theme or subject the story being told. This pre-story is different from Labov's cognitive notion of narrative pre-construction (Labov 2007), which refers to the cognitive process of pre-constructing a story before telling it. The pre-story in Wolof Sufi oral narratives is verbalized. The second stage is the abstract, which introduces the point of the narrative. The third stage is the orientation, which sets the time, place, and context of the story. The fourth stage is the complicating action, which is composed of miraculous deeds and crucial dialogues featuring the Sufi shaykh or master and the other protagonists. In this stage, the speaker uses various linguistics tools including embedded dialogues and/or monologues, genealogies and praise-evaluations of the shaykh's actions and philosophical stance. The final stage is the speaker's closing evaluation, which is basically his

personal assessment of the whole story. This final evaluation is tied to the abstract, giving the whole story an orthorhombic crystal shape sheltered by the pre-story stage as in Figure 1-1.

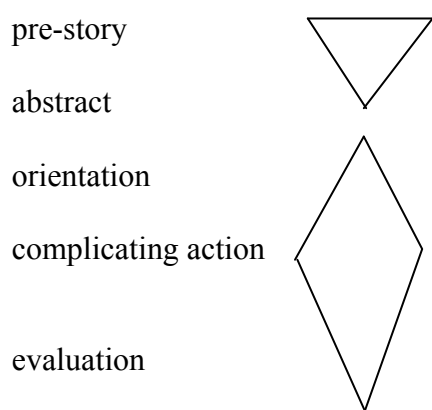


Figure 1-1. Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure

To understand the rationale for having such a structure, one must look at the functions devoted to each narrative unit. The pre-story stage is here to provide a general thematic background to the listeners. It results from the fact that, in this oral culture, the more you say, the better you make yourself understood. Everything is verbalized for pedagogical purposes. In order to prepare the audience for the hearing of the upcoming story, the speaker announces the general topic of his story. This announcement sometimes goes beyond the sentence to become a whole pre-section of the story. In order to show the importance of the pre-story in Sufi stories I selected the narrative ‘An Example of Faithfulness’, composed of a very long pre-story in which the narrator praises the faithfulness of his Sufi master before recounting episodes of the life of that shaykh involving the concept of faithfulness. That pre-story section is different from the Labovian concept of narrative pre-construction, which is a cognitive process in which the speaker pre-constructs his or her story (Labov 2007).

The abstract fulfills the function of stating the point of the story. It answers the question: Why tell such a story in this particular setting? The abstract gives the audience a reason for listening to the story being told. Generally, it is not longer than a single statement.

The orientation fulfills the function of setting the historical background: the site of the story, and the characters that are involved. Locations and time expressions are among the linguistic expressions in use in the orientation to help the listeners situate the event.

The complicating action is the most important section of the story, the one that features the shaykh, his actions and philosophical teachings. It is characterized by series of actions, often extraordinary, presence of dialogues or/and monologues, embedded praises and genealogies, and so forth. It is the stage everybody wants to hear, because it highlights the shaykh.

Finally, the evaluation serves as moralistic conclusion provided by the speaker. This is not only an assessment of the actions being told, but also an opportunity for the speaker to draw a conclusion from the whole story and transmit a message to his audience.

The context of the narrative performance determines both the structure and the functions of the units discussed above. The word context here refers to a set of factors that determine the forms and functions of the stories. A working definition of the term context can be Gee's (1999) definition of the notion: "the material setting, the people present (and what they know or believe), the language that comes before or after a given utterance, the social relationships of the people involved, and their ethnic, gendered, and sexual identities, as well as cultural, historical, and institutional factors" (Gee 1999:57). In other words, the people who compose the audience as well as the physical and cultural Sufi settings determine the structure of Wolof Sufi oral narratives. For instance, the way a story is told at a Sufi gathering taking place in Touba, the headquarters of the Muridiyya order, will likely be different from the way the same story is told at another Sufi gathering taking place in Philadelphia, in the United States. Attendees of the Touba gathering will likely be composed of a majority of Murids or followers of the Muridiyya, while those of the Philadelphia meeting will likely be mixed. The Senegalese community in the

United-States is composed of people from different Sufi orders; and gatherings usually are mixed. As a result, Sufi speakers tailor their speech according to the audience's background and needs at the time of the performance. The audience-designed nature of Sufi narratives undoubtedly leads to some variations in the accounts of the same story.

In addition to the context, there is the fact that Sufi gatherings are always dominated by the figure of the shaykh, and the speakers' intention is to extol the actions and teachings of that shaykh. The choice of a reportable event (Labov 2002:10), meaning an event worth telling and listening to, is determined by the extent to which it helps the speaker magnify a shaykh. While Labov defines reportable events as 'the least common events', in Sufi narratives, they seem to be the most known events about a particular shaykh, which the audience is here to hear about again. The question the speaker needs to answer is: what event involving that shaykh is worth recalling in this particular moment? The way of telling Sufi stories is highly codified. It is the griot or West-African verbal specialist, who set the norm for public speaking, although he is no longer the only one who speaks in public or tells stories. The choice of a reportable event is also influenced by the context. For instance, Ahmet Iyane Thiam, the speaker of the second narrative called 'The Prediction', has chosen to tell about the prediction his shaykh, El-Hajj Umar Tall⁵, has made about the advent of Amadu Bamba⁶. The context of the storytelling is the Great *Màggal*⁷ of Touba. The speaker's presence at that event in addition to the prediction his shaykh is said to have made about Amadou Bamba, led the speaker to recall such a highly reportable event.

⁵ One of the spreaders of the Tijaniyya order in West-Africa and the past leader of the Tall branch of the Tijaniyya in Senegal

⁶ The founder of the Muridiyya Sufi order, one of the four major Sufi orders of Senegal

⁷ Celebration of the day of departure into exile of Amadu Bamba (1853-1927) in Gabon in 1895 by the French colonial authorities

The fact that the shaykh is the focus of Sufi stories also explains the preeminence given to the complicating action stage. Indeed, this is the stage where speakers emphasize the actions and teaching of a given shaykh. The stages preceding and following that complicating action respectively prepare or wrap it up. Various linguistic tools are used for highlighting the shaykh's actions and teachings within that complicating action, which include embedded text types such as dialogues, monologues, praises, and genealogies, narrative clauses (as opposed to non-narrative clauses found in other sections), simple subject-verb-object clause structure without any focus marker, and topicalization, in the form of right and left dislocation.

The speaker's personal feeling vis-à-vis the story being told serves as conclusion.

Labov and Waletzky (1967:13) define narrative as "one method of recapulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that actually occurred". In a more recent article titled 'Narrative Pre-construction' (2007), Labov reiterates his definition and the six steps of a narrative structure as follows:

A particular way of reporting past events, in which the order of a sequence of independent clauses is interpreted as the order of the events referred to. They then describe the full elaboration of adult narratives of personal experience, beginning with an abstract, orientation, and evaluation section embedded in the complicating action, a resolution and a coda (Labov 2007:1).

Labov's conception of narrative structure is centered on the temporal sequencing of the events and the six-step narrative structure (abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution and coda). Although, Labov's analytical framework was based on oral versions of personal experience in English (Labov & Waletzky 1967: 1), it can be applied with modification to Wolof Sufi narratives, and the Labovian categories such as abstract, orientation, complicating

action and evaluation can be used to analyze Sufi stories. The context of the performance Wolof Sufi stories explains the presence of a pre-story and the function given to the evaluation.

The West-African Sufi context of the narratives, characterized by the dominant figure of the shaykh whose known actions and teachings are recalled by Sufi speakers, has certainly given shape to the five-step structure, instead of six as in the Labovian model. The actions accomplished by the shaykh and teaching that can be learned from these actions are the most important aspects of the storytelling. As a result, after highlighting these actions (complication), the speaker wraps up his account with his personal assessment (evaluation). Each performer of Sufi narratives takes care of at least one series of actions performed by a shaykh during his lifetime, which ties in with other episodes told by other speakers. In that sense, Wolof Sufi narratives can be considered episodes of a master narrative, woven by different storytellers. This conception of Sufi narratives corresponds to Barber (2007)'s notion of verbal texts, which she defines as follows:

Verbal texts are representatives of supra-individual creativity *par excellence*. A text is dialogic and relational. It presents itself to an interlocutor; and not usually to a single addressee, but to an implied "audience". By being constituted to be "out there", it signals its nature as something which exceeds the specific aims of any individual speaker or writer. It is composed in relation to other texts, sharing formal templates with them and drawing in myriad ways upon their textual resources, to the point where it could be described as "a tissue of quotations" (Barthes 1977:146). A text is wholly intentional, but is never confined to the singular intention of a solo originator (Barber 2007:10).

In contrast, while Barber seems to downplay any individual take on verbal texts, in Sufi narrative texts the speaker tailors his account according to the context. The general template of

the story remains the same but the way each individual tells a story varies depending on his goals and audience's expectations. Although the recipe is the same, some ingredients can change based on the milieu.

The idea that the complicating action is the most salient part among the narrative units itself is not new. Longacre (1976, 1985, 1990, and 1996) refers to the complication as *peak* or 'zone of turbulence' of the story, and to the pre- and post-complication stage, respectively as *pre-* and *post-peak*. I use Longacre's terminology to refer to the pre-complication sections (pre-story, abstract, and orientation), complication section (complicating action) and post-complication section (evaluation) in my analysis of Wolof Sufi oral narratives. Likewise, Labov (1972) stipulated that the complication is the part of the story that the hearer looks forward to hearing. It answers the question: 'and what happened?'

However, the internal structure of that complication, meaning the way of making it salient, is language and culture specific. A tense shift is among the most popular linguistic features of the complication across-languages - English shifts to preterit tense, past progressive and historical present, French uses *présent historique* (historical present) and *passé simple* (preterit), Fore (Papua New Guinea) uses present tense (Longacre 1996). In addition, there is a series of actions referred to as *action peak* along with crucial dialogues referred to as *didactic peak* by Longacre (1990 and 1996).

In the case of Sufi narratives, in addition to the crucial dialogues, one also finds in the complicating action monologues, through which one learns more about the Sufi characters. In addition, the complicating action is marked by a shift to a subject-verb-object clause structure. This clause structure differs from that of the other stages. Indeed, in that stage there are sequenced clauses, characterized by subject-verb-object order, uninflected verbs, meaning

without any auxiliary (Diouf 2001, Robert 1993, 1999, and 2000). In contrast, in canonical clauses (see chapter 3), found in pre- (pre-story, abstract, orientation) and post-complication (evaluation) sections, the verb is always inflected by an auxiliary. Beside specific structural aspects of the clause, there are also embedded text types such as praises, dialogues, and monologues within the complicating action.

Praise consists of recalling the genealogy of the shaykh in order to justify and legitimate his capacity for performing miraculous actions. There is a popular Wolof proverb used when praising someone to show the presupposed correlation between that person and his/her parents: *lu juddoo cim tàgg, su naawul jaaxal ay bokkam*, meaning a bird is expected to fly as other birds do. In Wolof society, the personality of an individual is often seen as a reproduction of that of his or her parents. If it is a girl, she is expected to behave like her mother: *doom ja ndey ja* ‘like mother like daughter’. If it is a boy, he is also expected to reproduce the model of his father in terms of qualities that are believed to be those of a typical man. In the context of Sufism for instance, a son of shaykh is expected to have the same charisma (Villalón 1995) as his father. Moreover, one will always be praised based on the extent to which he or she is able to reproduce the models of his or her parents, both biologically and spiritually.

The embedded evaluation differs from the post-complication evaluation, which serves as a way to end the story. The example (3) below is an embedded praise-evaluation, in which the speaker praises his shaykh, referring back to his maternal filiation, *kodd Aadama Aycha*⁸ ‘the youngest son of Aadama Aycha’ and religious notoriety *Amiirul Moominun*⁹ ‘Commander of the faithful’. In the example, the speaker concludes his account with a final evaluation which draws

⁸ The speaker is a multilingual speaker of Arabic, Pular, and Wolof. He praised his shaykh in his native language, Pular

⁹ Arabic formula meaning ‘commander in chief’

upon what the shaykh uttered in the embedded crucial dialogue, that he will ultimately be the leader of all the people living in his area:

(3)

1. kodd Aadama Aycha
2. Amiirul Moominun

Translation

1. *The youngest son of Aadama Aysa*
2. *Commander of the faithful*

(4)

1. Ku am ku tol noonu nak nga xam ne wóor na ne
2. bés bu ker gi doone genn wax ji doon jenn
3. boo ci amee war nga njëp ci moom
4. war nga njëp ci ay ¹⁰wasayaam manaam ay ¹¹recommandaasiyoom,
5. war nga njëp ci ay ndigalam,
6. war nga njëp ci njaboot gi mi fi bàyyi
7. ndax ku am koo xam ni bés bu ker gi doonee genn
8. wax jépp ci moom lay ne (laughs)
9. am nan lu rëy am nan lu rëy lu kenn amul.à

Translation

1. *Whoever has someone who reaches that level, that, you know for sure,*
2. *the day the shadows will be the same,*
3. *if you have someone of that level, you must hold on to him,*
4. *you must hold on to his wasayaam, meaning his recommendations,*
5. *you must hold on to his recommendations,*
6. *you must hold on to the family he left with us*
7. *Because whoever has someone which, the day when the shadow will be the same,*
8. *all the talk will be about him.*
9. *We have something big; we have something big that no one has.”*

¹⁰ Arabic origin expression meaning ‘recommendation’

¹¹ Wolofization of French word ‘recommandation’ or recommendation

Methodology

Data Collection

My data come from audio-video cassettes featuring *Gàmmu* and *Màggal*¹² events, the two most important Sufi events in Senegal, and Sufi lectures taking place in Senegal and overseas. I gathered my resources from Senegal and the United-States. Indeed, Senegalese market places, in Senegal, the United-States (in big cities like New York, Atlanta, and Raleigh), and Europe (Paris, Italy and Spain), are full of audio-video cassettes and DVDs featuring Sufi events taking place in Senegal and abroad. The narratives I worked with are from Sufi events held in Senegal, Touba and Tivaouane, respectively the headquarters of the Muridiyya and Tijaniyya order, also from overseas, the United-States and Europe. The rationale for collecting data from different places was to see the extent to which the context shapes the structure of narratives.

Though I am not examining the narratives from a visual perspective in this study, I chose to work with audio-video documents because the video is more vivid; it provides storytelling with context and shows non-verbal interactions between the speakers and their public.

In addition to Sufi audio-video materials, I also collected data from the interviews I conducted in New York City, the headquarters of the Murid community living in the United-States, in particular with Imam Bachir Lo, the imam or leader of the mosque built by the Murid community living in Harlem and Mouhamadou Thioune¹³, one of the foremost Murid lecturers and radio broadcasters in the United-States. The latter is invited every year to come to Philadelphia to give lectures during the *Màggal* celebration and also speaks in many of my audio

¹² The *Gàmmu* is the Wolof term for Arabic expression *Mawlid al-Nabi*, the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam. The day is fixed at the 12th day of the month of *Rabi al-Awwal*, the third month in the Muslim calendar. Muhammad was born about A. D. 570 and died in A. D. 632.

¹³ I thank Mouhamadou Thioune for the two interviews we have had in New York City. The first interview took place in his hospital room.

resources. My interviews provided me with opportunities to ask questions and hear more stories about the shaykhs, mostly the founder of the Muridiyya, Amadu Bamba (1853-1927), and his life itinerary, from his disciples. In the course of these interviews, I heard different versions of the same events (for instance with Imam Bachir Lo¹⁴). As a result, I was able to find variations in the accounts of the same event, sometimes from the same speaker (Mouhamadou Thioune), sometimes with a different one (Imam Bachir Lo), which confirms my conviction that narrative is an individual construction or representation of a sequence of events that occurred in some place, time, and under certain circumstances in the past. The context of the storytelling has an impact in the structure. Even though there are always a basic template and sequence of events (a then b) present in all accounts of the same story, the way a given narrator frames his account is rather personal and context-based. Some speakers add praises and genealogies - for instance the griots or griot-like speakers - while others focus on the main storyline.

Selected Narratives

Twelve narratives were selected for this study. Eleven of these were selected based on the extent to which they were representative of what makes a Sufi narrative, that is, a contextualized story that highlights the miraculous actions and philosophical teachings of a particular Sufi shaykh. The first rationale for selecting the non-story was to show the difference between a Sufi story and non-Sufi story. Non-Sufi stories have a complete structure, meaning they fit into the Labovian six-stage structure, while Sufi stories do not contain a resolution and coda but include a pre-story followed by abstract, orientation, complication, and evaluation. The second rationale for having a non-Sufi story in my corpus, otherwise composed of Sufi stories, was to show that not all narratives told in Sufi gatherings necessarily contain a Sufi element. Some of the stories

¹⁴ I thank Imam Bachir Lo for the interview we have had in Harlem, at kër Sëriñ Touba, the headquarters of the murid community living in New York City

do not address the life of a shaykh but rather serve other purposes. The use of non-Sufi stories by Sufi speakers, and even by Sufi shaykhs themselves, adds more value and worthiness to those stories. The most common functions of these non-Sufi stories are to entertain the audience and also help the speaker to support an argument just made.

The first narrative, ‘Throwing Dates’, was told by Abdoul Aziz Sy-Junior, grandson of El-Hàjj Malick Sy, one of the foremost propagators of the Tijaniyya order in Senegal. The speaker was interviewed by a Senegalese journalist, Ahmet Bachir Kunta, also a member of the Kunta family¹⁵. The interview was about the interviewee’s father, Ababacar Sy, oldest son of El-Hàjj Malick Sy. I selected this narrative because of the long pre-story stage the narrator uses to announce the topic of his stories, miracles. The interview took place in Tivaouane, the headquarters of the Sy branch of the Tijaniyya order in Senegal, during the 2007 *Gàmmu* dedicated to Ababacar Sy. The speaker talks about miracles and their pervasiveness in the history of religions as an introduction to his testimonials about his father.

The second narrative, ‘The Prediction’, was told by Ahmet Iyane Thiam, who represented the Tall¹⁶ family at the 2000 Great Mànggal of Touba. This story features one of the favorite topics of Sufi storytellers, prediction making. The speaker here talks about the long-term relationship between the Tall and the Mbacke, which, according to him, dates back to the prediction El-Hàjj Umar Tall¹⁷ made about the advent of Amadu Bamba.

¹⁵ The Kunta family is the leading family of the Qadiriyya order, the oldest Sufi order in Senegal. The father of the interviewee, Ababacar Sy, was married to a woman from the Kunta family. The house where she stays in Tivaouane was named Ndiassane, after the city of Ndiassane where she came from and where the Kuntas still live today.

¹⁶ The Tall family from the Fouta region, Northern Senegal, the Sy from Tivaouane, The Seck from Thienaba, and the Niasse from Kaolack are the four major branches of the Tijaniyya order in Senegal.

¹⁷ El-Hàjj Omar Tall (1797-1864) is one of the propagators of the Tijaniyya in West Africa.

The third narrative, ‘In the Governor’s Office’, was told in Philadelphia, in the United-States, by Mouhamadou Thioune, a native of Tivaouane. In the interview I had with this speaker, he claimed to have grown up and studied in the school of the Sy family in Tivaouane though he is a follower of the Muridiyya order. He narrates the encounter between shaykh Amadu Bamba and French Governor General¹⁸ in Dakar, the former capital of Senegal and the French West Africa (1895-1904). This story is from a griot and contains embedded praises of Amadu Bamba, who, according to the speaker, was so moved that he commanded his brother to reward the praise-singer.

The fourth narrative, ‘The Lion Chasing the Warthog’, is from Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba. The performance took place in Touba during the Great *Màggal* of 2000. The story is about the foundation of the city of Touba. It involves a shaykh, Amadu Bamba, and a lion. It is common in Sufi stories to see animals tamed by Sufi masters. In this particular story, a lion chasing a warthog stopped and abandoned the chase when the warthog found refuge in Amadu Bamba. The same speaker told two more stories about Amadu Bamba (the ninth narrative, ‘Investing in Amadu Bamba’ and the tenth, ‘When the shadows will be the same’), in which he intended to convince his audience that they have the best shaykh, worth investing in and worth following.

The fifth narrative, ‘Staying with the Shaykh’, is about the relationship between the speaker, Abdou Karim, and his shaykh, Sëriñ Ababacar Sy. The speaker highlights the mystical dimension of his shaykh, who granted him knowledge without his having to study. The venue of this performance is Tivaouane, during the 2007 *Gàmmu*, dedicated to Ababacar Sy.

¹⁸ The interim Governor General was Martial Merlin (1860-1935), see Babou (2007)

The sixth narrative called ‘An Example of Faithfulness’ is composed of a long pre-story from another disciple of Ababacar Sy, whose name was not mentioned in the DVD. I collected that pre-story because of its length and the way it conveys the topic of a series of short stories the narrator will tell about Ababacar Sy and his attachment to faithfulness.

The seventh narrative, ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’, is from El-Hàjj Ibou Sakho, a famous Tijan lecturer, known for his mastery of the Qur’an and the writings of El-Hàjj Malick Sy on the Prophet Muhammad. This narrative is not dated but the venue is the Great Mosque of Dakar in New Year’s Eve. The speaker used to give an annual lecture in that location, in which he told stories about the Prophet Muhammad punctuated by Sufi poems and songs by El-Hàjj Malick Sy. Prior to this story, he talked about a woman who attempted kill the Prophet Muhammad by poisoning his meal. According to the speaker, the meal warned the Prophet that it was poisoned. To justify her action, the woman argued that she wanted to challenge the Prophet to see if he was a true Prophet. He forgave her. The speaker’s evaluation of that story is the abstract of the following story on the same topic, that is, the action was bad but its justification was intelligent.

The eighth narrative, ‘Praying on the Water’, was told by Abdou Samade Mbacke, a grandson of Amadu Bamba. The venue of his performance was the Great *Màggal* of Touba in 2002. The speaker was recounting episodes of the life itinerary of Amadu Bamba. The episode I selected is the one dealing with the prayer on the waters, which includes a long embedded monologue, in which Amadu Bamba justifies his action. Generally, what people emphasize when talking about the prayer on the waters is Amadu Bamba’s capacity of performing such action and the rationales for such action. This story highlights those rationales via the monologue of Amadu Bamba.

The eleventh narrative, ‘Warning about Arrogance’, is from Abdoul Aziz Sy Dabakh, second General khalife¹⁹ of El-Hàjj Malick Sy. The speaker tells a story about Abdullah Al-Andalusi, a shaykh whose disciple, Siblun, is presented as being arrogant. The story is a pretext for the narrator to warn the audience about the negative outcomes of arrogance. He was giving a lecture at the zawiya El-Hàjj Malick Sy, the headquarters of the tijans living in downtown Dakar, about social and political issues confronting Senegal in 1992. The addressees of his speech were not limited to the attendees of the talk only, but to all the Senegalese community, including the officials.

Table 1-1 presents the selected narratives, the title of the narrative, the speaker, and the date and circumstances of the narrative performance:

To analyze these data above, two possible interrelated approaches can be used. The first approach is a form-function analysis (Gee 1999: 54, Levinson 2000), that is, a study of the correlations between form (structure) and function (meaning). Such an approach applied to Wolof Sufi narratives would lead me to analyze the structure of these narratives, both at the clause and beyond the clause level, and its function or meaning in the context of production. For instance, the pre-story stage, found in Sufi narratives, serves to provide the audience with a general theme or topic, which the upcoming story will treat.

The second approach is what Gee (1999:4) refers to as language-context analysis, meaning a study of the interaction between language and context. The interaction between the two is often

¹⁹ This is the French spelling of English word caliph. The Wolof spelling is *xalifa*, which is a version of the Wolof word *kilifa* meaning ‘leader’

Table 1-1. The Sufi narratives

Narrative	narrator	Shaykh the narrative is about	Date/circumstances of the narrative performance
Throwing Dates	Abdoul Aziz Sy Junior, grandson of El-Hàjj Malick Sy, son of Ababacar Sy	Aliw Tamaasiin, adept of Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani (1739 – 1815).	Gàmmu 2007 in Tivaouane dedicated to Ababacar Sy
The Prediction	Ahmet Iyane Thiam, a disciple of the Tijaniyya affiliated to the Tall family branch of the Tijaniyya order in Senegal	El-Hàjj Umar Tall (1797-1864), spreader of the Tijaniyya order in West-Africa	Great Màggal of Touba 2000 at the guests' reception
In the Governor's Office	Mouhamadou Thioune, a griot murid follower, living in New York City	Amadu Bamba (1853-1927), founder of the Muridiyya order.	Màggal of Philadelphia 2006
The Lion Chasing the Warthog	Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba	Amadu Bamba (1853-1927), founder of the Muridiyya order.	Great Màggal of Touba 2000
Staying with the Shaykh	Abdou Karim, disciple and companion of Ababacar Sy	Ababacar Sy (1885-1957) , oldest son of El-Hàjj Malick Sy (1855-1922),	Gàmmu 2007 in Tivaouane dedicated to Ababacar Sy
An Example of Faithfulness	A disciple of Ababacar Sy (name unknown)	Ababacar Sy (1885-1957), oldest son of El-Hàjj Malick Sy	Gàmmu 2007 in Tivaouane dedicated to Ababacar Sy
The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter	El-Hajj Ibou Sakho, disciple Tijan, affiliated to the Sy branch of the Tijaniyya order in Senegal	A mean king (name not provided)	New Year Eve Gàmmu at the Great Mosque of Dakar (year unknown)
Praying on the Water	Abdou Samade Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba	Amadu Bamba (1853-1927), founder of the Muridiyya order.	Great Màggal of Touba 2000
Investing in Amadu Bamba	Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba	Amadu Bamba (1853-1927), founder of the Muridiyya order.	Great Màggal of Touba 2000
When the Shadows Will Be Same	Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba	Amadu Bamba (1853-1927), founder of the Muridiyya order.	Great Màggal of Touba 2000
Warning about Arrogance	Abdoul Aziz Sy Dabakh (1904-1997), son of El-Hàjj Malick Sy	Siblun, disciple of Abdullah Al-Andalusi	Lecture given at the zawiya El-Hàjj Malick Sy in 1992

considered reflexive by some scholars, meaning, ‘an utterance influences what we take the context to be and context influences what we take the utterance to mean’ (Gee 1999: 57). Such an approach applied to my data would lead me to look at the relationships between the wording and structuring of Wolof Sufi oral narratives and their context of production, that is, the Wolof Sufi Islamic context. For instance, the widespread use of Arabic formulas in Sufi narratives shows the influence of that language on the religious practices in Senegal²⁰.

However, given the complexity of Wolof Sufi oral narratives and the interaction between their contexts of production, structure, and function, it becomes necessary to combine both form-function and language-context analyses to best analyze these narratives. In other words, my analysis will consist of showing how the structure of Wolof Sufi oral narratives, the functions of that narrative, and the language in use, reflect the context of the narrative performance. Particular attention will be paid to the complicating stage and how its structure interacts with the context. Indeed, the complicating action is the stage where various linguistic devices are used to highlight the figure of the shaykh, which is the goal of the storyteller and the reason for the audience to attend his talk.

Organization of the Dissertation

This study will start with a discussion of narrative in general, in which I shall present Labov’s view of narrative structure along with Longacre’s plot structure. I will apply the Labovian concepts of abstract, orientation, complication, and evaluation to Wolof Sufi narratives as well as his notions of narrative, free, and restricted clauses.

In contrast, I will show the differences between Wolof Sufi narrative structure and the structure of narratives of personal experience, object of Labov’s research. More specifically, I

²⁰ For the status and influence of Arabic in Senegal, see Fiona McLaughlin (2008), ‘Arabic in Senegal’ in Versteegh, Kees, ed. *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*. Leiden: Brill. Vol. 4: 179-185

will show how the pre-story stage in Wolof Sufi oral narratives differs from the Labovian notion of narrative pre-construction. Finally, I will also show the difference between the status of the embedded evaluations, found in the complicating action, and the final evaluation of Wolof Sufi oral narratives.

The third chapter deals with the grammar of Wolof Sufi oral narratives. In that chapter, I show the complexity of these narratives, which include embedded sub-genres such as monologues, dialogues, praises, and genealogies. In addition, I will look at the narratives both at the macro and micro levels. At the macro level, I shall distinguish the background sections, composed by the pre-story, abstract, orientation, and evaluation, and foreground stage, which consists of a complicating action. The background sections are characterized by presence of non-narrative clauses (free and restricted clauses) as opposed to narrative clauses found in the foreground section. At the clause level, I shall look at the difference between narrative and canonical clauses (free and restricted clauses) in Wolof Sufi narratives. Beyond the clause level, I will look at notions such as tense, aspect, mood, topicalization, and focus and their functions in the narratives being studied.

The fourth chapter deals with the cultural background of the Wolof Sufi narratives, the influence of West-African Sufi culture on the structure of the narratives. Aspects of that culture include the role and function of the Sufi shaykh, whose actions and teachings are the foci of the narratives and determine both their content and themes. The norms of public speaking set by the griot²¹ or verbal specialist will be also examined in that chapter. Finally, the possible correlations between West-African epic figures and Sufi leaders throughout the narratives will be discussed in this chapter

²¹ For the status and function of the griot see Irvine (1974), Tang (2007), Panzacchi (1994), Tamari (1991), Diop (1981), and Leymarie (1999).

The fifth chapter will deal with the analysis of Sufi narratives. This chapter will show the functions of the background stages (pre-story, abstract, orientation, and evaluation) as well as the foreground stage (complicating action), determined by the context of the storytelling. In the analysis I will show how the Wolof grammatical resources discussed in chapter three are used in the Wolof Sufi narratives to help them fulfill their function.

The last chapter will show how the research questions formulated in chapter one have been answered throughout this dissertation. I will also discuss the significance of these questions in the study of narrative and narrative structure. This chapter will finally show the limits of my study and make recommendations for further research.

In the next chapter I shall discuss the two narrative frameworks mentioned above, that is, the Labovian and Longacrean narrative theories, and, the extent to which they apply to Wolof Sufi oral narratives.

CHAPTER 2 NARRATIVE

Labov and Waletzky's (1967) narrative framework as well as Longacre's plot structure are well established for the analysis of narrative at the clause level as well as the discourse level. As Labov (2006) stipulates, his framework "has proven useful for many students of narrative in following the path of narrative construction". This chapter examines Labov and Longacre's frameworks, their combination, and the extent to which they apply to Wolof Sufi oral narratives.

Labov and Waletzky's (1967) Narrative Framework

Labov and Waletzky's (1967) narrative framework has been used as basic framework by many analysts of narrative structure both at clause and discourse levels. The framework was developed by these two authors after analyzing oral versions of personal experiences from a 'large number of unsophisticated speakers' in order to relate the 'formal properties of narratives to their functions'. It resulted from their analysis that forms interplay with functions in oral narrative of personal experience. The data for their study was limited to narratives in the English language.

Labov and Waletzky (1967:74) claim their view of narrative analysis to be a formal analysis of 'recurrent patterns characteristic of narrative from the clause level to the complete simple narrative' as well as a functional analysis of 'verbal technique for recapitulating experience- in particular, a technique of constructing narrative units that match the temporal sequence of that experience'. To this function of recapitulating experience, they add that of 'personal interest determined by the stimulus in the social context in which the narrative occurs'. In sum, they distinguish two major functions: (a) referential (reference to a sequence of events) and (b) evaluative (the narrator's personal assessment of the recounted events).

With regard to their methodology of data collection, Labov and Waletzky tape-recorded narratives taken from two different social contexts: a face-to-face interview in which the narrator is speaking only to the interviewer, a non-member of the narrator's community, and a situation in which the narrator interacts with members of his primary group and the interviewer, an outsider of that group.

The following outcomes resulted from Labov and Waletzky's study:

Temporal Sequence

Labov and Waletzky (1967:81) define narrative as 'one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that actually occurred.' They provided the examples below to illustrate that definition:

1. Well, this person had a little too much to drink
2. and he attacked me
3. and the friend came in
4. and she stopped it

To show the importance of temporal sequence in narrative, they reverse the order of the events:

(1')

4. A friend of mine stopped the attack
3. She had just come in
2. This person was attacking me
1. He had a little too much to drink

According to the definition above, (1') is not a narrative because it does not comply with requirements of narrative, in the strict sense, since the order of clauses, and thus of events, is altered.

It appears from the examples above that only independent clauses are relevant to temporal sequence. Subordinate clauses as well as embedded clauses may be seen anywhere in the

narrative sequence without altering the temporal order of the semantic interpretation as in the following example taken from the same article:

1. Then she left a note one day
2. she was going to commit suicide
3. because he was always raising hell about me

In (2), clause 2 refers to the person's intention for the future while clause 3 refers to the event prior to clause 1.

These examples demonstrate that temporal sequence is the key element of the analysis of narrative structure at the clause level.

Types of Clauses

The authors distinguish four types of clauses according to whether or not they maintain the strict temporal sequence.

- a. Narrative clauses: they maintain the strict temporal sequence of events, which characterizes a narrative. Later on, Labov (1982) provides the following definition of narrative clause:

“They are independent clauses with verbs in the indicative mood and (in English) one of three tenses: the preterit, the historical present, or the past progressive (...) narrative clauses can be identified by the criterion that they are appropriate answers to the critical question, ‘And then what happened?’ The sequence of narrative clauses for the complicated actions’ (1982:225)

- b. Free clauses: Labov and Waletzky (1967) claim that they ‘can range freely through the narrative sequence (...). They have no fixed relation to the temporal sequence’.
- c. Coordinate clauses: They can be reversed without altering the temporal sequence or semantic interpretation.

Below is an example of coordinate clauses from Labov & Waletzky (1967):

(3)

1. [and the rock] came down
2. and smacked him in the head
3. and say (slap!)

Clauses 2 and 3 can be reversed without altering the semantic interpretation.

(3)

1. [and the rock] came down
2. and say (slap!)
3. and smacked him in the head

- d. Restricted clauses: They are ‘neither free nor temporally ordered in the strict sense’. They cannot move freely over the narrative, but have a wider range of movement than narrative clauses. In (4), clause 1 is a free clause, although ‘there’ refers to the pier, while clause 2 is a restricted clause, which is coordinated to clause 3.

(4)

1. Scoutmaster was up there
2. He was watching me
3. But he didn’t pay me no attention

Temporal Juncture

As one can see, both free and restricted clauses can intervene between two narrative clauses. In order to be able to define temporal relations between two clauses separated by either free or restricted clauses, Labov and Waletzky (1967) develop the concept of temporal juncture, which they define as follows:

“Two clauses which are temporally ordered with respect to each other are said to be separated by temporal juncture. This juncture has no relation to any free or restricted clauses that may fall in between the temporally ordered clauses.” (1967: 25)

They provide (5) to illustrate temporal juncture:

(5)

- 1 I caught cramps
- 2 and I started yelling
- 3,4 the fellows didn’t believe; they thought I was
- 5,6 all of them kept going; they leave me
- 7 I started going down
- 8 there was another guy
- 9 he just jumped over
- 10 And grabbed me

In (5), there is temporal juncture between 1 and 2, 2 and 3, 4 and 5, 6 and 7, 7 and 8, 8 and 9, and 9 and 10. Notice that 3 and 4, and 5 and 6, are coordinate clauses.

A new definition of narrative is thus formulated by the authors:

‘Any sequence of clauses that contains at least one temporal juncture is a narrative.’

The example below is illustrative:

(6)

1. I know a boy name Harry
2. Another boy threw a bottle at him right in the head
3. And he had to get seven stitches.

Thus (4) is a narrative because there is temporal juncture between u and v.

Narrative Heads

Labov and Waletzky (1967) furthermore define NARRATIVE HEAD as the finite verb of a narrative clause, which carries the tense marker of that clause. Heads of coordinate clauses are coordinate heads:

(7)

1. And—gone a while
2. and come back
3. and he didn’t have the duck
4. And that was unusual—
5. I said: “you got back there
6. and get that duck’
7. And he went back there;

In (7), gone, come, did-, was, said, and went are narrative heads.

Primacy Sequence

Labov and Waletzky (1967) postulate the primacy of an underlying a-then-b narrative form from which other equivalent narratives are derived. In order to isolate primary sequence, they suggest moving free clauses to the beginning of the narrative, restricted clauses to a point as early as possible in the narrative and coalescing coordinate clauses into single units.

Overall Structure of Narratives

According to Labov and Waletzky (1967), a fully-formed narrative is composed of:

1. ORIENTATION
2. COMPLCATION
3. EVALUATION
4. RESOLUTION
5. CODA

1. Orientation: Labov and Waletzky (1967) define it formally as ‘the group of free clauses that precede the first narrative clause’. It serves to ‘orient the listener in respect to person, place, time and behavioral situation’. Sometimes the orientation section is displaced later to serve another function such as evaluation. Most interestingly, the authors postulate that the orientation section is lacking in children’s narratives and adults whose narratives do not preserve the sequencing of events.
2. Complication: it consists of a unit formed mostly by narrative clauses that comprise the series of events that happen in the narrative. This unit is termed the complication or complicating action. It is the most important one since it is the one the listener is looking forward to hearing from the very beginning of the account.
3. Evaluation: According to Labov and Waletzky (1967), ‘a narrative that contains only an orientation, complicating action, and result is not a complete narrative because it lacks significance: it has no point’. Thus they claim that it is the evaluation that conveys the point, which they define as:

‘That part of the narrative that reveals the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative by emphasizing the relative importance of some narrative units as compared to others.’

The evaluation section, which is embedded within the narrative, is defined by three different ways (Labov and Waletzky 1967):

It is *semantically* defined by means of:

- a) direct statement: ‘I said to myself: this is it’
- b) lexical intensifiers: ‘He was beaten up real, real bad’

It is *formally* defined by the suspension of the action:

- a) through coordinate clauses and restricted clauses
- b) by means of repetition: ‘And he didn’t come back, and he didn’t come back’

It is *culturally* defined by means of:

- a) the narrator's symbolic action
- b) third person's judgment: the entire narrator is reported to a person not present at the narrative

Furthermore, Labov and Waletzky (1967) distinguish internal and external evaluation:

- Internal evaluation: It is a direct statement of the narrator expressing his thoughts at the time of the event to the listener.

- External evaluation: it is a statement the narrator tells himself or a highly internalized feeling or symbolic action.

The authors then provided an example of a scale of degrees of embedding of evaluation:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Internal | 1. And when we got down there, her brother turned to me and whispered. 'I think she's dead, John'.
2. And when we got down there, I said to myself, 'My God, she's dead!'
3. And when we got down there, I thought, 'She's dead'
4. And when we got down there, I thought she was dead
5. Later, the doctor told us she was close to death
6. I think she must have been close to death |
|----------|--|

External	7. You know, in cases like this, it's clear that she was likely as not dead.
----------	--

4. Resolution: According to Labov and Waletzky (1967), many narratives end with a resolution, which they define as 'that portion of the narrative sequence that follows the evaluation. If the evaluation is the last element, then the resolution section coincides with the evaluation'.
5. Coda: It is 'a functional device for returning the verbal perspective to the present moment.' The coda can of different forms:

Use of deixis: They define it as a ‘linguistic category that points to a referent instead of naming it explicitly’, which, in this case, ‘has the standing at the present moment of time and pointing to the end of the narrative, identifying it as a remote point in the past’.

The authors provide the examples below:

(8)

1. I packed up
2. and got there
3. That was two.

The use of ‘that’ in (8) contrasts with the use of proximate ‘this’ for example.

Another device is an incident in which one of the actors can be followed up to the present moment in actions that may not be totally relevant to the narrative sequence.

Example:

(9)

1. And you know that man who picked me out of the water?
2. he’s a detective in Union City
3. and I see him every now and again

A third device is the effect of the narrative on the narrator, which may be extended to the present moment as in (10):

(10)

1. I was given the rest of the day off,
2. and ever since then I haven’t seen the guy, ‘cause I quit’
3. I quit, you know.
4. No more problems.

Finally, Labov and Waletzky (1967) concluded that, although their study was conducted with ‘non-skilled storytellers’, it could be extended to ‘more complex types of narration developed by skilled storytellers and preserved by oral tradition’. They also acknowledge the fact that their conclusions are restricted to the speech community they have examined but also

predicted that this view of narrative structure would achieve greater significance when material from radically different cultures are studied in the same way.

Further Developments of Labov's Framework

Abstract

Labov (1972, 1982) introduced a sixth stage, the ABSTRACT as the starting point of a complete narrative, before the orientation. He defines abstract as 'a brief summary statement of the narrative as viewed by the narrator' (Labov 1982:226). The function of this first part of the narrative is to 'encapsulate the point of the story' (Labov 1972b:363). The example below illustrates the phenomenon:

(11)

(Were you ever in a situation where you thought you were in serious danger?)

1. I thinker # situations of danger really.
2. probably the most common one in my case would be being robbed.
3. thankfully not in Spain but in England I've been robbed three or four times.

The narrator, responding to his interlocutor's question, provides a brief summary of the situation of danger he had been involved before recounting the story. As a result, Labov (1972) suggests the possibility of seeing the narrative 'as series of answers to underlying questions':

- a) Abstract: what was this about?
- b) Orientation: who, when, what, where?
- c) Complicating action: then what happened?
- d) Evaluation: so what?
- e) Result: what finally happened?

Labov (1982) postulates that narratives of young children or narratives of somebody else's experience, the so-called narratives of vicarious experiences, not related to the personal experience of the narrator, do not have a point (abstract). Figure 2-1 shows Labov's 'normal form of narrative':

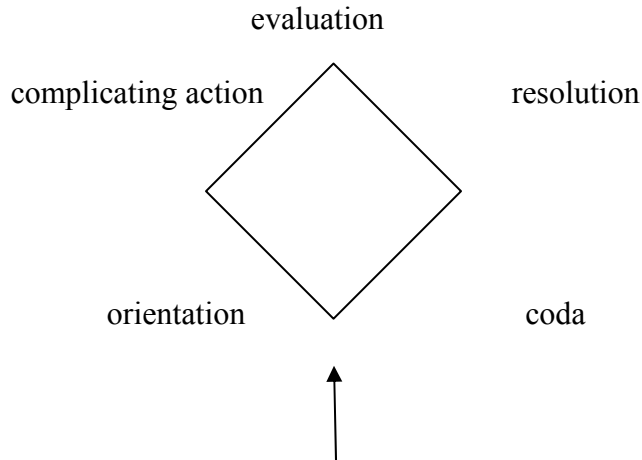


Figure 2-1. Labov's normal form of narrative (Labov and Waletzky 1967)

Narrative syntax

Labov (1972:372) assumes that surface structures of clausal framework of narratives display syntactic patterns that he classified into eight grammatical categories as follows:

Group a. The sentence adverbial:

1. Conjunction, including temporals: so, and but, then

Group b. The subject noun phrase

2. Simple subjects such as: pronoun, proper names (this girl, my father).

Group c. the verb phrase

3. An underlying auxiliary: simple past tense marker incorporated in the verb; no member of the auxiliary appears in the surface structure except some past progressive was...ing in the orientation section, and occasional quasimodals start, begin, keep, used to, want.
4. Preterit verbs, with adverbial particles up, over, down.
5. Complements of varying complexity; direct and indirect objects
6. Manner or instructional adverbials.
7. Locative adverbials (narrative syntax is particularly rich in this area).
8. Temporal adverbials and clauses which present a temporal slot filled by then, when or ever since, then, before the subject (comitative clause).

Evaluative elements

Labov (1967) defines evaluation semantically, formally, and culturally as I mentioned earlier. Labov (1972) ranks the *evaluative elements* from the most highly internalized type to the most external. He classifies the *evaluative elements* under four headings:

INTENSIFIERS

COMPARATORS

CORRELATIVES

EXPLICATIVES

Intensifiers: they include gestures that accompany a deictic, expressive phonology (the lengthening of vowels being the most common mode), quantifiers (the most used of intensifiers) such as *all, every, really* and so on, repetition, and ritual utterances.

The comparators include the use of negative, future and modal auxiliaries.

The correlatives are more complex syntactic mechanisms. They ‘bring together two events that actually occurred so that they are conjoined in a single independent clause’ (Labov 1972:382).

Correlatives imply the use of:

progressives (indicate events which occur simultaneously), mostly in the orientation section, which suspends the action.

appended particles: -ing particles used to describe simultaneous actions.

double appositive and double attributives used ‘to heighten or deepen the effect of a particular description’ (1972b: 338).

The explicatives consist of explicative clauses that are appended to the main narrative or evaluative clause of a section. They range from simple (when there is one clause) to complex

(when ‘a clause is embedded in a clause which is in turn embedded in the main clause’) and compound (when ‘the two clauses are embedded at the same point in the matrix clause’.

Reportability and credibility

Other terms introduced later to the model are REPORTABILITY and CREDIBILITY. After claiming narratives of personal experience to be constituted of most reportable events, Labov (1997) defines a most reportable event as ‘the event that is less common than any other in the narrative and has the greatest effect upon the needs and desires of the participants in the narrative [is evaluated most strongly]’. As for credibility, Labov (1997) defines it as ‘the extent to which listeners believe that the events described actually occurred in the form described by the narrator’. According to Labov (1982:228), an event must be not only reportable (worth listening to) but also credible to the audience, otherwise there will be no interest in it. The listeners’ reaction to the narrative is the best way to compute reportability. The author classifies the listeners’ responses into two types (1982:227):

Type A: responses which consist of expressions of ordinary understanding, such as *I see, Uh-Huh, Naturally...*

Type B: responses which consist of expressions of ordinary surprise, such as *Really? Is that so? You don’t mean it! No kidding! etc.*

A narrator aims at hearing a Type B response. If both reportability and credibility are met, every narrative clause or event will truly represent the *objective event* (which nobody can contradict) as opposed to *subjective event* (which can be contradicted by a witness present at the time). Labov defines objective event as representing ‘the cognitive framework that is provisionally accepted as a true representation of the events reported in the narrative’ (1982:231). In such case, each event answers the question: ‘And then what happened?’ which makes the sequencing of the narrative move forward.

The assignment of praise and blame

Labov (1997) introduces new features to the analysis of oral narratives of personal experience, the assignment of PRAISE and BLAME, and assumes that “the narrator and the audience inevitably assign praise and blame to the actors for the actions involved”. He identified some ways of assigning praise and blame which include ‘the use of linguistic devices of mood, factivity and causality, evaluative lexicon, the insertion of ‘pseudo-event’, and the wholesale omission of events’.

Narrative pre-construction

One of Labov’s recent works, which is a continuation of Labov (1997), is concerned with the idea of NARRATIVE PRE-CONSTRUCTION (Labov 2007). The idea behind this concept is that every narrator must accomplish a narrative pre-construction before beginning the narrative itself (Labov 2007). This pre-construction consists of making a selection between the stories a narrator has stored in his memory. Consequently, the narrator has already selected the events he wants to focus on as well as the endpoint for his story. The first step in narrative construction, according to Labov, is to select the reportable (or tellable) events. Then the narrators construct a series of events preceding the most reportable events, each linked causally to the one that follows (Labov 2007). The recursion of events will generate the complicating action. The third step will then consist of finding a section which Labov refers to as unreportable event, that is, an event that ‘does not require an explanation’ and ‘that informs the listener about time, place, participants, and behavioral setting at the beginning of the narrative’ (Labov 2007).

This notion of narrative pre-construction is different from the pre-story in Wolof Sufi narratives, which, more than a mental process of constructing a story, is an actual stage of that story. It is stated and not just mentally processed.

Longacre's Narrative Structure

Longacre (1976) distinguishes four discourse types: Procedural –that involves procedures or ‘how-to-do-it’, Expository – that involves explanations or ‘essays’, and Hortatory – that involves persuasive texts or ‘sermons’ and Narrative. In Figure-2-2, Narrative is differentiated from the other major types of discourse genre by having: “chronological linkage, because time sequence is crucial; agent orientation, rather than orientation to ‘patient’, subject-matter or addressee, e.g. they are predominantly oriented to *who* carries out actions; accomplished or real past time, rather than the projection of time towards the future of prophecy or instruction.” In addition, Narrative is uttered in the first or third person. Finally, most narratives involve some sort of struggle or plot and have tension –if not, they are said to be episodic (Cortazzi 1993:102-103):

	- projected	+ projected
+succession	<p><i>NARRATIVE</i> first/third person agent oriented accomplished time chronological</p>	<p><i>PROCEDURAL</i> non-specific person patient oriented Projected time chronological</p>
-succession	<p><i>EXPOSITORY</i> no necessary reference subject-matter oriented time not focal logical</p>	<p><i>HORTATORY</i> second person addressee oriented mode, not time logical</p>

Figure 2-2. Longacre's Scheme of Discourse Types (from Cortazzi 1993:102-103)

Longacre (1976, 1985, 1990, and 1996) considers there to be two levels of narrative structure: an underlying level and a surface level. The underlying structure, which he calls notional or plot structure, consists of seven stages as: (1) EXPOSITION ‘laying it out’, (2) INCITING MOMENT ‘getting something going’, (3) DEVELOPMENT ‘keeping the heat on’, (4) CLIMAX ‘knotting it up proper’, (5) DENOUEMENT ‘loosening it’, (6) FINAL SUSPENSE

‘keep it untangling’, and (7) CONCLUSION ‘wrap it up’. The underlying level can be compared to the Labovian notion of narrative pre-construction given that they both are mental processes. Longacrean underlying stages correspond to episodes or paragraphs at the surface level. Indeed, the notional Exposition corresponds to an Expository paragraph or Stage at the surface level, which includes information about time, setting and characters. The Inciting moment and Developing conflict correspond to ‘prebreak episodes’ which prepare the listener for the peak. Longacre refers to these two stages as pre-peak. Deep structure Climax and Denouement surface as PEAK episode and PEAK’. The Final suspense in the deep structure surfaces as ‘post-peak’ episode’ (corresponding to the Labovian resolution) whereas the deep structure Conclusion surfaces as the closure (corresponding to the Labovian evaluation). The surface episodes of APERTURE (corresponding to the Labovain abstract) and FINIS (corresponding to the Labovian coda) in Longacre’s model do not have correspondents at the deep structure level as shown in Table 2-1:

Table 2-1. Narrative discourse with surface peaks (from Longacre 1996:36)

title	Aperture	Stage	(Prebreak episodes)	Peak episode	peak'	Postpeak' episode	closure	Finis
Surface structure	Formulaic Phrase sentence	Expository paragraph/discourse Narrative paragraph/discourse	Paragraph/discourse (usually narrative or dialogue) articulated by means of: 1. Time horizons in succession 2. Back reference in paragraph/discourse to preceding 3. Conjunctions 4. Juxtaposition, i.e., clear structural transition	Paragraph discourse marked by: Rhetoric underlining Concentration of participants Heightened vividness Shift of tense Shift to more specific person Narr-pseudo-dialogue-drama Change of pace Variation in length of units Less conjunction & transition Change of vantage point orientation	see peak		Of varied structure: especially expository paragraph, but can be expository discourse, narrative discourse, hortatory discourse (= moral?)	Formulaic phrase/sentence
Notional structure (plot)	Surface features only	1. Exposition 'lay it out'	2. Inciting moment 'get something going' 3. Developing conflict 'keep the heat on'	4. Climax 'knot it up proper' 5. Denouement A. Climax may encode as peak and denouement' OR B. Climax may encode as pre-peak		6. Final suspense 'keep untangling'	7. Conclusion 'wrap it up'	Surface feature

As a result, Longacre (1976) defines narrative structure as being composed of six stages: aperture, stage, peak episode- that involves the inciting moment, developing conflict, and climax, and possibly denouement -, conclusion, and finis as shown in Figure 2-3:

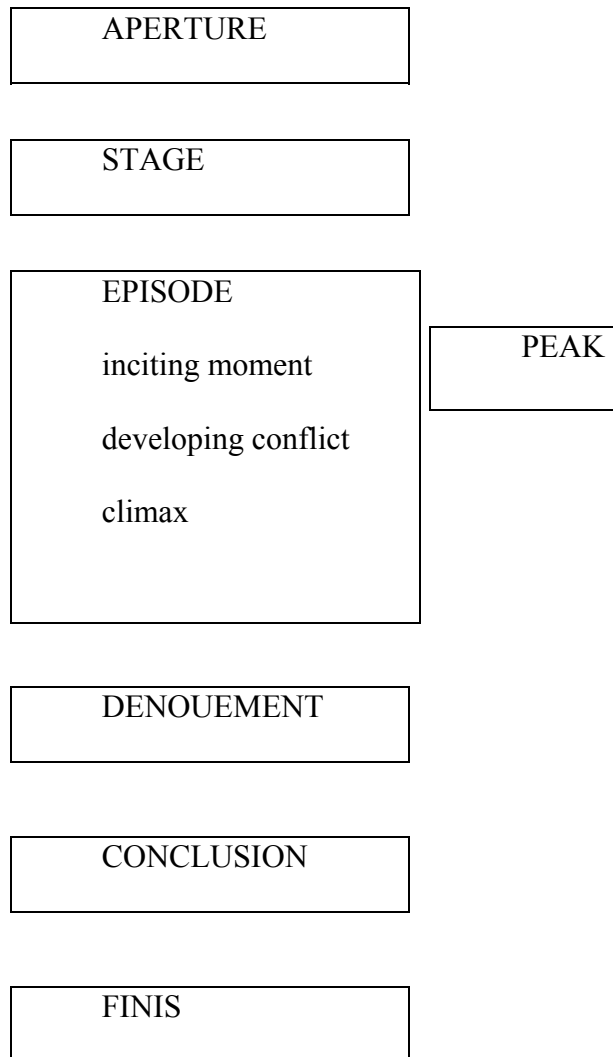


Figure 2-3. Longacre's Model of Narrative Structure (from Cortazzi 1993:104)

In his framework Longacre (1976, 1985, 1990, 1996), pays special attention to the complication corresponding to the complication in the Labovian six-stage framework. Longacre (1976, 1985, 1990, and 1996) refers to the complication as PEAK and 'zone of turbulence', which he defines as follows:

“I use the term *peak* to refer to any episodelike unit set apart by special surface structure features and corresponding to the climax or denouement in the notional structure. Where the surface structure distinguishes two such surface units which encode both of these notional structure units, I posit peak (climax) versus peak’ (denouement). Climax and denouement may, however, be marked in no special way in the surface structure, but may on the contrary simply encode further surface structure episodes. When both are unmarked the surface of the narrative is episodic even though there are climax and denouement in the notional (plot) structure”
(Longacre 1996:37)

Longacre worked with American written narratives as well as oral narratives from Non-Western cultures and languages such as Ga’dang (Philippines), Fore and Kosena (Papua New Guinea). He also looked at religious texts such as biblical Hebrew narratives.

According to Longacre (1996) the peak is signaled by linguistic and non-linguistic features:

The first feature is called ‘heightened vividness’, which may be obtained in a story by various means including a shift to a narrative tense (English, French), a more specific person, for instance from third person to second person, from pseudo-dialogue to dialogue to drama and sometimes to use of rhetorical questions. For instance, at the peak (complication stage) of Ga’dang folktales, there is a proportion of one verb to three nonverbs.

The second feature is a change of pace marked by a variation in the length of units (clauses, sentences, paragraphs, embedded discourses). For instance, in Wojokeso folktale, the peak is marked by a long paragraph which contains a rhetorical question: *Now why did he do that? And the answer He did it because...* (Longacre 1996:42).

The third feature is called ‘the shift of vantage point/orientation’. By vantage point Longacre means ‘by whom do we stand, through whose eyes we view the story? Whereas orientation refers to ‘what is encoded as surface structure subject.’ He noticed that in many narratives, generally, the agent is encoded as subject and the patient as object but there can be a shift of roles. A story which starts with a certain character A as subject (agent) and another character B as object (patient) can end up with B as subject (agent) and A as object (patient). In other words, there is often a shift of role from patient to agent and vice versa.

The fourth feature is the loss of linguistic particles found earlier in the discourse and/or introduction of new particles. Taking Ga’dang as an example, he indicates that the word *kanu* (disclaimer of responsibility, ‘so they say’) regularly occurs in the storyline clauses of narratives, but drops out at peak. This phenomenon is similar to what is found Wolof narratives. Indeed, Wolof narrative clauses are characterized by the disappearance of verbal inflections, which were in non-narratives clauses.

The peak is divided into two subparts: ACTION PEAK and DIDACTIC PEAK. The action peak is composed of series of actions whereas in the didactic peak, ‘actions cease and participants speak out in a monologue/dialogue which develops the theme of the story (Longacre 1996).

The stages preceding and following the peak or complication stage are respectively referred to as *pre* and *post-peak* by Longacre (1976, 1985, 1990, and 1996) , corresponding to the abstract and orientation (pre-peak), and the resolution and coda (post-peak) in the Labovian account.

Points in Common between the Labov-Longacre Model and Wolof Sufi Oral Narratives

At the macro level, both Labov and Longacre have proposed a model composed of six stages but use different terms for these stages: Labov’s abstract, orientation, climax, resolution, evaluation, and coda correspond respectively to Longacre’s aperture, stage, episode or peak,

denouement, conclusion, and finis. In addition to the six stages, Longacre's underlying level of narrative structure can be compared to Labov's narrative pre-construction since none of them is found at the surface level, and both are concerned with the pre-construction of the narrative in the narrator's mind. As a result, a combination of both models is possible. Figure 2-4 shows a combination of both Labov and Longacre's narrative structure:

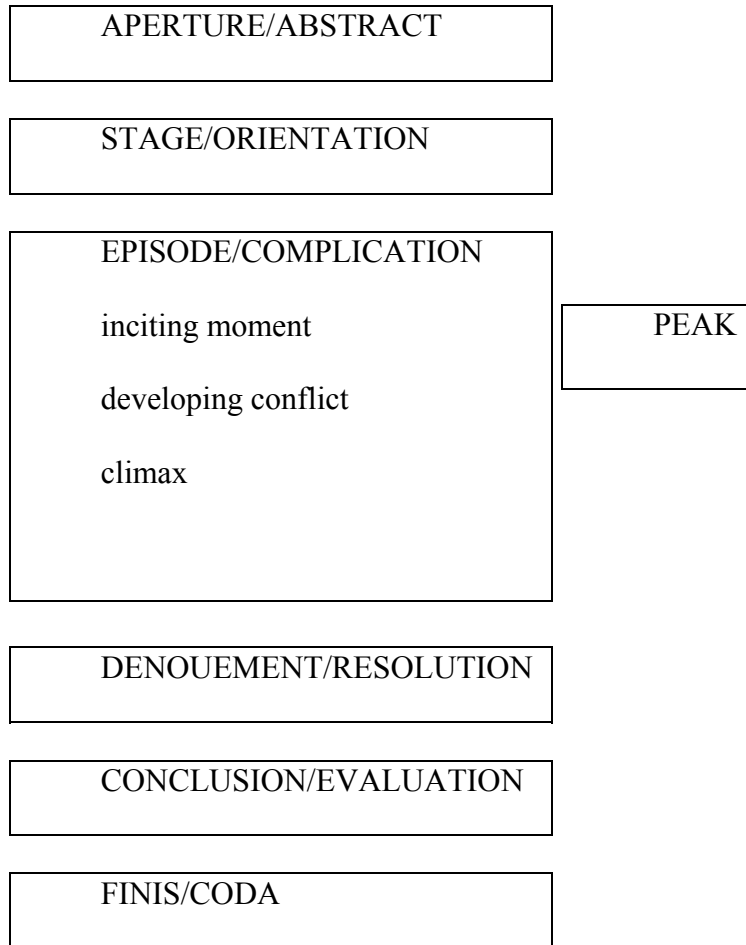


Figure 2-4. A combined model of Longacre and Labov

To some extent, the combination of the Labov and Longacre's models can be applied to Wolof Sufi oral narratives. Indeed, Wolof Sufi oral narratives also contain an abstract, orientation, complication, and evaluation. The functions assigned to these units are also similar to those in the Labov and Longacre's models, that is, the abstract provides the audience with the

point of the story, the orientation sets the background, introduces the protagonists and specifies the time of the event, the complication highlights the actions accomplished by the different protagonists, and the evaluation assesses these actions.

At the clause level, the Labovian concepts of narrative clause, free clause, and restricted clause also apply to the Wolof Sufi narrative grammar. In fact, in Wolof, there is a clear divide between those three. Narrative clauses are characterized by their temporal sequencing or temporal juncture, to use the Labovian notion. In (12) below 1, 2, 3, and 4 are temporally ordered, that is, separated by temporal juncture:

(12)

1. Mu woo ma ba ma ñów
2. Mu jël kaas def ci soow ba mu fees
3. Teg ko taburye
4. Summi mbaxanaam

Translation

1. *He called me, I come*
2. *He took a cup; fill it up with sour cream*
3. *Put it on a stool*
4. *Took his hat off*

Wolof canonical clauses, which are not temporally sequenced, correspond to the Labovian free and restricted clauses. In (13) below, clause 1 is a free or canonical clause while clauses 2 and 3 are restricted clauses, meaning they are neither free nor temporally ordered.

(13)

1. Sëñ bi toog na fii di bind
2. ci garab gii mu taalife 1mat la bul fawseeni
3. lu mel nig dimb la woon
4. mu toog fii
5. ag ngara gaynde di ko daq

¹ It is the Arabic title of a poem written by Amadu Bamba and the name given today to the hospital of Touba

Translation

1. *the shaykh sat here to write*
2. *Under this tree, where he wrote his poem mat la bul fawseeni (Arabic)*
3. *It was something like a pear tree*
4. *He sat here*
5. *A lion was pursuing a warthog*

In addition, the narrative heads, which Labov and Waletzky (1967) have talked about, correspond, in Wolof narratives, to the uninflected verbs found in narrative clauses (as opposed to the inflected verbs found in canonical clauses). In the example below the narrative heads are in bold characters:

(14)

1. Mu **ubbi** bunt **těj**, **ubbiwaat** bunt **těj**,
3s.subj v.open n.door v.close v.open.again n.dooe v.close
2. nu **bokk** toog
1pl v.share v.sit
3. Mu **jox** ma materyel bi
3s.subj. v.give 3s.obj. n.material det.
4. **Won** ma benn siwo ne ma :
v.show 3s.obj. nom. n.bucket v.tell 3s.obj.

Translation

1. *He opened a door, opened another door*
2. *we both sat down*
3. *He gave me the material*
4. *He showed me a bucket and told me:*

The last point in common between the Labov and Longacre's models and Wolof Sufi narratives is the preeminence of the complicating action. Indeed, in narratives, including oral and written narratives, religious and non-religious narratives, the actions of the protagonists are the most important to the hearers. The linguistic devices used to highlight those actions may differ from one language to another, as well as their functions. For instance, in English and French,

these devices include a tense shift while in Wolof, narrative clauses substitute for non-narrative clauses. Wolof narrative clauses are characterized by their minimal structure (subject-verb-object) and lack of verbal inflections. In Wolof, the linguistic mechanisms of highlighting the actions and teachings of the shaykhs include embedded dialogues, monologues, praises and genealogies.

Points of Difference between the Labov-Longacre Model and Wolof Sufi Oral Narratives

The points of difference between the Labovian and Longacrean models and Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure are fourfold:

First, Labov's narratives are reported personal experiences and Longacre worked mainly on literary texts, which are complete stories, although he looked at oral literature from cultures such as Papua New Guinea.

In contrast, Wolof Sufi narratives are known and shared stories about the life itineraries of Sufi shaykhs and other saints such as the Prophets.

The second point of difference is concerned with reportable events and the credibility of these events. A reportable event in Labov's narratives of personal experience is, 'a least common event' (Labov, 1997). In contrast, in Wolof Sufi narratives, the most reportable event is the best event a given speaker can tell in a given context, to a given audience. For instance, during the Great *Màggal* of Touba or *Gàmmu* of Tivaouane, the two major Sufi gatherings in Senegal, a most reportable event would be the one that highlights the deeds and teachings of respectively Amadu Bamba (1853-1927) and El-Hàjj Malick Sy (1855-1922). For instance, the majority of the stories told in the 2007 *Gàmmu* in Tivaouane were on the life and teaching of Ababacar Sy, because the event was dedicated to him. As a result, both the fifth and sixth narratives of table 1-1, in chapter one, taken from the DVD of the 2007 *Gàmmu*, feature Ababacar Sy (1885-1957).

The credibility of Sufi stories depends on the extent to which they are known to other people, including the attendees of the narrative performance, and also the citation of names of witnesses of the events being told. Indeed, in order to make their stories credible, Sufi speakers cite their sources, which include names of people who told them these stories or testified to them. For example, in (15) below, taken from the second narrative ‘The Prediction’ (see table of the narratives in chapter one), the narrator cites the name of former general khalife of the Murids, Sëriñ Saliou Mbakke, who would have testified to the objectivity of his story - to use the Labovian term -, the first time he told it in front of him:

(15)

1. Ba ma koy wax ci kanamu Sëriñ Tuubaa Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke
2. Ma foogoon ni man maa ko gën a xam nettali wi
3. Mu tegal ma ci ne : « at mooma sax de ku juddu ci Mbakke
4. Seex Umar lan la tudde”
5. Man ma xam ne sama nettali wi dëgg la ndax ku mel ni Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke
6. Man may wax ne ‘laa yanfixu anil xawwaa in xuwwa ilaa faqqun mu xarra’
7. Ku mel ni Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke
8. Dóotul waxe bakkanam
9. Lu mu wax rekk Yàllaa moo ko decide ca *Azal*

Translation

1. *When I said that before Sëriñ Tuubaa Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke*
2. *I thought that I knew the story better than he did*
3. *He added : « In fact that year, whoever was born was in Mbakke*
4. *was named after Seex Umar “*
5. *Me, I knew that my story was true because someone like Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke*
6. *Me I say that ²”laa yanfixu anil xawwaa in xuwwa ilaa faqqun mu xarra” (he does not speak for himself)*
7. *Someone like Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke*
8. *Does not speak anymore for his own pleasure*
9. *Whatever he says, God has decided it in Hazal*

² From sourate 53 verses 3 of the Qur’an: ‘*La yantiq ‘anil hawa in huwa illa wayun yuha meaning: he does not speak for his own pleasure, it is indeed a revelation from God*’

Third, there is a pre-story stage in Wolof Sufi oral narratives, which corresponds to neither Labov's cognitive concept of narrative pre-construction nor Longacre's underlying level of narrative structure. Rather, it is an actual stage that states the topic of the story. In the Sufi oral culture in which these narratives are anchored, it seems common to verbalize the topic or theme of the story before its telling. Indeed, there are cases where the speaker elaborates at length on the topic of the narrative for the sake of preparing the hearers for the forthcoming story.

Fourth, there are two types of evaluations in Wolof Sufi oral narratives. The embedded evaluations within the complicating action consist of praises of actions and genealogies of the shaykh. In contrast, post-complication evaluations serve as ending points to the story and display the form of moralizing lessons for the audience. In the Labovian and Longacrean stories, the resolution/denouement and coda/finis close the account. Sometimes, the evaluation consists of a blame of a protagonist who misbehaved, as in the narrative 'The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter' and the eleventh one, 'Warning about Arrogance', respectively about a mean king and an arrogant shaykh (see table of Sufi narratives in chapter 1). Otherwise, in Wolof Sufi oral narratives there are mostly praises because the focus is on the actions performed by a shaykh, whose actions are rather extolled.

Thus, a typical Wolof Sufi oral narrative has: (1) a pre-story stage in which the speaker indirectly announces his story in the form of a general thematic statement or praises – this stage is not necessarily present in all stories; (2) an abstract in which he gives the point of his story; (3) a character, time, and place orientation in which he provides information about the protagonists, time and places; (4) a climax or peak composed of actions (*action peak*) and embedded monologues, dialogues, praises and genealogies (*didactic peak*); (5) and finally the narrator's closing assessment/evaluation composed of personal judgments in honor of the shaykh as in

Figure 2-5. The figure shows the points in common as well as the points of difference between the Labovian and Longacrean models and Wolof Sufi oral narratives:

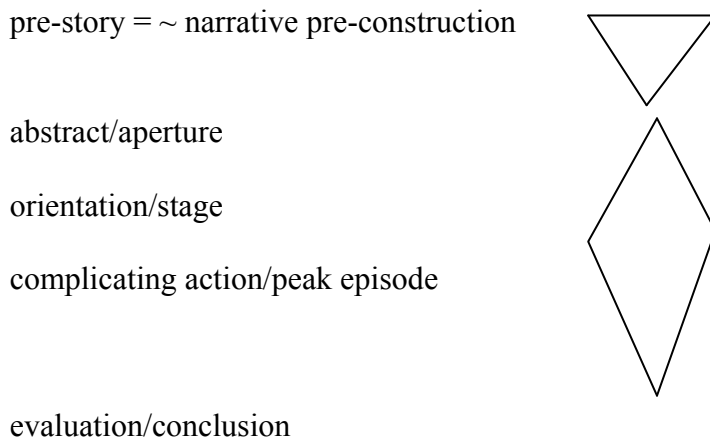


Figure 2-5. Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure

Below is a model of the Sufi oral narrative, ‘Throwing Dates’ in which the narrator, Sëriñ Abdoul Aziz Sy Junior, grandson of El-Hajj Malick Sy (1855-1922), tells a story about a miracle performed by Aliw Tamaasiin, a disciple of Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani (1739 – 1815), the founder of the Tijaniyya Sufi order. The latter is said to have thrown a bunch of dates, from the city where he lived, to his shaykh, Ahmad al-Tijani, who lived in Fez, Morocco. The first characteristic of this text is the length of the pre-story, which introduces the general theme, miracles in the history of the prophets. With this pre-story, the narrator intends to prepare his public for the story he will be telling, the miracle performed by Aliw Tamaasiin. The second particularity resides in the combination between the abstract and orientation on the one hand, and the complicating action and the final evaluation on the other hand. There is an embedded evaluation within the climax, whose function is to justify the capacity of Aliw Tamaasiin to perform such a miracle. The reason is he is a blessed man ‘*li ko Yalla defal*’ ‘what God did for him’. Finally, there is code-switching from Wolof to Arabic and back to Wolof. Arabic is used when the speaker refers to some passages of the Qur’an, which he immediately translates into Wolof. There is also a French expression, ‘*combien de kilomètres!*’ a language of prestige,

especially when spoken by someone who has been trained in Arabic. The use of foreign languages, here French and Arabic, reinforces the shaykh's authority and gives him credit for being multilingual and knowledgeable in the language of the Qur'an (Arabic).

(16)

Pre-story

1. Danu nekk ci jamono boo xam ne xel dafa ubbiku lool
2. te/ tubaab yi bokkul ci seen xam-xam/ baatin
3. Ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo/ lanu xam
4. moo tax ñi ñu jàngal ñepp
5. lool lañu xam
6. su ma waxee mbiru baatin sax daf leen di jaaxal
7. te baatin pourtant am na
8. am na am nan ci prëw
9. gis nañ ñu ko jëffe
10. gis nañ ñu ko wone
11. ma nga commencer ca yonent yalla Isaa
³waobrio alakmaha waalabrassa waohyee almawta biithni Allahi waonabbiokum
12. bima takuloona wama taddakhiroona fee buyootikum inna fee thalika laayatan lakum in kuntum mumineena
13. kooku ci ay miraclam la bokk
14. yalla mayoon ko loolu
15. wéral gaana yi
16. fekk ku dee mu ni ko jógal mu jóg
17. wax ak moom soxlaam
18. bayyiwaat ko mu tēdd
19. loolu yépp ci ay miraclam la bokk
20. yonent bi itam sax am na ay miracles/
21. waaye moom dafa nekk superieuru yonent yi
22. mootax nanguwunu waxal ko benn miracle bu ëpp alxuraan
23. monumaa jizatuhoo alxuraanul karim (Arabic language)
24. bañ ca jógee
25. nitu yalla dañuy am ay miracles yu ñuy wone di ko def
26. nekk fii wax ag ku sori
27. gis nañ ñu ci def ba bayyi

³Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrassa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrassa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bima takuloona wamaa tadahuroon', this is from sura Aal-e.imran verse 49. The translation of the whole verse is 'And will make him [‘Isā (Jesus)] a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allāh's Leave; and I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allāh's Leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe'.

Abstract and orientation

28. Seex Axmat Tijaan toog na bés
39. ci buntu kēram
30. néegam yore kurusam
31. Aliw Tamaasiin a nga ca Tamaasiin ak fa mu nekk ak Faas ni mu soree
32. combien de kilometres

Complicating action + evaluation

33. mu dugg ci tool bi rekk gis benn tiggū tandarma
34. yeene ko ko
35. mu ni kii daal sama seriñ bi rekk laa ko yeene
36. daadi ko jël
37. pas-pas boobu ak yeene bi mu am
38. ak li ko yalla defal
39. mu sanni ko rekk
40. tigg bi dal ci kaw
41. kanamu Seex
42. Seex ree ni kii de xam naa Aliw Tamasiina la
43. bim ko gisee ni ko gis naa tigg bi wante nag maangi lay ñaan bu ko defati

Translation

Pre-story

1. *We are in a time when people's minds are very open*
2. *and the white people, do not believe in mystical knowledge*
3. *them, they know something one can touch with his hand,*
4. *that is why the people they trained*
5. *it is what they know*
6. *Even when I talk about mysticism, it surprises them*
7. *but, mysticism does exist*
8. *it does exist; we have proof of its existence*
9. *we have seen people who practiced it*
10. *we have seen people who showed it*
11. *It started from the prophet of God, Jesus*
12. *Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bimaa takuloona wamaa tadahuroon (Arabic language)*
13. *that is among his miracles*
14. *God gave him that capability*
15. *to heal the leper*
16. *to find a dead person and tell him to wake, and then he wakes up*
17. *talk with him about his needs*
18. *let him sleep (lay down) again*
19. *All that is among his miracles*
20. *Even the prophet also had miracles*
21. *but, him, he is superior to other prophets*
22. *that is why we do not accept to talk about any that he did, which is superior to the*

Qur'an.

23. *monumaa jizatuhoo alxuraanul karim*
24. *after him*
25. *people of God have miracles that they show and perform*
26. *be here and speak with someone far away*
27. *we have seen people who did it already*

Abstract and orientation

28. *Seex Axmat Tijaan one day sat here*
29. *At his doorstep*
30. *His room, holding his prayer breads*
31. *Aliw Tamaasiin was in Tamaasiin, which was far away from Fez (where Seex Axmat Tijan was)*
32. *how many kilometers! (in French)*

Complicating action + evaluation

33. *he entered the field and saw a bunch of dates*
34. *he wanted for him (Seex Axmet Tijaan)*
35. *he said, this, I want it for my shaykh only*
36. *then took it*
37. *that determination and the intention he had*
38. *and what God blessed him with*
39. *he just threw it*
40. *the bunch arrived*
41. *before Seex*
42. *Seex laughed and said, this, I know is from Aliw Tamaasiina*
43. *When he saw him, he said to him, I saw the bunch but I beg you to not do it again.*

The next chapter will discuss the grammatical resources in use in Wolof Sufi narratives and their functions.

CHAPTER 3 GRAMMAR OF WOLOF SUFI NARRATIVE

This chapter examines the Wolof grammatical resources in use in Sufi oral narratives. Not all the resources of Wolof grammar will be discussed here, but only those that shed light on the understanding of Sufi oral narratives. At the macro-level, those resources include text types, such as monologue, dialogue, praise, and genealogy as well as background and foreground. At the micro-level, meaning the clause level and below, this chapter looks at tense, aspect, and focus and their role in the information structure of Sufi oral narratives. Before addressing grammar issues, this chapter will launch with a brief overview of Wolof.

A Brief Overview of Wolof

The word Wolof refers both to the language and the community that speaks it. Wolof belongs to the Atlantic group of the Niger-Congo family, one of the four language families in Africa, and specifically, the northern subgroup of the Atlantic languages. It is most closely related to Fula, Seereer-Siin, and the Cangin languages. The general linguistic characteristics of Atlantic languages include morphologically conditioned consonant mutation, a noun class system (McLaughlin 1997), auxiliaries (referred as inflections by Robert 1991, 2007) divided into two categories: focusing and non-focusing auxiliaries¹, and verbal extensions (Williamson & Blench 2000). This chapter focuses on the linguistic categories of Wolof that are used in generating Sufi oral narratives. Those categories include backgrounding and foregrounding, canonical and narrative clauses (McLaughlin 1991), tense, aspect, and information structure via focus.

¹ The terms focus and non-focus refer to whether a constituent of the clause is given special preeminence over the others. A more elaborated discussion of these notions are found later in this chapter

Wolof is spoken primarily in Senegal and the Gambia, on the northwestern coast of Africa. It is also spoken on a smaller scale in the neighboring countries of Mauritania, Mali and Guinea. Although Wolof is the native language of only 44 per cent of the Senegalese population (McLaughlin 2008), corresponding to the national percentage of the Wolof ethnic group, it is spoken by about 90 per cent as a first or second language (McLaughlin 2008). Overall, the estimates about the total number of Wolof speakers vary from one source to another, for instance Ndiaye (2004) talks about 80 per cent.

A wolofization process is taking place due to the status of lingua franca (McLaughlin 2008:150) which Wolof has in the Senegalese linguistic landscape (McLaughlin 1995, Ngom 2004, Swigart 1990:4). Three main factors account for this wolofization: socioeconomic integration, urbanization, and inter-ethnic marriages. As the preferred language of trade, Wolof is most likely to be spoken in the markets. The rapid growth in the urban population – the population of Dakar was 813,317 inhabitants in 1976 and 1, 500, 000 in 1990 (McLaughlin 2009, paper presented at ACAL 2009) - not only has enhanced its importance as a lingua franca, but has further helped its spread in the main towns and cities: Dakar, Saint-Louis, Thiès, Kaolack, Diourbel, Louga, Ziguinchor, Tambacounda, Touba, and Tivaouane. Interethnic marriages have also contributed to wolofization. Indeed, the continuous migration of rural populations to the cities in search of work has increased the frequency of marriages between speakers of different languages. Because of its dominant position as the language of the city, Wolof is likely to be adopted as the language of the linguistically mixed couples. The children of such couples will speak Wolof as their main language. The wolofization phenomenon has led some Non-Wolof speaking communities in Senegal and overseas to organize themselves into associations in order to promote and empower their own mother tongues. In the United-States for

instance, the Pulaar Speaking Association promotes the Pulaar language among speakers of that language.

Wolof Sufi Narratives: A Complex Genre

Wolof Sufi oral narratives are a complex genre, which include embedded text types such as monologue, dialogue, praise, and genealogy.

Embedded Text Types

Monologue

A monologue in Wolof Sufi oral narratives consists of an interior discourse of a character, in which he communicates his or her thoughts at the time of the event. The purpose of having a monologue in Wolof Sufi narratives is to justify an upcoming action and also to show a character's philosophical teachings. For instance, in the long monologue below, from the narrative 'Praying on the Water', the shaykh, Amadu Bamba, acknowledges the risk of going to the waters, but justifies his intention by the necessity to pray on time as recommended by God to all Muslims. The string of clauses from line 1 through 11 consists of the speaker's evaluation after the ship crew's refusal to allow the shaykh to pray aboard. This evaluation is meant to prepare the audience for the monologue of the shaykh, in which he justifies his upcoming action, the descent in the water:

(1)

The speaker's evaluation

1. Te nag moxtaaru tisbaar ak mum takkusan
2. Dañoo lënkéloo
3. Fa muxtaarum tisbaar yem
4. Ca cat la fa la moxtaarum takkusaan tàmbalee
5. Te moom dafa bokk ci ñi nga xam ne sañuñoo julli waxtu
6. ca njëlbéenu waxtu waxtu wa
7. xam ngeen aqsaabi yépp
8. loolu dafa bokk ci seeni kii waxtu wu ne
9. ca njëlbéen ga lañu koy julli
10. ak luñu tabdi tabdi

11. ak fu ñu man a ne rawatina Sëriñ bi
monologue
12. mu wax nag ne bëgg sa bakkan warta tax
 13. ma faat waxtu yàlla wii
 14. ndox mi jaamu yàlla ni man la
 15. suuf si mu lalu nga xam ne moo ko lal
 16. jaamu yàlla la ne man
 17. defu ma ko ngir ndam
 18. defu ma ko ngir xarbaax
 19. dama koy def ngir bañ a faat waxtu yàlla wi
 20. leegi dinaa sanni der bi
 21. mu dem ci ndox mi
 22. lu yagg yagg dina dem ca ci suuf sa
 23. ma man ca taxaw julli
 24. wala ndox mi taxaw ngir ndigalu Yàlla
 25. ndax ab jaam la
 26. ma man a taxaw ci ndox mi julli
 27. wala sama baat bi, sama bakkan bi ma ñakk ko ci ndigalu yàlla
 28. waaye lépp a ma gënal bëgg sama bakkan
 29. tax ma bañ a julli waxtu wi
going to the water
30. bi loolu amee mu sanni der bi
 31. mu war a dem ci ndox mi

Translation

The speaker's evaluation

1. *and the ideal time to perform the afternoon prayer and that of the evening prayer*
2. *overlap with each other.*
3. *Where the afternoon prayer finishes*
4. *is where the evening prayer starts.*
5. *And him (Amadu Bamba) he is among those who have not the right to pray*
6. *past the beginning of the timeline of that prayer.*
7. *You know, all the aqsaabi,*
8. *it is among their things that for each prayer,*
9. *they do it at the beginning,*
10. *no matter how busy they are*
11. *and where they can be, especially the master (Amadu Bamba).*

The monologue of Amadu Bamba

12. *Then he said that to like my life*
13. *should not allow me to skip this prayer of God.*
14. *The water is a slave of God like me.*
15. *The sand that lies on it, that you know, covers it*
16. *Is a slave of God like me.*
17. *I am not doing it for pride,*
18. *I am not doing it for miracle,*

19. *I am doing it to avoid skipping God's prayer (time).*
 20. *Now I am going to throw down the prayer skin,*
 21. *it will go in the water.*
 22. *It will surely reach the shore*
 23. *So that I can stand up and pray.*
 24. *Or the water will stop at God's will*
 25. *because it is a slave,*
 26. *So that I can step on the water and pray.*
 27. *Or my neck, my life, I will lose it in following God's recommendation.*
 28. *But, all this will be better for me than hanging on to my nose life*
 29. *Causing my refusal to pray on time.*
- Going to the water***
30. *Once that happened, he threw his prayer rug*
 31. *he had to go the water*

Dialogue

Wolof Sufi oral narratives often contain dialogues between the shaykh and other protagonists. The rationale for having dialogues in these narratives is to highlight the teachings and thoughts of a shaykh. Indeed, the audience needs to hear the shaykh's voice in addition to his actions. The interlocutors of the shaykh were generally his disciples or the colonialists. For instance many narratives about Amadu Bamba contain dialogues between him and the colonial authorities because of their difficult relationship (Babou 2007). In the passage below, from the narrative 'In the Governor's Office', the governor Ponty, who was in office in Dakar from 1908 to 1915, asked Amadu Bamba about himself and his order, the Muridiyya. In his response, the shaykh answers insisted on the conformity between his movement and the precepts of Islam. The audience of the narrative is a mixed group of Senegalese Muslims in Philadelphia, and the speaker's intention was to present the Muridiyya in such a way that the non-Murids would accept it. Other aspects of the Muridiyya such as the unconditional allegiance to a shaykh, for this life and the hereafter, are not mentioned in this contextual definition. Notice that, in this dialogue, Amadu Bamba's interlocutor is referred to indifferently as Tubaab bi 'the white'. In contrast,

Amadu Bamba is referred by one of his most common denominations, ‘Sëriñ Tuubaa’ or the ‘shaykh of Touba’:

(2)

Complicating action

1. Bi mu ñówee fanaan ba xéy dem wuyuji gouverneur jëkk a ñow sanni der bi daadi julli ñaari rakka yu yàgg, matoon na 45min, di sëlmal ne:

Dialogue

2. - ‘ana yeen nii nit ku ma woo ci yeen?’.
3. **Tubaab bi** ne ko: ‘li ma lay doye du lenn, li may doye du dara ludul rekk takkal la medaayu legion d’honneur’
4. **Sëriñ Tuubaa** ne ko yittewoowu ko. Mu ne ko:
5. - ‘agit di la laaj ñan ñooy say njaboot, ñan ñoo di say njaboot, ba nu xammee leen ci nit ñi, ba am nu nu jëflanteek ñoom ci xeetu teraanga’
6. **Sëñ Tuubaa** ne ko: ‘képp kuy wax Asxadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa, wa asxadu ana mu Xamada Rassuulula, iqamu salaata, itaamu xakaata, sayru ramadaan, xajul bayti, ci sama njaboot nga bokk’

The speaker’s evaluation

7. kon nag képp kuy wax Asxadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa, ci njabootu Sëñ Tuubaa nga bokk

Translation

Complicating action

1. *Then when he came, he spent the night, left in the morning to go to respond to the governor. He first came, threw the prayer rug, then performed two long rakkas², which amounted to 45 minutes, then he finished and said:*

Dialogue

2. - *‘who among all of you has called me’*
3. *The white said to him: ‘the reason I wanted you to come here is nothing. The reason I wanted you come here is nothing other than to give you the legion d’honneur medal’*
4. *Sëriñ Tuubaa told him that he did not need it.*
5. - *‘and also to ask who your people are, who your people are, so that we recognize them among others, so that we treat them with lots of hospitality’.*
6. *Sëñ Tuubaa said to him: ‘ whoever says there is only one God and Mohamed is his prophet’ prays, helps the poor, fasts during the month of Ramadan, accomplishes the pilgrimage to Mecca, it is to my family that you belong’*

The speaker’s final evaluation

7. *Therefore whoever says “Assadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa’, it is to Sëñ Tuuba’s family that you belong’*

² steps of the physical performance of a prayer

Praise

One of the characteristics of Wolof Sufi oral narratives is the presence of embedded praise-evaluations within the complicating action, which are different from the final or closing evaluation. In general, praises follow the shaykh's actions. This practice might be taken from the heritage of the griot, a West-African figure, whose functions include that of praise-singer (see chapter 4). In the example below, the speaker, who happened to be a griot, reports the praises of Amadu Bamba after he finished performing two long *rakkas* in Governor Ponty's office, by a witness called Goorgi Mapaate Mbaay:

(3)

Complicating action

1. Sanni der bi daldi julli ñaari rakka yu yàgg
2. Matoon na 45 min

Mapaate Mbaay's praises

3. Goorgi Mapaate Mbaay daadi koy daadi koy woy foofa, tagg ko, ne ko. "Balla Aysa Buri Sëñ Mbakke Maaram fii nga taxaw fattaliku sa boroom, ku fi mēsa taxaw fätte nga sa boroom ndax sa moroom, yow rekk yaa finjekk a taxaw fattaliku sa boroom'

Complication action (continued)

4. Mu daldi ni gees, Maam Seex Anta, ne ko: 'Seex' mu ne ko 'Mbakke' mu ne ko'may ko'

Translation

Complicating action

1. *he threw down the leather rug, and then prayed (performed) two long rakkas*
2. *It amounted to 45 minutes*

Mapaate Mbaay's praises

3. *Mapaate Mbaay then sung him, sung him there, praised him, told him: "Balla Aysa Buri Sëñ Mbakke Maaram, here you step and recall your load, whoever stepped here before, forgot about his owner (God) because of someone, you are the first one to step here and recall your owner (God)".*

Complicating action (continued)

4. *He turned around, and told Maam Seex Anta: "Seex", he said: "Mbakke", he told him "reward him".*

Genealogy

The last text type found in Wolof Sufi oral narratives is genealogy. This is a text in which a speaker traces the family tree of a shaykh, to justify his capacity of performing miraculous and extraordinary deeds. This practice, also characteristic of a griot's speech style, is rooted in the common belief in this Sufi context that a shaykh inherits the baraka and charisma of his ancestors³. In addition, in Wolof society, a child is expected to reproduce the same good deeds as his parents. In the example below, the speaker recites a short genealogy of El-Hajj Umar Tall, just by recalling the name of his mother, Aadama Aycha, and his position among her sons, *kodd*⁴ or 'oldest child'. Notice that the genealogy is followed by a sequence of praises, in which the speaker extols the spirituality of the shaykh, referred to as *amiirul moominun*⁵ 'commander of the faithful' and his maxim: "yaqoolul Fuutiyu wazaakal afharu al qadariiyu ibn Seyiidu Umaru"⁶:

(4)

- | | |
|----|---|
| | Complicating action |
| 1. | Ñów taxaw ci kanamu Seexu Omarul Fuutiyu |
| | Genealogy |
| 2. | kodd Aadama Aycha |
| | Praise |
| 3. | Amiirul Moominun |
| 4. | Nga xam ni moo daan wax : |
| 5. | "yaqoolul Fuutiyu wazaakal afharu al qadariiyu ibn Seyiidu Umaru" |

³ For more information on charisma and Sufi brotherhoods see Cruise O'Brien (1988), *Charisma and brotherhood in Senegal*

⁴ The Pulaar word for the Wolof word *taaw* 'oldest son'. The speaker, fluent in both Wolof and Pular, praises in Pular El-Hàjj Umar Tall (1797-1864), a shaykh with a Pular background.

⁵ Arabic formula meaning 'Commander of the faithful'

⁶ Arabic formula that translates as 'he is saying, the person from the region of Fuuta, the poor servant of his lord, the son of Seyiidu Umaru'

Translation

Complication

1. Came, stood up before Seexu Omarul Fuutiyu
Genealogy

2. The youngest son of Aadama Aysa

Praise

3. Commander of the faithful

4. You know that he used to say

5. 'he is saying, the person from the region of Fuuta, the poor servant of his lord, the son of Seyiidu Umaru'

The Macro-Structure

At the macro level, the information in Wolof Sufi narratives can be characterized as either background or foreground⁷.

Background and Foreground: Definitions

The background in Wolof Sufi oral narratives consists of sections which do not advance the story. In the background the narrator either provides the audience the supportive information they need to understand the story or gives his personal assessment of that story. The background sections include the pre-story, abstract, orientation, and evaluation. In Wolof, the background is grammatically complex, that is, composed of canonical clauses, which are characterized by the presence of verbal inflections. Some of these verbal inflections fulfill the function of focus.

In contrast, the foreground is simpler, and is composed of narrative clauses. Such clauses do not contain any verbal inflection and are characterized by a subject-verb-object structure. The foreground deals with the main event line. Since the purpose of telling Sufi stories is to relate sequences of events, it is not surprising that the foreground represents the most important section

⁷ For information on background and foreground see Longacre (1968, 1976), Grimes (1975), and Hopper (1979). Hopper defines foreground in narrative discourse as including 'the parts of the narrative belonging to the skeletal structure of the discourse' and background as 'the language of supportive material which does not itself relate the main events' (Hopper, 1979)

of the narratives. It is made up of a complicating action, which, therefore, becomes the main section of Wolof Sufi oral narratives.

Background stages (Non-narrative sequences). Pre-story. The pre-story is the section of the background in which the narrator provides the audience with the general theme of the narrative. It is generally made up of a declarative sentence as in (5) below from ‘Warning about Arrogance’:

(5)

Xeebaate yal nanu ci yalla musal!
May God preserve us from being arrogant!

There are cases where the pre-story consists of a long introductory sequence in which the narrator elaborates at length on the theme of his story as in (6) from ‘Throwing Dates’:

(6)

Pre-story

1. Danu nekk ci jamono boo xam ne xel dafa ubbiku lool
2. Te tubaab yi bokkul ci seen xam-xam baatin
3. Ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo lanu xam
4. moo tax ñi ñu jàngal ñepp
5. lool lañu xam
6. su ma waxee mbiru baatin sax daf leen di jaaxal
7. te baatin *pourtant* am na
8. am na am nan ci prëw
9. gis nañ ñu ko jëffe
10. gis nañ ñu ko wone
11. ma nga *commencer* ca yonent yalla Isaa
 ⁸ waobrio alakmaha waalabrasa waohyee almawta biithni Allahi waonabbiokum
12. bima takuloona wama taddakhiroona fee buyootikum inna fee thalika laayatan
 lakum in kuntum mumineena
13. kooku ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
14. yalla mayoon ko loolu
15. wéral gaana yi
16. fekk ku dee mu ni ko jógal mu jóg
17. wax ak moom soxlaam
18. bayyiwaat ko mu tëdd

⁸ see footnote 3, in chapter 2

19. loolu yépp ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
20. yonent bi itam sax am na ay *miracles*/
21. waaye moom dafa nekk *superieuru* yonent yi
22. mootax nanguwunu waxal ko benn *miracle* bu ëpp alxuraan
23. *monumaa jizatuhood alxuraanul karim (Arabic language)*
24. bañ ca jógee
25. nitu yalla dañuy am ay *miracles* yu ñuy wone di ko def
26. nekk fii wax ag ku sori
27. gis nañ ñu ci def ba bayyi

Translation

Pre-story

1. *We are in a time when people's minds are very open*
2. *and the white people, do not believe in mystical knowledge*
3. *them, they know something one can touch with his hand,*
4. *that is why the people they trained*
5. *it is what they know*
6. *Even when I talk about mysticism, it surprises them*
7. *but, mysticism does exist*
8. *it does exist; we have proof of its existence*
9. *we have seen people who practiced it*
10. *we have seen people who showed it*
11. *It started from the prophet of God, Jesus*
Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa
12. *wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bimaat takuloona wamaa*
tadahuroon (Arabic language)
13. *that is among his miracles*
14. *God gave him that capability*
15. *to heal the leper*
16. *to find a dead person and tell him to wake, and then he wakes up*
17. *talk with him about his needs*
18. *let him sleep (lie down) again*
19. *All that is among his miracles*
20. *Even the prophet also had miracles*
21. *but, him, he is superior to other prophets*
22. *that is why we do not accept to talk about any that he did, which is superior to the*
Qur'an.
23. *monumaa jizatuhood alxuraanul karim*
24. *after him*
25. *people of God have miracles that they show and perform*
26. *be here and speak with someone far away*
27. *we have seen people who did it already*

Abstract. The abstract is the section in which the narrator states the point of the story, what or whom it is about. Generally the story is about a shaykh as (7), from ‘When the shadows will be the same’:

(7)

Abstract

Sëñ Tuubaa ci boppam, ma musal leen ci benn xisa
Sëriñ Tuubaa, let me tell you a story about him.

Sometimes, the story is a speaker’s version of events involving a Sufi shaykh. For instance the abstract in (8) contains the speaker’s intention to explain the reason Amadu Bamba had decided to pray on the water.

(8)

Abstract

foofa fekk na li ko sabab
there what causes it (the prayer on the waters)

Orientation. The orientation is the section in which the narrator provides his audience with the information they need about the setting, time, and characters involved in the story. In (9), from ‘The Lion Chasing the Warthog’, the narrator provides the audience with the location of the event, ‘fii kër Sëñ Saaliw gi ne’ ‘*here where the home of Sëñ Saaliw⁹ is*’, the approximate date of that event, ‘ci garab gii mu taalife¹⁰ *mat la bul fawseeni*’ ‘*under this tree, where he wrote his poem mat la bul fawseeni (Arabic)*’. In the orientation, the speaker also cites Sëñ Saaliw as the source of his story, ‘Sëñ Saaliw dégg naa ci làmmiñam mu ni’ [literally, ‘*Sëñ Saaliw I heard from his own tongue he said*’] or ‘*I heard Sëñ Saaliw say*’.

(9)

⁹ Serigne Saliou Mbacke (the French spelling of Sëñ Saaliw Mbacke) was the general caliph of the Murids at the time when this story was told.

¹⁰ Title of one of Amadu Bamba’s poems, for ‘*mat la bul fawseeni*’, written before his trip into exile see footnote 4 in chapter 1

Orientation

1. Ndax fii kër Sëñ Saaliw gi ne
2. Sëñ Saaliw dégg naa ci làmmiñam mu ni
3. Sëñ bi toog na fii di bind
4. ci garab gii mu taalife *mat la bul fawseeni*
5. lu meñ nig dimb la woon
6. mu toog fii

Translation

Orientation

1. *Because here where the home of Sëñ Saaliw is*
2. *I heard Sëñ Saaliw say that*
3. *the shaykh sat here to write*
4. *Under this tree, where he wrote his poem 'Mat la bul fawseeni' (Arabic)*
5. *It was something like a pear tree*
6. *He sat here*

There are cases where an orientation is embedded within the complicating action, as in (10) and (11) below. In (10), the narrator gives background information to his listeners with regard to a house Amadu Bamba's younger brother, Maam Seex Anta Mbakke, owned in Dakar at the time of the narrated events, which Amadu Bamba did not occupy during his stay in Dakar.

(10)

1. Bi mu ñówee
2. fekk bi mu jógee ci géej gi Maam Seex Anta jëndoon na fa kër
3. waaye Sëñ Tuubaa dafaa wacc waaye fanaanu fa.

Translation

1. *When he arrived,*
2. *in fact, when he returned from the ocean, Maam Seex Anta bought a house there.*
3. *But Sëñ Tuuba just arrived there but did not spend the night'.*

In (11), from the narrative 'Staying with the Shaykh', the narrator gives the audience important information with regard to his withdrawal from the Qur'anic school because of the new responsibilities his shaykh, Ababacar Sy (1885-1957), has given him. This information is

necessary for the audience to understand what comes next in the story, that is, his father's complaint.

(11)

Keroog laa gëj a jàng Alxuraan ci jataay boobu
I haven't been studying the Qur'an since that day.

Evaluation. The evaluation is the section in which the narrator gives his personal assessment of an action performed by a shaykh. It can also be a character's assessment of an action performed by another character. The evaluation generally includes embedded praises and genealogies of the shaykh as well as a speaker's final assessment of a story. In (12) below, from the narrative 'Warning about Arrogance', the final evaluation consists of closing remarks for the story. The narrator warns himself and the audience against the consequences of being arrogant, after relating the story of an arrogant shaykh whose knowledge was withdrawn by God.

(12)

1. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
2. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
3. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
4. LéppiYalla yal na rey ci nun niYalla reye ci nun!
5. Nit ak kam moom noo yem
6. Bu dee fas wi
7. Yeen a bokk ku leen bind
8. Kenn ku ne ci yeen am nga bisub juddu
9. Na la wóor ne sa besub de ngi sa kanam yaag fas wi

Translation

1. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
2. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
3. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
4. *May all about God be big to us like God!*
5. *A person and his belonging*
6. *If it is a horse*
7. *You belong to the same creator*
8. *Each of you has a day of birth*
9. *Be sure that your day of death is forthcoming you and the horse.*

Foreground stage: the complicating action (narrative sequences). The complicating action is the stage where the Sufi narrator relates the main events or actions. It is a complex stage which contains embedded text types such as dialogue, monologue, praise, and genealogy, along with narrative clauses containing the main actions. The complicating action highlights the actions performed by a shaykh, which are constantly evaluated by the narrator or other protagonists of the story. The verbs in the complicating action are active verbs, as opposed to stative verbs, which characterize the background sections. The example (13), taken from the narrative ‘Praying on the Water’, is a complex complicating action, which contains an embedded dialogue, monologue, and evaluation, and a series of actions. In (13), verbs of action in the foreground sections, that is, the section of the complicating action that advances the story, are in bold characters.

(13)

Complicating action

Main actions

1. tubaab yi **natt** waxtu yi
2. julli tisbaar jot

Embedded dialogue

3. ñu ne ko
4. boo jullee ci gaal gi
5. daŋ ñu tooñ
6. te boo julliwul wóor nanu ne
7. danga tooñ sa boroom

Main actions

8. Tisbaar jot muy **naxanteek** ñoom
9. Ngir ñu may ko mu julli
10. *Trois heures* jot mu **jàppaat** bëgg a tekk der bi
11. Ñu **gàntu**
12. Mu dem ba *quatre heures* jot ci misaal
13. Mu **waajaat** bëgg a julli
14. Ñu **gàntu**

The narrator’s embedded evaluation

15. Te nag moxtaaru tisbaar ak mum takkusan
16. Dañoo lënkëloo

17. Fa muxtaarum tisbaar yem
18. Ca cat la fa la moxtaarum takkusaan tàmbalee
19. Te moom dafa bokk ci ñi nga xam ne sañuñoo julli waxtu
20. ca njëlbéenu waxtu waxtu wa
21. xam ngeen aqsaabi yépp
22. loolu dafa bokk ci seeni kii waxtu wu ne
23. ca njëlbéen ga lañu koy julli
24. ak luñu tabdi tabdi
25. ak fu ñu man a ne rawatina Sëriñ bi

Amadu Bamba's embedded monologue

26. mu wax nag ne bëgg sa bakkan warta tax
27. ma faat waxtu yàlla wii
28. ndox mi jaamu yàlla ni man la
29. suuf si mu lalu nga xam ne moo ko lal
30. jaamu yàlla la ne man
31. defu ma ko ngir ndam
32. defu ma ko ngir xarbaax
33. dama koy def ngir bañ a faat waxtu yàlla wi
34. leegi dinaa sanni der bi
35. mu dem ci ndox mi
36. lu yàgg yàgg dina dem ca ci suuf sa
37. ma man ca taxaw julli
38. wala ndox mi taxaw ngir ndigalu Yàlla
39. ndax ab jaam la
40. ma man a taxaw ci ndox mi julli
41. wala sama baat bi, sama bakkan bi ma ñakk ko ci ndigalu yàlla
42. waaye lépp a ma gënal bëgg sama bakkan
43. tax ma bañ a julli waxtu wi

Main actions

44. bi loolu amee mu **sanni** der bi
45. mu war a dem ci ndox mi
46. boobu Sëñ bi ci *quarante ans* la tollu
47. ci *zaayir* am na kàttan lool
48. dafa dafa dafa **dajele** kaamil bi ak der bi
49. **jiital** der bi
50. **boq** kaamil bi
51. **meeb** mbubb mi
52. daadi **cëppeelu** ak doole

Translation

Complicating action

Main actions

1. *the white counted the hours*
2. *it was time for the afternoon prayer*

Embedded dialogue

3. *they told him:*
4. *“if you pray on this ship*
5. *you will offend us*
6. *and if you do not pray, we are certain that*
7. *you will offend your lord”*

Main actions

8. *It was time for the afternoon prayer and he **negotiated** with them*
9. *For them to let him pray*
10. *It was three o'clock, he did his ablutions again and wanted to set down his prayer skin*
11. *They **refused***
12. *He went until say four o'clock*
13. ***did** his ablutions again to get ready for the prayer*
14. *They **refused***

The narrator's embedded evaluation

15. *and the ideal time to perform the afternoon prayer and that of the evening prayer*
16. *overlap with each other.*
17. *Where the afternoon prayer finishes*
18. *is where the evening prayer starts.*
19. *And him (Amadu Bamba) he is among those who have not the right to pray*
20. *past the beginning of the timeline of that prayer.*
21. *You know, all the aqsaabi,*
22. *it is among their things that for each prayer,*
23. *they do it at the beginning,*
24. *no matter how busy they are*
25. *and where they can be, especially the master (Amadu Bamba).*

Amadu Bamba's embedded monologue

26. *Then he said that to like my my life*
27. *should not allow me to skip this prayer of God.*
28. *The water is a slave of God like me.*
29. *The sand that lies on it, that you know, covers it*
30. *Is a slave of God like me.*
31. *I am not doing it for pride,*
32. *I am not doing it for miracle,*
33. *I am doing it to avoid skipping God's prayer (time).*
34. *Now I am going to throw down the prayer skin,*
35. *it will go in the water.*
36. *It will surely reach the shore*
37. *So that I can stand up and pray.*
38. *Or the water will stop at God's will*
39. *because it is a slave,*
40. *So that I can step on the water and pray.*
41. *Or my neck, my life, I will lose it in following God's recommendation.*
42. *But, all this will be better for me than hanging on my life*
43. *Causing my refusal to pray on time.*

Main actions

44. *Once that happened, he **threw** his prayer rug*
45. *he had to go the water*
46. *at that time, the shaykh was forty years old*
47. *in zaayir (overtly) he was very strong*
48. *“He he he **wrapped up** the Quran and the prayer skin,*
49. ***threw** the prayer skin on the water first,*
50. ***held** the holy book under his shoulder,*
51. ***pulled up** his robe a little bit,*
52. *and then **dismounted** with strength.*

Temporal Sequencing

The narrative clauses, which form the complicating action, maintain the temporal sequencing of the events or action. In contrast, the embedded dialogues, monologues, or evaluations, do not advance the story. In (14), from ‘Praying on the Water’, clauses 1 through 5 containing actions accomplished by the shaykh (wrapping up of the Quran and prayer skin, throwing of that prayer skin, and so on) are temporally sequenced. They move the time forward (Dry 1981, 1983). In contrast, clauses 6 and 7 are descriptive clauses; they do not advance the story, they support it (Hopper 1979). In 6 and 7, the narrator describes the mood of the ship crew when they saw the shaykh going to the water. They thought he would drown:

(14)

Narrative clauses (temporal sequencing)

1. dafa dafa dafa **dajele** kaamil bi ak der bi
2. **jiital** der bi
3. **boq** kaamil bi
4. **meeb** mbubb mi
5. daadi **cëppeelu** ak doole

Non-narrative clauses (background information)

6. tubaab yaan koy xool ñoom
7. seen xol sedd lool defe ni leeg mu génn àddina

Translation

Narrative clauses (temporal sequencing)

1. *“He he he wrapped up the holy Quran book and the prayer skin,*
2. *threw the prayer skin on the water first,*
3. *held the holy book under his shoulder,*

4. *pulled up a little bit his robe,*
5. *and then dismounted with strength.*
- Non-narrative clauses (background information)***
6. *The white people, them, looked at him,*
7. *with happiness, hoping that he would soon leave this world (die).*

The Micro-Structure

In Wolof Sufi oral narratives, the background is composed of a pre-story, abstract, orientation and evaluation. These sections are made up of non-narrative clauses or canonical clauses. In contrast, the foreground, that is, the complicating action, is made up of narrative clauses.

Canonical clauses

A canonical clause in Wolof contains a VP that consists of an auxiliary encoding number and person, which sometimes fulfills the syntactic function of focus, and a main verb that also encodes tense. Canonical clauses are free clauses (Labov & Waletzky 1967) that appear in the background sections, that is, the pre-story, abstract, orientation, and evaluation. They can be a matrix clause of a subordinate clause. For instance in (15), taken from the pre-story of the narrative ‘Throwing Dates’, the verb ‘ubbiku’ ‘to be open’ is verb-focused by the verb-focus auxiliary *dafa*. The speaker here launches his story about the miracle of Aliw Tamaasiin, by introducing the general theme, miracles in religions.

(15)

xel dafa ubbiku lool
 mind 3sfoc open-refl very
 ‘mind is very open’

Narrative clauses

Narrative clauses are clauses that are temporally sequenced. They make up the foreground of Wolof Sufi oral narratives, that is, the complicating action stage, where actions are sequentially ordered. In the example below (16) from the same narrative as in (15), ‘Throwing

Dates’, the action of seeing the dates is preceded by that of entering the field. The clauses do not contain any auxiliary or focus auxiliary, but simply a subject, verb, and complement:

(16)

- | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|---------|------------|----------|------|
| 1. | mu | dugg | ci tool | bi | rekk |
| | 3s.subj | v.enter | in n.field | the only | |
| 2. | gis | benn | tiggu | tandarma | |
| | v.see | a | n.bunch-of | dates | |
| 1. | <i>he enter/entered the field</i> | | | | |
| 2. | <i>see/saw a bunch of dates</i> | | | | |

Below clausal level

Tense and aspect. Tense markers. Tenses in Wolof are present, preterit (or simple past), present perfect, future, and conditional (Ndiaye, 2004). All these tenses, except present tense, which is unmarked, are marked by a suffix, which sometimes attaches to the verb, and sometimes is unattached.

The tense in Wolof narrative clauses is generally interpreted as being either historical present or preterit (Diouf & Yaguello 1991, Perrino 2005). In this way, like in English and French, Wolof may be said to have a historical present, which is a present tense used to express past actions. In Wolof Sufi oral narratives, the complicating action is made up of uninflected verbs in historical present or preterit. For instance in (17), from the narrative ‘Staying with the Shaykh’, the actions performed by the shaykh are expressed either in historical present or preterit, depending on the way we look at them:

(17)

1. Mu ubbi bunt tēj, ubbiwaat bunt tēj, ubbi pantere,
2. nu bokk toog
3. Mu jox ma materyel bi moo waaje waxtu julli yépp

Translation

1. He opened/opens a door, opens another door , opens a storage room,
2. we both sat/sit down

3. He gave/gives me the material he uses for getting ready for the prayer

In contrast, in Wolof canonical clauses, which characterize the background sections of the narratives, other tenses such as past, past progressive and future are used.

In Wolof, the past tense marker, also referred to as remote past marker (Ngom 2003), is the suffix –oon (after a consonant) or -woon (after a vowel). It is followed by perfective **na** or preceded by verb focus marker **dafa**. The difference between this tense and preterit, described above, is that the ‘remote past’ refers to a time considered farther in the past, as opposed to preterit. That is the reason ‘remote past’ is used to describe a situation prior to the complicating action. In cases where the actions were performed habitually in the past, suffixes –aan or waan (after vowel) are suffixed to the verb. In (18a), from ‘Warning about Arrogance’, the speaker refers to the number of disciples Aliw Tamaasiin (the arrogant shaykh) had prior to the withdrawal of his knowledge by God. In (18b), from ‘The lion chasing the warthog’, the narrator informs his audience about the existence of a lion in Touba before it became the modern city it is today. In (18c), the speaker explains why he could not attend a meeting:

(18a)

Mbolloom ma bari**woon** na lool lool
n.people-poss.3s det.distal.the v.be-a-lot.present.perf. perf. adv.very adv.very
Literally, ‘his disciples were a lot’/(He had) a lot of disciples’

(18b)

Fii jumaa ji ne, gaynde engi fi **woon**
Adv.here n.mosque det.the v.be n.lion aux.3sg adv.here present.perf
Here where the mosque is, there was a lion

(18c)

Dama dem**ooon** Tuubaa
v.foc. v.go.present.perf. Proper.n.Tuubaa
‘I went to Tuubaa’

The future tense is marked by an auxiliary that is composed of the imperfective marker *di-* plus the perfective verbal marker, which agrees in person and number with the subject as in (19), from the monologue of shaykh Amadu Bamba in the narrative ‘going to the waters’:

(19)

1. leegi **dinaa** sannu der bi
 adv. Fut.1s. v.throw n.prayer rug det.the
2. mu dem ci ndox mi
 2s.subj v.go prep.to n.water det.the
3. *Now I am going to/will throw down the prayer skin,*
4. *it will go in the water.*

Aspect. The verbal system of Wolof is more aspectually oriented than temporally oriented.

There are two major aspectual divisions in Wolof: imperfective and perfective. Imperfective means that the action is on-going as in a sort of progressive (the equivalent of English present progressive), or not started yet (the equivalent of future). In contrast, perfective means that has already been accomplished (the equivalent of past). The imperfective marker is the morpheme *di-*, which is also the Wolof copula (see (20a), clause 2) or its allomorph *-y* (McLaughlin 2004). The morpheme *di-* is attached to perfective to form the future in Wolof (see the preceding section). The morpheme *-y* is always attached to a word ending with a vowel. Stative verbs and adjectives are inherently imperfective and do not require the imperfective marker, unless the meaning is a habitual state. In addition to *di* and *-y*, there is the auxiliary **na**, which is a marker of perfective *par excellence* (Diouf 2001:128, Robert 1991:207).

In Wolof Sufi oral narratives, the foreground section, that is, the complicating action, is characterized by the absence of inflection markers; verbs are in their bare form, without any tense or aspectual marker although the actions expressed by those verbs are already completed. In contrast, the background section, which includes the pre-story, abstract, orientation and evaluation as well as embedded dialogues, monologues, praises, and genealogies, imperfective

markers *di* or *-y*, and perfective **na** may be used. The perfective **na** can be found in the areas where the narrator initiates or closes his story or make comments. In (20b), from the narrative ‘Throwing Dates’, the narrator launches his story about Aliw Tamaasiin using the perfective:

(20a)

1. agit di la laaj ñan ñooy say njaboot,
2. ñan ñoo **di** say njaboot,
3. ba nu xammee leen ci nit ñi,
4. ba am nu nu jëflanteek ñoom ci xeetu teraanga

Translation

1. *and also to ask who your people are,*
2. *who your people are,*
3. *so that we recognize them among others,*
4. *so that we treat them with lots of hospitality’.*

(20b)

1. Seex Axmat Tijaan toog **na** bés
2. ci buntu kërám néegam
3. *Seex Axmat Tijaan one day sat/was sitting*
4. *At his doorstep, his room,*

Combination forms. When tense markers *-oon* and *-aan* are prefixed by aspectual marker *di* (the ‘i’ deletes) to form separate morphemes *doon* and *daan*, they respectively express imperfective past, the equivalent of English ‘was doing X’, and habitual imperfective past, the equivalent of ‘used to do X’. Example (21) is from the narrative ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’. The speaker here sets the background of his story featuring a king:

(21)

Gisoo buur bi ma waa ji **doon** nettali,
 v.see.neg.2s n.king det.the 1sObj n.guy det.the imperf.past v.tell (about)
Don’t you see the king that the guy was telling a story about?

Wolof auxiliaries in narratives

Non- focusing auxiliaries in Wolof. In total, there are ten auxiliaries in the Wolof verbal system: perfect, aorist, presentative, verb focus, subject focus, negation, negation focus, obligative, and imperative. These auxiliaries are found in Wolof canonical clauses, which make up the background sections of Sufi narratives. As one sees, only four of the auxiliaries are focusing auxiliaries (verb focus, subject focus, object focus, and negation focus), the rest are non-focusing auxiliaries. In this section, I shall briefly present two of the non-focusing auxiliaries, perfect and presentative, which are used in Wolof Sufi oral narratives and whose study will shed light on the understanding of the narratives.¹¹

Perfective NA. Perfect is expressed by a VP inflected with an auxiliary, which agrees in number and person with the subject. The action or state expressed by the verb was completed in the past. Perfective is used in the orientation stage of the narratives to start the story, as in (22a), from ‘The Lion Chasing the Warthog’, in which the narrator cites the source of his story. In (22b), the speaker provides his audience with supportive background information about the length of Amadu Bamba’s prayer in the governor’s office (from the narrative ‘In the Governor’s Office). The purpose of giving this information is to show the courage of the shaykh, although he was facing a real threat. He will later be exiled to Gabon.

(22a)

Sëriñ Saaliw dégg **naa** ci làmmiñam
Proper.n. Sëñ Saaliw v.hear perf. prep.from n.mouth.poss
‘Sëñ Saaliw, I heard from his own mouth’

(22b)

matoon **na** 45min
it amounted to 45 minutes

¹¹ For a discussion of negation, negation focus, obligative, and imperative see Robert (1991, 2001, and 2007).

Presentative –ANGI. The proximal **-angi** and its distal counterpart **-anga** are bound morphemes, which Diouf (2001) and Robert (1999) refer to as presentatives, used with a verb to express ongoing actions or states. In that case, the event occurs at the same time as the utterance. A presentative can be used to define a situation (Robert 1991:217) or locate people, objects or things. For instance in (23) below, from ‘Throwing Dates’, the narrator uses the presentative to situate Aliw Tamaasiin away from his shaykh who was in a different city. The information about the distance between the two protagonists is given to persuade the audience that Aliw Tamaasiin has performed a real miracle:

(23)

Aliw Tamaasiin **anga** ca Tamaasiin ak fa mu nekk ak Faas ni mu soree
Aliw Tamaasiin was in Tamaasiin, which was far away from Faas (where Seex Axmat Tijan was)

Focus auxiliaries in Wolof. The grammaticalization of focus is characteristic of Niger-Congo languages in general, that is, focus is accomplished via a focus marker in some languages (like Pulaar) or in the verbal construction itself, as in Wolof¹². In Wolof, the focus marker also carries information about person and number. There are three focus markers: subject focus, verb focus, and object focus. The form of each marker depends on the syntactic status of the focused constituent (subject, verb, or complement/object). The focused constituent of a clause has a double function, in the syntactic structure (as subject, predicate or complement) and the information structure (as new information as opposed to the given information)¹³. Subject, verb, and object focus are characteristic of the background in Wolof Sufi oral narratives, in which they help provide new information about a situation, setting or character, to the audience.

¹² See Heine & Nurse (2000) for more information.

¹³ For more on the study of the focus in Wolof, see Robert (2000), and also the paper she presented at the International workshop on Atlantic languages at the University of Hamburg, in February, 2007

Subject focus. In subject focus constructions the subject is in first position (left-dislocated), followed by a synthetic focus auxiliary, which carries information about person and number. The purpose of focusing the subject is to designate it among various possible subjects. The existence of a subject is presupposed, but what is asserted is the qualitative designation of that subject (Robert 2007). For instance, in (24a), the subject, Mapaate Mbaay, is the right one (among other possible subjects). The fact there was a chef/cook in the governor’s household is assumed to be known to the audience. But, what the audience may not know is the identity of that chef, which the speaker gives them, using subject-focus. The subject Mapaate Mbaay is followed by the subject-focus marker, **moo**, and then the presupposed predicate ‘doonoon cuisinier ba’ was the cook’. The focus auxiliary **moo** agrees in person and number with that subject.

(24a)

[Goor gu ñuy wax Mapaate Mbaay] **moo** doonoon *cuisinier* ba
 [rel. clause] Subj. sfoc.3s v.be.past n.chef det. s.distal.the
 ‘Literally, a man called Mapaate Mbaay, he was the cook’

In (24b), the speaker selected faithfulness, the quality he believes was the best to characterize his shaykh, Ababacar Sy, among other possible qualities, and subject-focused that quality. This example is from the narrative ‘An Example of Faithfulness’. The subject, that is, the relative clause ‘ku dul soppeeku ba muk’ ‘someone who never changes’, is followed by the focus marker, **mooy** (notice the imperfective marker –y attached to the auxiliary), which also plays the role of copula of the presupposed predicate ‘mooy Sëriñ Baabakar Si’ ‘is Sëriñ Baabakar Si’. It is as if the speaker had to answer the question ‘kan mooy Sëriñ Baabakar Si?’ ‘Who is Sëriñ Baabakar Si?’ Indeed the 2007 *Gàmmu* of Tivaouane, from which this narrative has been recorded, was dedicated to Ababacar Sy.

(24b)

Ku dul soppeeku ba abada **mooy** Sëriñ Baabakar Si
rel.3s neg.3s. v.change adv.until n.abada sfoc.3s. proper.n. Sëriñ Baabakar Si
'Someone who never changes was Sëriñ Baabakar Si'

Object focus. In object focus constructions, the object is in first position (left-dislocated), followed by the focus marker, which agrees in person and number with the subject, not the object. The purpose of focusing the object is to designate it among various possible objects. The existence of an object is presupposed or given. What is unknown is the identity of that object.

In (25a) below, the existence of water is known/given but its definition as ‘slave of God’, by shaykh Amadu Bamba, is new. The function of the object focusing here is to tell the audience the reason Amadu Bamba went in the waters. The reason is the speaker believed Amadu Bamba went to the water to worship God, and therefore, did not have to fear another worshiper of the same God, the water. He is reporting directly here Amadu Bamba’s justification of his action. The subject ‘ndox mi’ ‘the water’ is topicalized’ in the front of the clause, followed by the object ‘jaamu Yalla’ ‘a slave/worshiper of God’, and then by the focus marker *la*.

(25a)

ndox mi jaamu yàlla ni man **la**
'The water is a slave/worshiper of God like me.'

In (25b), the object-focus auxiliary **la**, agrees in person and number, not with the object (*'Maam Seex Anta ak ay taalibeem'* ‘Maam Seex Anta and his students/disciples’), which is plural, but with the subject (*'Sëriñ Tuuba'* ‘the shaykh/master of Tuubaa’), which is in singular:

(25b)

Maam Seex Anta ak ay taalibeem **la** àndal dem
proper n. Obj. prep.with det.ind.p. n.students ofoc.3s v. go-with v.go
'It was with Maam Seex Anta and some of his students that he went with'

Notice the change from subject-focus auxiliary **moo** (in 24a and 24b) to object-focus marker **la** in (25a and 25b).

Verb focus. In Wolof verb focus constructions the focus marker precedes the verb and agrees in person and number with the subject, which can be topicalized. Verb focus is generally used to start a story, define a situation or give an explanation. Sometimes it is used for precision or rectification as well. In the example below (26), from the narrative ‘In the Governor’s Office’, it seems that the speaker wants to rectify the assumption that Amadu Bamba has spent the night at the house his younger brother Maam Seex Anta (Mame Cheikh Anta Mbacke (1861? - 1941) had in Dakar at the time of the events. According to the speaker, the shaykh got off there but did not stay the night. The verb-focus auxiliary **dafa** is shortened to **daf** but, in the meantime, the locative expression **fa** ‘there’ is lengthened to **faa** by taking an additional ‘a’, which looks like a compensation of the shortening of **dafa**.

(26)

Sëñ Tuubaa **daf** **faa** wacc waaye fanaanu fa
proper n.subj. v.foc3s. loc.dist. v. get off but v. spend the night. neg loc.dist.
‘Sëñ Tuubaa just got off there but did not spend the night’

The next chapter talks about the cultural context in which the Wolof Sufi oral narratives are anchored, and the extent to which it has an impact on the structure of the narratives.

CHAPTER 4
THE SOCIAL SETTING OF WOLOF SUFI NARRATIVES

Corpus of Texts

Oral discourse in West-African societies in many ways consists of a corpus of texts, interconnected and dialogic (Bakhtin 1981, Barber 2007). This conception of text developed by Barber (2007) draws upon the Latin etymology of the word, ‘a tissue of words, from Latin *texere*, meaning literally to weave, join together, plait or braid’ (Greetham 1999:26, Barber 2007). Verbal texts, as Barber refers to the corpus of oral discourse, are ‘locally-produced texts, composed and transmitted according to people’s own conventions, in their own language, encapsulating their own concerns’, which ‘do seem to speak as if from ‘within’’ (Barber 2007:3). In other words, texts, whether written or spoken, are rooted in their context of production and reception. From early on, in their edited volume, *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking*, Bauman & Sherzer (1974:6) tackled the same issue and used the term ‘speech community’, which they define in terms of ‘the shared or mutually complementary knowledge and ability (competence) of its member for the production and interpretation of socially appropriate speech’. Along the same lines, these authors speak of ‘the set of community norms, operating principles, strategies, and values, which guide the production and interpretation of speech, the community ground rules of speaking’.

Wolof Sufi oral narratives can be considered both globally and locally framed. Indeed, the norms of speaking in Sufi Islamic communities the norms of speaking draw upon a long tradition, departing from the *hadiths* or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. The latter is considered a model for all Muslims, and his life and teachings are recounted in Muslim societies as an example for other Muslims. The same practice is found among members of other Abrahamic religions, namely Christians and Jews. Indeed, the Bible is full of stories about

Jesus. Jesus' walking on the water and Moses' rod are certainly among the most popular stories of miracles. The stories are interconnected, woven and shared among adherents of each religion. The performance of these narratives is, in effect, a remembrance of the qualities of past religious figures, and an appeal for people to reproduce and perpetuate those qualities.

Sufi West-African communities have adapted locally the tradition mentioned above, and they recount the lives and miraculous deeds of their shaykhs at Sufi ceremonies. Local norms for public speaking set by the griot complexify this tradition. Moreover, Sufi oral narratives are constitutive of Sufi oral discourse, and are the major means of communication among followers of Sufi orders. The stories people tell each other are already known to almost every Sufi adherent. People tell them just to remind themselves of the good deeds of their leaders and to reinforce their faith in them. The episodic nature of such stories has given them a structure that differs from regular stories such as narratives of personal experience described by Labov & Waletzky (1967). In the West-African Sufi tradition, narratives are boundless because every speaker takes on an episode of a master text and links it to previous or incoming ones recounted by other speakers. In the narrative 'The Prediction', the speaker ends his story by telling his audience that he just wanted to share this episode with them, which they can add to what they already know:

(1)

1. Loolu dama leen koy seede
2. Ngeen dolli ko ca la ngéen xam
1. *This, I am sharing it with you*
2. *So that you can add it to what you already know*

Also, every speaker adds his personal skills to the way he tells the story, which make his account somehow different from other versions of the same story. In addition, the context of the narrative performance has an impact on the framing of the story. Some parts of the story may be

given preeminence over others while some other parts may be left out. The next section discusses an important figure in the ethnography of speaking in West-African societies including the Wolof society, namely the griot, who has set the local norms for public speaking in the context of Wolof Sufi oral narratives. The speech functions of the griot will also be discussed.

Ethnography of Speaking in Wolof Society

In West-African societies, the figure of the griot, *gɛwɛl* in Wolof, is fundamental in the weaving and spreading of texts. Indeed, the *gɛwɛl* is the one who set the fundamentals of public speaking as he or she is known for his or her verbal skills, inherited from his or her ancestors. In *Sundiata: an Epic of Old Mali* (1960), an epic book by Guinean historian and writer Djibril Tamsir Niane, the *gɛwɛl*, Djeli Mamadou Kouyate, stipulates at the beginning of the novel that he took the epic from his grandparents, who took it from his great-grand-parents. However, although the *gɛwɛl* has set the norms for public speaking, Sufi oral narratives are not told by the *gɛwɛls* only, they are told by everyone. The rationale for having a section on the griot is because of his or her multiple speech functions in the Wolof society, which includes that of storyteller, surrogate, historian, praise-singer and genealogist. However, some of his functions such as that of storyteller and surrogate speaker are sometimes fulfilled by non-griots.

Gɛwɛl as Verbal Artist

Irvine (1974) refers to the *gɛwɛl* as a ‘verbal specialist’, whose speech serves several communicative functions in Wolof society. These functions include that of *jottalikat* ‘transmitter’, *taggaatekat* ‘praise-singer’, *nettalikatu cosaan* or historian and *bàkkkat* ‘praise-drummer’. These multiples functions and the skills attached to them serve as paradigms for Wolof verbal performance so that others who are not *gɛwɛl*, such as some of the narrators of the narratives I collected, use the same techniques. Moreover, when a non-*gɛwɛl* speaks greatly in

public, people tend to tell him or her: *danga ngéwële*, meaning ‘you speak like someone from a *géwël* lineage’

The first function, the *jottalikat* or surrogate speaker, consists of repeating aloud the words uttered softly by a notable. This function is a widespread function in many West-African societies and is not always fulfilled by a *géwël*, just like the other functions enumerated above. Indeed, in West-African societies, speaking is seen as revealing of one’s personality. Wolof people often say: *ku wax feeñ* ‘speaking means revealing oneself to the public’. Therefore, speaking in public is taken very carefully by government officials, local chiefs, and marabouts, who usually have recourse to the service of a verbal specialist as a surrogate for their public speeches (Yankah 1995, McLaughlin & Villalón 2008). The surrogate speakers referred to by different terms throughout the African continent, play the same roles in their respective societies. The Akan people call him *okyeame*, the Ijo in Nigeria refer to him as *ogulasowie*, the Fon in Benin name him the *meu* - who speaks from the king to the people – and the *migan* – who speaks from the people to the king (Yankah 1995, 1998). In the Mande region, he is referred to as *jeli*, the equivalent of the *géwël* among the Wolof. But, it is important to understand that, although the *géwël* can or often fulfills the function of surrogate speaker, *jottalikat* in Wolof, a non-*géwël* can also fulfill that function. When the surrogate happens to be a *géwël*, his speech is characterized by features of *géwël* speech, presented in the chart below, from Irvine (1990).

Waxu <i>géer</i> (noble-speech style)		Waxu <i>géwël</i> (<i>géwël</i> -speech style)	
Pitch:	low		high
Volume:	soft		loud
Voice:	breathy		clear
Contour:	pitch nucleus last		pitch nucleus first
Dynamic range:	narrow		wide

Wolof style contrasts in prosody (Irvine 1990)

Géwël-speech style has become the norm in public speech. In the study done by McLaughlin & Villalón (2009), the *jottalikat* is not a *géwël*, but a close cousin of the marabout (Sufi master), with whom he studied Qur'an as a child. The *géwël*, seated next to the surrogate, assists with holding the microphone but did not mediate the marabout's words, as he did on other occasions.

The second function, that of the praise-singer, generally consists of reciting the genealogy of a person, usually a noble born or *géer*, and enumerating the good deeds his ancestors and he have performed.

The following example is taken from Irvine's (1979) data on praise-songs performed in *Kër Matar*, a village in Senegal where she conducted her dissertation fieldwork. A praise-singer retraces the genealogy of a *géer* or noble born:

(2)

Paté Ndaw Maabadyi, buur la woon. Moo di ko Magueye am tya Penda Magueye ak Koodu Kumba Magueye. Am tya Kura Magueye. Mbenda Magueye, Mbenda Magueye, nyu yobbu ko dikk bu nyu naan Kuurë. Mu am tya Mawo Mbenda. Mawo Mbenda, bu tya nyu musa hare, dyam. Koodu Kumba Magueye magg, nyu yobbu ko dikk nyu wah Gateen. Mu am fa koodu kumba, ak Galo koodu kumba, Astu koodu kumba, ak Makhudya koodu kumba.

Translation (by the author)

Paté Ndaw Maabaydi (praise-name for the Ndaw family), he was a king. It was he that Magueye had there, Penda Magueye and Koodu Kumba Magueye. She had there kura magueye. Mbenda magueye, Mbenda magueye, they took her to a town that they call Kurë. She had there Maawo Mbenda. Maawo Mbenda, when they wage war, (he would) pierce (i.e., he used a spear well in battle). Koodu Kumba Magueye grew up; they took her to a town that they call Gateen. She had there Koodu Kumba, and Galo Koodu Kumba, Astu Koodu Kumba and Makhudya koodu Kumba.

The third function is that of historian. Indeed, traditionally, the *géwël* is the depository of the ancestors' legacy, the memory of his community or the noble-caste family to which he is attached. He is the one in charge of telling people what their ancestors have done in the past. A

gèwël does not usually recall bad deeds and failures, unless they deliberately want to hurt someone. He usually recalls successes and positive actions. He has acquired this skill from his ancestors through oral tradition. Events may change from one storyteller to another because each speaker has his or her own personal skills, which differentiate him or her from the others. This explains the numerous variations observed in Sufi stories. Different versions of the same story may be heard from different speakers. Sometimes it is very hard to find out who first told a story and whether his or her account is original and authentic. The speakers' tendency to provide names of witnesses and places serves to give authenticity to their account.

The final function is that of praise-drummer. In fact, the use of drums when singing praises has been the norm in Wolof culture. Different names are given to praise-drumming: *bàkk*, *jiin*, *kañ*. All the three are synonymous and refer to the singing of praises to honor a king or noble born in public. The person who is being praised is moved by the performance and rewards the praise-singer. Praise-drumming is practiced by the subgroup of the Murids (disciples of the Muridiyya) called *Baay Faal*. *Faal* is the family name of the founder of that group, shaykh Ibra Faal, a companion of Amadu Bamba, known for his hard-working nature and attachment to the founder of the Muridiyya. The *Baay Faal* (For the Baay Faal see Villalón 1995, Coulon 1999, Thiam 2005) use drums when singing the praises of Ibra Faal and Amadu Bamba. The Qadirs (disciples of the Qadiriyya) also use drums when they celebrate events such as *Gàmmu*.

The speech functions listed above, while best known as functions of the *gèwël*, have become the norms for public speaking, adopted by all speakers, including marabouts, in their address to Sufi followers. However, the functions are distributed in accordance with the relationships between the speaker and the shaykh. For instance, the function of surrogate speaker can be given to a shaykh's close collaborator (McLaughlin & Villalón, 2008), usually one of his

adepts, trained to fulfill that function, or a *gɛwɛl* depending on the context. The next point I shall examine in details the *gɛwɛl* lineage among the social groups in Wolof society.

Origin and Social Status of the Gɛwɛl

The origin of the French term griot, *gɛwɛl* in Wolof, is controversial. The first appearance of the term would be in French as *guiriot*, employed by Alexis de St. Lô, a Capucin missionary monk who traveled along the Senegambian coast of West Africa in 1634-35 and published his *Relation du Voyage du Cap-Verd* in 1637 (Hale 1997:251). French scholar Henri Tabouret proposed a Portuguese origin of the term, *criado*, which means ‘[one] who has been nourished, raised, educated, who lives in the house of the master’. Tabouret’s theory reflects on the traditional relationship of the griot with his patron. Another etymology mentioned by Hale (1997) is from Charry (1992:66-67) who has proposed that griot comes from the Arabic term *qawal*, or singer, via the Wolof *gɛwɛl*. Students of West African societies use the French expression *griot* though some of them employ local words to refer more to the multiple functions of the griot in African societies.

Tang (2007) opens her book titled *Masters of the sabar: Wolof griot percussionists of Senegal* with this statement about the *gɛwɛl*:

“Griots are best known as artisans of the spoken word. Serving as oral historians, genealogists, storytellers, and praise-singers, griots have played a significant role in cultures throughout West Africa for over seven centuries.”

This functional definition of griot shows the place that he occupies in the hierarchical structure and divisions of West-African societies in general, including Wolof society in Senegal. The hierarchical divisions between social groups among the Wolof people led some scholars to use the controversial term of caste (Lang, 2007:48).

Panzacchi (1994) identified three social groups. At the top of the hierarchy are the *géer* or noble/freeborn. Below the *géer* are the *neeño*, a caste group composed of the *géwël* (griots), the *ràbb* (weavers), the *wuude* (leatherworkers), and the *tëgg* (blacksmiths). At the lowest level are the *jaam* (slaves or descendants of slaves)

Tal Tamari (1991)'s classification is similar to Panzacchi's account, except for the fact she subdivides the freemen and slave categories into subgroups. The subgroups of freemen (*jambur*, *gor*) are the *garmi* and the *gellwaar* (royals), the *doomi buur* (notables), and the *baadoolo* (commoners). Whereas the *Jaam* comprise the *jaami garmi* (slaves of the *garmi*) and the *jaami buur* (slaves of the king).

Senegalese anthropologist, Diop (1981), does not consider *jaam* a part of the caste system. Instead, he distinguishes two separate organizations: caste and political orders. The caste system he proposed comprises the *géer* and the *neeño*. As for the *jaam*, they are considered part of the political order (Lang 2007:49). According to Diop, a *géer* cannot do the job of a *neeño*, that is, he cannot be a leatherworker, blacksmith, praise-singer or weaver. The *neeño* comprise three subgroups: the *jëf-lekk*, literally 'those who make a living with their hands' (*tëgg* or blacksmiths, *wuude* or leatherworkers, and *ràbb* or weavers), *sab-lekk*, literally 'those who live from their singing, or 'crowing' (*géwël* or griot) and *ñoole* (a marginal group). In Diop's political order, there is no dichotomy *géer/neeño*, but rather a *gor (jambur)/jaam* (slave) opposition. The *gor* or *jambur* category comprises two subgroups, the *garmi* (nobles and descendants of nobles) and the *baadoolo* (peasants, commoners) while the *jaam* (slaves) comprise the *jaamibuur* (royal slaves) and the *jaami-baadoolo* (slaves of commoners).

Some scholars like Wright (1989) redefine the term caste, which they refer to simply as social groups. According to Wright, Wolof social groups are *géer* and *ñeeño* and are interdependent and definable based on the products of their labor. She wrote:

“The caste system is the most striking characteristic of Wolof social organization: all people are born into one of two broad castes, the first being *géer* (roughly translated as noble, freedom, or gentry and including farmers as well as descendents of royalty); the second *ñeeño*, which includes blacksmiths and jewelers (*tëgg*), bards or griots (*géwël*), and leatherworkers (*ude*). Each group is endogamous and dependent upon the other group for the product of their labor.” (Wright 1989:43)

Nowadays, a change is taking place with regard to caste divisions in many West-African countries, including Senegal, as some *géer* exert professions such as musician or hair braider, so far considered *géwël* professions. Babou (2008) explores the change noticed in the foundations of social hierarchies and gender roles among Senegalese female hair braiders and ordinary women in Senegal. His work showed that the lucrative businesses of hair-braiding salons in American cities such as Atlanta, New York, and Philadelphia, and the amount of money people make from this profession, have changed their ideas about the notions of prestige, blood, and caste. The distance from the home country may be a factor of that change of mentalities in addition to the economic reasons.

Beside his social status in the hierarchy, the griot is best known for his speaking skills. Indeed, his speech serves various functions in society according to the setting. The next section will address some of these functions and their impact on everyday Sufi communication.

Patterns of *Géwël*-speech Style in Sufi Narratives

The *géwël* speech functions of historian and praise-singer are prevalent in Sufi stories. Indeed, in the past, and even nowadays, the *géwël* is the one who is supposed to recall the history

of the past kingdoms in public settings because he or she is the one who masters the art of speaking and the framing of a story in accordance with the circumstances and audience. The *g w l* has been a central personage in pre-, colonial and post-colonial eras in West-African societies, including among the Wolof (Leymarie 1999). In the past, the *g w l* spoke on behalf of the king, served as surrogate of his message on various occasions, and told him about his ancestors' good deeds. By recalling these deeds to the king, the *g w l* expects him to perform the same good actions. Nowadays, the *g w l* still play a major role in all occasions, including naming and wedding ceremonies, as well as in the religious and political spheres (Leymarie 1999).

The influence of the *g w l*-speech style in Sufi oral narratives appears in the complication stage of these narratives, in which the history of past Sufi shaykhs, with a focus on miraculous actions, is recounted. Sufi narrators praise their shaykh, object of their narratives, and recite their genealogy in the form of embedded evaluations. In some cases, the whole narrative starts with praises (I refer to those as pre-story praises). Though not all Sufi narrators are *g w l*, the norms of verbal performance set by the *g w l* are predominant in Sufi narratives, regardless of the narrator. Moreover, comparison can be made between present-day shaykhs and early Senegalese kings based on the position held by the *g w l* in the two households. Indeed, in many Sufi leaders' families, a *g w l* is in charge of broadcasting incoming Sufi ceremonies. They also play a major role in organizing and entertaining the audience by singing Sufi songs or playing the role of master of ceremony. The complicating action below, from the narrative 'In the Governor's Office'', includes a sequence of praise that the speaker said was from a witness, Mapaate Mbaay, to extol Amadu Bamba's courage, after he performed a long-lasting prayer (forty-five minutes) in the governor's office:

(3)

Complicating action

1. Goorgi Mapaate Mbaay daadi koy daadi koy woy foofa, tagg ko, ne ko:

Embedded praise

2. Balla Aysa Buri Sëñ Mbakke Maaram fii nga taxaw fattaliku sa boroom,
3. ku fi mësa taxaw fätte nga sa boroom ndax sa moroom,
4. yow rekk yaa fi njëkk a taxaw fattaliku sa boroom'

Complicating action (continued)

5. Mu daldi ni gees, Maam Seex Anta, ne ko: 'Seex' mu ne ko 'Mbakke'
6. mu ne ko'may ko'

Translation

Complicating action

1. *Mapaate Mbaay then sung him, sung him there, praised him, told him:*

Embedded praise

2. *Balla Aysa Buri Sëñ Mbakke Maaram¹, here you step and recall your lord*
3. *whoever stepped here before, forgot about his lord because of someone*
4. *you are the first one to step here and recall your lord*

Complicating action (continued)

5. *He turned to Maam Seex Anta told him: "Seex", he said "Mbakke"*
6. *He told him "reward him"*

The functions of Sufi speakers also include that of public translator and lecturer. In fact, Wolof translation of Arabic formulas, used by some Sufi shaykhs when addressing the followers, into Wolof is crucial for non-Arabic speakers to understand the embedded Arabic words. Many Senegalese have a very basic knowledge of Arabic; they only use the Arabic language when performing the five daily prayers, because it is not allowed for Muslims to recite Qur'anic verses when praying in a language other than Arabic. As the language of the Qur'an, Arabic is considered sacred and it is highly valued by followers of Sufi orders that a Sufi shaykh uses it. This reinforces the authority of that Sufi shaykh. Therefore, the job of the Wolof translator consists of making this 'mystic' language accessible to non-Arabic speakers, using the language they know and master best, Wolof. Although the shaykh could use Wolof, he speaks Arabic

¹ Maaram (Marame in French spelling) is the name of the grandfather of Amadu Bamba

sometimes for the purpose of citing the sources of his arguments or supporting these arguments referring to the Qur'an or the writings of the founders of the Sufi orders. The use of Arabic also legitimates the marabout's knowledge of the Arabic language and Islam. Finally, Arabic is what helps the shaykh to keep a certain distance between him and his illiterate followers².

As for the function of *conférencier* (a French term) or lecturer, it consists of addressing a public about the history of the Sufi orders and lives of the Sufi leaders. Indeed, when a *daayira* or 'Sufi association' organizes an event, such as *Màggal* or *Gàmmu*, its members hire a lecturer to tell them about the founder's life, his family or the history of the order. The lecturer is a knowledgeable person, sometimes a member of the Sufi order's founder's family or alumnus of his *daara* or school. The lecturer addresses a public, which is attentive to his speech and eager to react by giving him extra money when they are moved. The speech of that lecturer is full of stories about the life and deeds of the shaykh, which the speaker intends to give as exemplars to the audience. The stories are transmitted through oral tradition from grandparents to parents and then children to grandchildren. Some of the speakers cite historical sources but mix them with anecdotes. Features of these stories include the presence of dialogues, series of miraculous actions or *kéemtaan* performed by the shaykh, and the speaker's praise- evaluations. The narratives 'In the Governor's Office' and 'Warning about Arrogance' are respectively from lectures given in Philadelphia in 2007 and Dakar in 1992. The narrative 'Warning about Arrogance' took place in a context of political and social crisis, and the former General Khalife of the Tijaniyya in Senegal, Abdoul Aziz Sy Dabakh (1904-1997), addressed the Senegalese community to try to overcome the situation.

² For the function of surrogate speaker in Sufi settings, see McLaughlin and Villalón, 2009.

Others contexts of Sufi narration include interviews during the *Màggal* and *Gàmmu* (e.g. narratives ‘Throwing Dates’ and ‘Staying with the Shaykh’, from the 2007 *Gàmmu*, and ‘Praying on the Water’ and ‘The Lion Chasing the Warthog’, from the 2000 *Màggal*) and testimonials (e.g. ‘The Prediction’ from the 2000 *Màggal*), and so forth.

A West African Sufi Culture

Students of Islam in Africa commonly mention the eleventh century as the beginning of the presence of Islam in West Africa. In Senegal, the gateway was the state of Tekruur in the Senegal River Valley, which, subsequently, became involved with the Almoravid reform movement that extended northward into Morocco and Spain (Villalón 1995, Robinson 2004, Babou 2007). According to Babou (2007), Waar Jaabi, the first ruler of Tekruur, who became Muslim at that period, supported the Almoravid movement. However, the real spread of Islam in Senegal and the surrounding region only happened in the nineteenth century with the advent of the Sufi orders. There are four of them: the Qadiriyya – the oldest order (11th century), originated in Baghdad in Iraq, and is named after its founder, Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani. The Tijaniyya – the largest order in present-day Senegal originated in Algeria and is named after its founder, Ahmad al-Tijani, an 18th century mystic. The Muridiyya and the Layenes both originated in Senegal. The founders of the last two orders are respectively Amadu Bamba Mbacke (1853-1927) and Limamou Laye (1843-1909) whereas Al- Hajj Malick Sy (1855-1922), El-Hàjj Umar **Tal** (1797-1864) and Ibrahima Niass (1900-1975) are often cited among the most popular propagators of the Tijaniyya in Senegal and the surrounding region.

Later on, Sufi orders appropriated Islam and adapted it to the local values and beliefs, leading some scholars, especially from the European perspective, to use the term *Islam noir* or Black Islam. Robinson (2004) rejects this term, which, he believes, is pejorative, and rather speaks of Africanization of Islam, meaning, the way “African groups have created ‘Muslim’

space or made Islam their own'. In Senegal it is through the Sufi brotherhoods and supreme direction of Muslim leaders called shaykhs, or marabouts in local parlance, that Islam is practiced by many Senegalese, leading Coulon (1981) to state: 'In Senegal, one is often a *Taalibe*, disciple of a marabout before being a citizen of the State'. According to Robinson (2004), the term marabout – *sëriñ*, in Wolof - comes from the Arabic name given to the Almoravid, al-murabitun 'a soldier-monk' (Dilley 2004). The term marabout is today used in the French language to refer to Sufi shaykhs, Qur'anic teachers, and anyone else who provides talismans or protection through mystical knowledge.

Sufism is seen by some scholars as a search for wisdom, piety, and closeness to God through rituals and litanies (Robinson 2004). Others see it as 'the annihilation of the individual's ego, will, and self centeredness by God, and the subsequent spiritual revival with the Light of His essence' (Gülen 2004). However, the main aspect of Sufism is a belief in mystical forms of knowledge that can only be obtained through the studying with a master or guide.

The core Sufi relationship is the individual bond between a student and a shaykh who expects complete submission to his or her guidance. In the process of study, the shaykh reveals efficacious litanies to students, and enthusiastic disciples seek to acquire all such religious secrets as well as the shaykh's permission to transmit them to others. There is also a widespread belief in the power of particular shaykhs, leading to the practice of making pilgrimages to the tombs of shaykhs, where pilgrims asked the dead to intercede for them before God. In addition, disciples of Sufi orders often work for the shaykh expecting baraka or blessings in return.

In Senegal Sufism is practiced individually, through formulaic prayer rituals known as *wird* and *dhikr*, in which one recollects and meditates upon the names of God (Glover 2007). It is also practiced collectively, through the chanting of Sufi poems gatherings and celebrations

known as *jàng* in Wolof. The two most popular Sufi events are the *Gàmmu* (Mawlid al-Nabi in Arabic meaning celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad), which is the major event of the Tijaniyya, and the Great *Màggal* of Touba or remembrance of the day of departure of Amadu Bamba into exile, which is the major event of the Muridiyya. In addition there are other events such as *ziara* or visits to the living marabouts, in the holy cities of Touba, the headquarters of the Muridiyya, Tivaouane, the headquarters of the Sy branch of the Tijaniyya, Medina Baye and Leona in Kaolack, the headquarters of the Niasse branch of the Tijaniyya, Njaasaan, the headquarters of the Qadiriyya, and Yoff, the headquarters of the Layenes. Other places where companions of the founding fathers of the Sufi orders were buried are also visited. The purpose of the visits is to seek baraka or spiritual blessings (Glover 2007) from the shaykhs, dead or alive, and from the holy places. In addition, the *daayiras* or local Sufi associations hold local events to practice and worship in communion.

Sufi discourse is characterized by the pervasiveness of stories about the Sufi leaders' miracles and life itineraries (*jaar-jaari sèriñ bi* in Wolof meaning 'the spiritual itinerary of the shaykh'). A designated speaker is hired to talk and tell these stories and other testimonies about the shaykhs, punctuated by the chanting of moralizing poems written by these shaykhs in honor of the Prophet Muhammad. The speaker may or may not be a *gèwël*, although *gèwël* speakers are especially good at recalling past events, which they combine with praises and genealogies. In my analysis of Sufi oral narratives, praises and genealogies are among the mechanisms in use in the form of climactic embedded evaluations to help highlight and legitimate miraculous deeds and philosophical teachings of the Sufi shaykhs.

Themes and Contents of the Narratives

As seen above, Sufi narratives are organized around themes and contents. The themes that derived from this study include prediction making and the relationship between shaykh and

disciple whereas the contents are mainly anecdotes, and biographies, some variations are found in the accounts of these anecdotes and biographies.

Themes of Sufi Narratives

Prediction making

Making predictions seems to be a thematic feature of Sufi narratives. In the passage from ‘The Prediction’ narrative below, Seexu Umar Tall (El-Hajj Umar Tall) makes a prediction of the advent of Amadu Bamba Mbacké after being given water to drink by Maam Jaara Buso, the mother of Amadu Bamba. The same Seexu Umar Tall is said to have made the same prediction with regard to El-Hajj Malick Sy, after receiving a gift sent to him by the mother of El-Hajj Malick. There are many other predictions that are said to have been made by Sufi shaykhs. The capacity for making predictions seems to be an important test for a shaykh to be granted holiness and sanctity. Amadu Bamba is said to have made prediction about the holy city of Touba and the Great *Màggal* or celebration of his departure into exile, held in that city. It seems also that a real shaykh must know the unknown and predict the future in order to be considered shaykh.

However, the prediction is always believed to be the reward for a holy man’s good actions and closeness to God. Amadu Bamba’s mother, Maam Jaara Buso, viewed as a female saint, is believed to have been rewarded for her good actions, including towards Seexu Umar Tall, to whom she gave water when he arrived in Mbacké, very thirsty, with a child who later became the founder of one of most representative Sufi orders in Senegal. Similarly, Faa Wade Wele, the mother of El-Hajj Malick Sy, is said to have been rewarded for her good actions, including towards the same Seexu Umar, to whom she sent a piece of fabric as her participation in his *jihad*. As a result, she gave birth to one of the most popular adepts and propagators of the Tijaniyya in Senegal and West Africa. All these Sufi leaders are believed to have gained their holiness from the love and admiration they had for the Prophet Muhammad. Indeed, Amadu

Bamba called himself *khadimoul Rassoul*, an Arabic expression meaning ‘the servitor of the prophet’. The pervasiveness of predictions in Sufi stories can also lead to some sort of comparison between these texts and epic texts in African societies. Indeed, the advent of epic heroes is also predicted, usually by sorcerers and practitioners of witchcraft.

(4)

1. Seexu Umar walbatiku daldi koy joxaat bàttu bi
2. Mu ni wélbat di dem soxna soosu moom ndaw soosu
3. wàlla moom xale boobu na ma Yàlla jéggal
4. Seexu Umar daldi walbatiku wax waa tóoc gi
5. Mag ñi toogoon ci tóoc gi
6. Ci ron garab gi
7. Mu ne leen “ndaw see
8. Am na ku nekk ci moom
9. Su ñówee Baayam sax di na ko topp
10. Waxumalaak keneen

Translation

1. *Seexu Umar turned around and then returned the container to her*
2. *Then she turned around to leave, that saint Woman, her, that woman*
3. *Or her that young woman, may God forgive*
4. *Seexu Umar then turned around and told the people at the bench*
5. *The old people who were seated at the bench*
6. *Under the tree*
7. *He told them: “that woman*
8. *There is someone in her*
9. *When he comes, even his father will follow him*
10. *A fortiori someone else”*

Relationship between shaykh and disciple

The second theme found in Sufi narratives deals with the relationship between a shaykh and his disciple, a shaykh and God (Archangel Gabriel sent to Amadu Bamba by God in the narrative ‘Praying on the Water’), or a shaykh and the Prophet Muhammad (in some declarations attributed to Amadu Bamba, he said that he encountered the Prophet Muhammad, who elevated him to a grade that no shaykh had ever reached before). In almost every Sufi narrative that core relationship is depicted in one way to or another by the speaker. The relation between shaykh

and disciple is characterized by the latter's complete submission, worshiping, and eagerness to execute all instruction given by the former. In return the submissive disciple, worshiper, or helper expects to receive *baraka* (Wolof *barke*), meaning grace, sanctity, and knowledge from his patron. In the context of Sufism in Senegal, that relationship varies according to Sufi families. Copans (1980) defines the nature of the relationship between marabout and disciple focusing on three points: (1) the marabout is the mediator between God and the disciple, (2) the allegiance to a marabout is up to the disciple but the latter has to accept the conditions linked to the allegiance, set by the marabout, and (3) the allegiance is an absolute one, at least for the Murid. Although the disciple has the choice to pick his or her marabout, he or she is expected to behave like a 'true disciple', meaning being obedient and submissive. Copans says: 'the good disciple is then the one of complete submission and obedience' [le bon Tallibe (disciple in Wolof) c'est donc celui de la soumission et de l'obéissance].

Villalón (1995) has done extensive analysis of the relationship between marabout and disciple focusing on the city of Fatick, where he conducted his research. Villalón's work drew from those of pioneers such as Behrman (1969, 1970) and Coulon (1980). Behrman notes variations in the way disciples interact with their marabouts, depending on the Sufi order. She points out that the degree of maraboutic control over disciples is greater among the Murids than within the Tijaniyya order (Villalón 1995). As for Coulon, he concentrates on the relationship between the marabouts and the political elites, and especially the exchange of service between the two, leading him to call that relationship a relationship of personal dependence (Villalón, 1995). Coulon uses the Weberian term 'charisma' to account for the disciple's belief that the shaykh can intercede on his behalf before God and his total devotion towards that shaykh. However, Coulon distinguishes two types of charisma: 'pure' charisma and 'hereditary'

charisma. The first refers to the founding fathers of the Sufi orders while the second is more ‘rational’ (Villalón, 1995). Elaborating on Coulon’s idea, Villalón says: ‘the marabouts are expected to provide certain *material* benefits to their followers in addition to the spiritual ones’. Villalón acknowledges the influence of the marabouts over their followers but stipulates that the extent of the influence varies significantly from one context to another, and from one individual to another. For instance nowadays, in the context of presidential elections, the *ndigal* or endorsement of a candidate by a Sufi leader does not seem to be as strong as it used to be in the past.

The relationship between shaykh and disciple is a prevalent theme in the narratives I worked with. For instance, in this passage below, from ‘Staying with shaykh’, the speaker relates the actions of his shaykh, whom he just joined, and the instructions he received and is accountable for during his stay with that shaykh, Ababacar Sy. The instructions include fetching water for the shaykh and keeping track of his praying materials. This is the typical life of a disciple who stays with his Sufi master. The text shows that the relationship between the two people goes beyond teaching and learning the Qur’an and involves complete submission to the instructions of that shaykh:

(5)

1. Mu ubbi bunt tēj, ubbiwaat bunt tēj, ubbi pantere,
2. nu bokk toog
3. Mu jox ma materyel bi moo waaje waxtu julli yépp
4. Won ma benn siwo ne ma :
5. « Roqaya Si mu Alaaji Maalik, ca kër góorgi Madun Saar,
6. boo demee nga laajte doomam ju nuy wax Ndey Sofi Saar,
7. am naa fa ndaa loo xamne kenn du ca dem
8. na nu ko tijji nga wax leen maa la yebal
9. nga duy ci siwa bi bu guddee doom
10. nga ñów sottil ma ko ci ndaa li ci laay naan.
11. Su ndaa la amulee ndox nga dem simonj Bawal

12. Moo fi nekk teen bu neex
13. Nga seet ku la gunge nga dem rooti ca paan
14. Sottil ma ko ci ndaa lii
15. Keroog laa gëj a jàng Alxuraan ci jataay boobu.

Translation

1. *He opened a door, opened another door , opened a storage room,*
2. *we both sat down*
3. *He gave me the material he uses for getting ready for the prayer*
4. *He showed me a bucket and told me:*
5. *“Roqaya Si of El-Hàjj Malick, at Góorgi Madun Saar’s*
6. *When you go there, you ask her daughter, called Ndey Sofi Saar,*
7. *I have there a water jar that no one uses*
8. *Tell them to open it for you, that I sent you there*
9. *To get a bucket of water from it, and at night, my child,*
10. *you come and pour it into this jar, that’s my drinking water*
11. *If that jar does not have water, go to Cement Baol*
12. *It is the well in this neighborhood that has good water*
13. *You find someone to accompany you to go there and get a basin of water*
14. *And pour it into this jar for me”*
15. *I haven’t been studying Qur’an since that day.*

The next section discusses the content of Sufi narratives.

Content of Sufi Narratives

Biographies of the shaykhs

Sufi narratives are generally biographical as they are centered on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, drawn from the *hadiths* or sayings about the Prophet, and that of Sufi leaders such as Shaykh Amadu Bamba for the Muridiyya, El Hajj Malick Sy for the Tijaniyya, Limamou Laye for the Layene, and Boucounta Ndiassane for the Qadiriyya, as well as their descendents. In narrating the lives of these different people, speakers select episodes of their lives that would display evidence of endurance and the multiple challenges they have faced, which seem to be a mandatory path for them to become saints. Sufi mystics believe that no reward can be received without going through some tough situations. This explains the harshness of Sufi education or *tarbiya*, from Arabic (Babou 2007), that every Sufi student is expected to go through. The

thousands, if not millions of disciples who work hard in for the shaykhs' fields, and execute their instructions while being away from their own families, consider their devotional submission part of their *tarbiya* and, in return, expect to be blessed by their respective shaykh in this world and the hereafter, with an entry to paradise. In the Muridiyya order, working for the shaykh, referred to as *qidma*, from Arabic, is among the cardinal virtues of the *taalibe* or disciple.

The points developed in Sufi biographies include the shaykh's difficult childhood, studies, and teachings. For instance, according to biographers of El Hajj Malick Sy, he grew up poor, and went to different places to seek knowledge from different Sufi masters, and taught Qur'anic lessons and philosophy for survival. After facing all kinds of obstacles due to his poverty, he was given a large piece land at in a village called Ndiarndé where he settled in and ran successful agricultural activities. It is in Ndiarndé that he trained most of his significant disciples or *muqadams* and sent them to various areas in Senegal. The *muqadams* stayed in their new places and spread the essentials of the Tijaniyya Sufi order. This explains the various Tijan lineages we have today in Senegal, which include the Niassé family in Kaolack, the Toure in Fass Toure, the Cisse in Pire, the Sakho in Rufisque, and others. Each of these families has picked a date to celebrate its *Gàmmu* or the night of the Prophet Muhammad. However the major *Gàmmu* event is celebrated in Tivaouane, the headquarters of the Sy lineage of the Tijan Sufi order.

Like El-Hajj Malick Sy, Amadu Bamba's biography is recounted by the Murids, disciples of the Muridiyya. Among the most popular episodes are his exile in Central Africa, precisely in Gabon, from 1895 to 1902; his encounter with the colonial governor in Saint-Louis and his imprisonment with an angry bull. Amadu Bamba would have suffered from his opposition to the colonial power who suspected him of intending to wage *jihad* and therefore sent him into exile in Gabon for seven years. When he returned, he decided to celebrate the anniversary of his day of

departure whenever as a way of thanking God for giving him the opportunity to get closer to him by facing and surviving all kinds of challenges. Amadu Bamba's popularity and the success of the Muridiyya are believed to be a reward for the challenges he faced during his forced trip. All these assumptions came from the speakers listened to for this study. The Great Màggal of Touba is today attended by around four million people according to the 2009 Senegalese news broadcasting agency.

In the passage below, from 'Praying on the Water', the speaker, Sëriñ Abdu Samat Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba, talks about a particular episode of Amadu Bamba's trip to Gabon, namely his decision to go to the water to perform his prayer after being refused his request to pray aboard the ship. Amadu Bamba then threw his prayer skin on the water and jumped in. The narrator dramatizes that moment by insisting on the courage of his grandfather, and also relating the visit the Archangel Gabriel paid to the shaykh to help him accomplish his will:

(6)

1. dafa dafa dafa dajele kaamil bi ak der bi
2. jiital der bi
3. boq kaamil bi
4. meeb mbubb mi
5. daadi cëppeelu ak doole
6. tubaab yaan koy xool ñoom
7. seen xol sedd lool defe ni leeg mu génn àddina
8. Sëriñ bi nee na li muy gatt gatt
9. diggante bu muy wàcc ci bato bi
10. di wàcc ci suuf ci ndox mi
11. li muy gatt gatt sey dinaa jibril gatanu na ko
12. laaj ko ne ko
13. san suuf nga bëgg ñu tegal la fa der bi nga julli
14. mu ne suufas Tuubaa
15. Seydina Jibril ñoddi na suufas Tuubaa indi ko ba ci ron der bi
16. fekk ko fi sëñ bi tegu ci

Translation

1. *“He he he wrapped up the holy Quran book and the prayer skin,*
2. *threw the prayer skin on the water first,*
3. *held the holy book under his shoulder,*
4. *pulled up his robe a little bit,*
5. *and then dismounted with strength.*
6. *The white people, they, looked at him,*
7. *with happiness, hoping that he would soon leave this world (die).*
8. *The shaykh said that, although the time was very short,*
9. *between his dismounting from the ship*
10. *to the water,*
11. *despite the short time, Archangel Gabriel came to rescue me,*
12. *asked him, told him:*
13. *“which sand would you like your prayer skin to be dropped at, for you to pray”.*
14. *He told him: “the sand of Touba”.*
15. *Master Gabriel pulled over the sand of Touba, slid it underneath the prayer skin,*
16. *joined the shaykh, who stood upon it”*

The next section examines another content of Sufi narratives, anecdotes.

Anecdotes

In addition to the biographies of the shaykhs, Sufi narratives contain anecdotes from the speaker’s life experience and that of other people’s. The purpose of telling anecdotes is to teach and support Sufi moralizing lessons. The former *khalife* (from Arabic *khalif*) of the Tijaniyya, Sëriñ Abdoul Aziz Sy, was known for the anecdotes he was accustomed to including in his speeches to warn people about bad habits or sins from an Islamic point of view. One of these is about looking down upon someone, which is the topic of the anecdote below, from the narrative ‘Warning about Arrogance’. The speaker gave his speech in 1992 in the Tijaniyya mosque in downtown of Dakar, called *zawiya* El-Hajj Malick Sy. The *zawiya* was built by El-Hajj Malick Sy, which explains his name given to the place. Looking down upon someone is considered a sin in Sufi Islam and the speaker intended to elaborate on that topic by making recourse to an anecdote. In the anecdote, a shaykh, who was so proud of his knowledge and the numerous followers he had, looked upon down another shaykh. As a result, God withdrew all the

knowledge of the arrogant shaykh in accordance with the widespread belief among Muslims, that all one has, including knowledge, is given by God, who can take it back whenever He wishes to:

(7)

1. Xeebaate yal nanu ci yalla musal!
2. Am na kenn ku ñu daan wax Abdulahi al andalusi
3. Ay talibeem isna ashara ar fan la woon [fukki junniy Tallibeek ñaar]
4. Am na ca ku ñuy wax Sibluun
5. Wattuwoon na ci addiisu Rasululahi fanweeri junni
6. Nekkoon na it koo xam ni juróom-ñaaari jangini alxuraan yépp, wattuwoon na ko
7. Mbolloom ma bari woon na lool lool
8. Waaye yalla nattu ko
9. Jaarale nattu ba nit ñi mu gis xeeb leen
10. Ne: “man daal àgg naa ci baax goo xam ne kenn ci sama mbolloo mii rekk wecci na mbooloo mii”
11. Sama boroom dal koy nattu
12. Rékki addiis yépp
13. Rékki Alxuraan ca dënn ba
14. Ba mu koy rékki nag, bi loolii duggee ci xolom, mooy xeeb mbolloo moomii
15. Mu daldi yék xolom di yengu mel ne garab
16. ndeke xol baa
17. Am lu ca naawe
18. Mu yék ne “lii de dafa am lu naaw”
19. Ndeke liimaan ba la moom la Yalla rékki
20. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
21. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
22. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
23. Léppi Yalla yal na rey ci nun ni Yalla reye ci nun!
24. Nit ak kam moom noo yem
25. Bu dee fas wi
26. Yeen a bokk ku leen bind
27. Kenn ku ne ci yeen an nga bisub juddu
28. Na la wóor ne sa besub de ngi sa kanam yaag fas wi

Translation

1. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
2. *There was a man called Abdulaay Al Andulusi*
3. *His disciples amounted to 12000*
4. *There was one of them called Sibluun*
5. *He mastered the 30000 of teachings of the servant of God (Prophet Muhammad)*
6. *He also was someone who knew all the 7 ways of reading the Qur'an*
7. *(He had) a lot of disciples”*
8. *But God challenged him*

9. *Made him arrogant to other people*
10. *He said: "I really reached a certain level in goodness so that one of my people can be equal to this whole group of people"*
11. *Then, God punished him*
12. *Took away all his knowledge of the prophet's teachings*
13. *Took away all the knowledge of the Qur'an*
14. *When He was taking this away, when arrogance entered his heart, which is underestimating this group of people*
15. *He then felt that his heart was shaking like a tree*
16. *In fact it was his heart*
17. *Something flew from it*
18. *He felt that "something has flown away"*
19. *In fact his faith in God was taken away by God*
20. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
21. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
22. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
23. *May all about God be big to us like God!*
24. *A person and his belonging*
25. *If it is a horse*
26. *You belong to the same creator*
27. *Each of you has a day of birth*
28. *Be sure that your day of death is forthcoming, you and the horse."*

Note that not all anecdotes in Wolof Sufi narratives include a Sufi element. Some of them, while used in a Sufi setting, are taken from other sources or drawn from the speaker's imagination. The anecdote below was told by a talented Tijan speaker, El-Hajj Ibou Sakho, known for his comments and interpretation of the Qur'an and the stories about the life of the Prophet Muhammad, which he takes from El-Hajj Malick Sy's writings. He was also known for his sense of humor. His father, Elimane Sakho, was among the *muqadam* 'significant disciples' that El-Hajj Malick Sy had trained. The anecdote does not contain a Sufi element but aims to convey an example of a wise person who managed to overcome a situation where he was sentenced to death by a mean king. The speaker was particularly good at entertaining his audience because everybody laughed after hearing it.

(8)

1. Caay-caay ga rey na waaye lay wi dafa rafet

2. Gisoo buur bi ma waa ji doon nettali,
3. dafa def inwitasijon bu rëy,
4. dafa wex, ku wex nak na,
5. njaboot gi yépp ko ragal,
6. waa ji ñow di versi, di serwi di serwi ba tollook buur bi,
7. manto bu weex bi mu sol, tuuti ci neex mi tax ca,
8. mu dal ci kowam tiim ko ni ko : “danga dof?”
9. daldi woo ñaari sandarma ni nan ko rendi
10. ñu génne waaji pur reyi ko ñépp ni tekk,
11. bam ko wóore ni ci dee la jëm,
12. mu ni wëlbit fap li desoon ci ñeex mi sotti ko buur bi
13. jallaabi baak manto baak karawaat yaag lépp a tooy nak faf.
14. “Waaw yow danga dof xanaa?”
15. mu ne déédéet dama la bëgg rekk te bañ ku la xas,
16. soo ma reye ngir toq bu bon, toq-toq sii rekk,
17. ñepp ni danga soxor waaye bu ma la sottee ñeex mi yépp,
18. ku ko dégg ni moo yey,
19. bañal la xay rekk, banal la noon rekk, ay reewu noon rekk,
20. bañal la ko rekk, moo tax ma def jëf jii,
21. mu ni ko yaa rëy tooñ te rafetu lay, bayyi leen ko mu dem (laughs from people).

Translation

1. *The action was bad but the justification was beautiful*
2. *Don't you see the king that the guy was telling a story about?*
3. *he invited people to a big party*
4. *he was severe, he was very severe*
5. *his family feared him*
6. *A guy came to serve and serve until he got to him*
7. *the white robe that he wore (the king) is dirtied by the food*
8. *he shouted at him: “Are you crazy?”*
9. *he called his guards and ordered to kill the waiter*
10. *they took him out to kill/slaughter him, everybody was quiet*
11. *when it was clear to him that he would die*
12. *he turned around and got the rest of the sauce and threw it over the king*
13. *The kaftan and the robe and the tie all became wet*
14. *“Are you crazy?”*
15. *he said to him : “no, I just like you and do not want you to be criticized*
16. *if you kill me for this little drop*
17. *all the people would think you are mean but if I throw all the sauce on you*
18. *whoever hears that would agree with you*
19. *I just do not want you to be criticized, I don't want you to have enemies, enemies who laugh at you*
20. *I just don't want that to happen, that's why I did such thing”*
21. *He said to him: “what a great offense but what a great justification. Let him go”.*

The last point of the outcome of this study deals with variation in Sufi stories.

Variation in Sufi narratives

Sufi oral narratives are characterized by the variations one notices from one version of the same story to another. These variations are sometimes from the same narrator's account, sometimes from different narrators of the same story. For instance, one of my speakers gave different names to the same character, namely, the *g w l* present at the governor's office in Saint-Louis when the governor's guest, Amadu Bamba, performed the two long *rakkas*, which would have lasted forty-five minutes. According to the narrator, a *g w l* present in the office praised the shaykh's audacity. However, in one version of his story, the narrator gave the *g w l* the name Mapaate Mbaay while in another version he refers him as Matabara Mbaay. The profession of that *g w l* in the governor's household has also changed from one version to the other. These contradictory accounts of the same story can be explained at least by two factors:

- 1) Oral narratives are transmitted through oral tradition, meaning from mouth to ear, and are, therefore, vulnerable to change.
- 2) The details about the conditions and circumstances of the event may not be as important as the core actions themselves.

However, ultimately, such discrepancies may affect the accountability of Sufi narratives, which, after all, constitute an important source of knowledge about the history of Sufi orders and their development.

Wolof Sufi Narratives and West-African Epics

Sufi stories are somehow comparable with West-African epics, in particular, the epics of Sufi military figures such as El-H jj Umar Tal (1797-1864), whose actions are praised and sung by epic singers such as Samba Djabare Samb³. Sufi leaders are comparable to epic heroes if we

³ Famous Senegalese griot, who sings and plays the Senegalese traditional guitar called a *xalam* in Wolof.

follow their life itineraries. There are some common places between Sufi oral narratives and West-African epics: prediction making, difficult childhood, and exile. For example, there are two instances in my data, in which El-Hàjj Umar Tall is said to have predicted the advent of both Amadu Bamba (1853-1927) and El-Hàjj Malick Sy (1855-1922). In this epic book, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* (1960), by Guinean historian and writer Djibril Tamsir Niane, the epic hero Sundiata went into exile with his mother Sogolon, who feared for his safety in Mali. Later on the hero came back and liberated his people from the dominance of Sumaguru Kante. Similarly, but under different circumstances, Amadu Bamba was exiled for seven years before he returned to Senegal and established one of the biggest Sufi communities in Senegal, the Muridiyya. Sundiata and his mother went into exile deliberately while Amadu Bamba was deported to Gabon by the colonial authorities, who suspected him of preparing a holy war against their power (Babou 2007).

In that sense, Wolof Sufi oral narratives can be seen as contemporary versions of West-African epics or a continuation of that practice. In their book entitled, *Les Epopees d'Afrique Noire [The Epics of Black Africa]* (1997), Kesteloot & Dieng stipulate that the epic of El-Hàjj Umar Tall has given birth to that of Amadu Bamba, his disciple Ibra Fall, and also the epic of Maaba Diakhou Ba, from the region of Saloum, Senegal. The idea developed by Kesteloot & Dieng seems to corroborate Barber's notion of texts being dialogic and interconnected, which I talked about earlier in this chapter.

Role of the Narratives

Sufi narratives play many different roles in the Sufi orders, including those of shaping the identity of the followers, setting up communication and interactional relationships between Sufi speaker and disciples.

Sufi Narratives and Identity Shaping

This study of Wolof Sufi oral narratives indicates that Sufi identities are constructed throughout storytelling. Sufi narratives play the role of not only emphasizing and overstating actions performed by a shaykh, but also shaping the disciples' personality. Sufi stories are part of what constitutes the patrimonies of the *Murid*, *Tijan*, *Layene* or *Qadir*. When a major Sufi event such as the *Màggal* or *Gàmmu* takes place, the conversation around these events is dominated by stories about the shaykhs. Moreover, some stories have become the landmarks of Sufi orders and, as a result, followers are always eager to tell them or listen to them. For instance, Amadu Bamba's prayer on the water has become part of the Murid patrimony and legacy. This identity construction through stories has created jealousy and competition among adepts of different Sufi orders. Those who do not tell miracles about their shaykhs - maybe because these have not performed any miracle, or if they did, did not allow their disciples to talk about it - criticize the others who tell miracle stories and exult in them. The tellers and believers of Sufi miracles are sometimes considered sinners, especially when they exult and show excessive pride. The sin they would have committed is referred to as *bokkaale* in Wolof or *shirk*, an Arabic term understood as the association of someone or something with God (Glover 2007).

When a member of a particular order is asked the question: 'who is your shaykh?' He or she sometimes answers by enumerating the miraculous actions his shaykh is said to have performed along with the genealogy of that shaykh. The recitation of genealogy, which I believe to be an adaptation of the *gèwël* speech style, is an attempt to explain the reason a particular shaykh is capable of performing miraculous deeds. The reason given by genealogists is because the shaykh is the son of a 'female saint' or a great man. Indeed, in Wolof society, a mother is believed to play an important role in the success or failure of his son or daughter. A mother with good qualities, in this society meaning being submissive to her husband and patient no matter

what situation she is confronted with, is expected to have valuable and successful children.

Mothers of the founders of Sufi orders in Senegal are generally said to have had good qualities in their lives. Similarly, a son of a shaykh would likely be granted blessing and sanctity thanks to his father.

Beyond the group identity constructed throughout the actions performed by a shared shaykh for all the members of a given order, there is an individual take on that identity. Indeed, each individual adept of an order claims a personal relationship with the particular shaykh he or she has picked to be his or her guide (Copans1980:177). The individual bound to a shaykh creates an identity between the disciple and that shaykh. The disciple, therefore, identifies with the shaykh and aims to reproduce his life style and personality. Sufi narratives reinforce the disciple's knowledge about the shaykh by emphasizing his good deeds and philosophical ideas. This is the reason why, in Sufi narratives, actions are evaluated and there is always a moralizing evaluation at the end which provides the audience with some sort of take-home message.

Communicative and Interactional Role of Sufi Narratives

Narratives are a powerful communication tool that Sufi speakers favor when interacting with their audience. Their whole speech is most of the time composed of narratives; each of these based on a theme and episode of the life of a shaykh. In narrating Sufi lives, speakers put a special emphasis on miraculous actions a particular shaykh is said to have performed. The reason of such pervasiveness of narratives in Sufi communication is to help speakers dramatize those miraculous actions in order to better touch the audience's feeling and revitalize its faith in a particular Sufi leader. Followers of that leader expect to hear about the extraordinary deeds he performed because they believe him to be superior to other people and capable of performing supernatural actions. Such a capacity is believed to come from his baraka (Villalón, 1995). This communicative function has indeed shaped the structure of Sufi narratives. The preeminence

given to the complication stage in Sufi stories is the result of the speakers' aim to emphasize and magnify the actions. A moralizing evaluation follows the complicating stage to serve as ending point.

In the next chapter I shall analyze the Wolof Sufi oral narratives and illustrate their grammatical features, discussed in chapter three, and the role of the context in shaping those narratives.

CHAPTER 5 WOLOF SUFI NARRATIVES

In chapter three I discussed the Wolof grammatical devices in use in Wolof Sufi narratives both at the macro and micro levels. In this chapter I will analyze the functions of the macro-structure of the narratives, that is, the function of the background stages (pre-story, abstract, orientation, and evaluation) as well as the foreground stage (complicating action). In addition I will look at the function of the micro-structure of the narratives within the background and foreground, that is, the function of the narrative and canonical clauses, and below the clause, tense and aspect. All these grammatical functions will be analyzed in relation with the context of the narrative performance. Before the analysis of the narratives per se, a brief overview of the cultural context in which they originated will highlight the critical aspects of that context that have a real impact on the narrative meaning and structure. Some of these aspects have already been discussed in chapter four.

Cultural Context of the Narrative Performance

The cultural context out of which these narratives emerge is a West-African Sufi culture in which the figure of the shaykh plays a dominant role. Indeed, among the cultural values featured in Sufi narratives is the notion of *kilifa* or leadership. The title of *kilifa* is normally given to an elderly person who is respected and obeyed because of his age, wisdom and knowledge. In Wolof society, age is viewed as synonym of wisdom and knowledge. From this point of view, knowledge does not have to come from school instruction only, but from life experience as well, confirming the quote by the famous African novelist and philosopher, Amadou Hampâté Bâ, that is, ‘In Africa, when an old man dies, a library burns’. The notion of *kilifa* is equally relevant in Senegalese Sufism. Moreover, in Senegal, the *khalifa* (title given to the supreme leader of a Sufi order) is up to this point transmitted to the oldest living son or grandson of the founder of that

Sufi order, sometimes with difficulty. In addition, it is a common belief that one must have a *kilifa*; otherwise the bad spirit will be his *kilifa*. *Ku amul kilifa, jinne di sa kilifa* ‘If you don’t have a leader, the bad spirit will be your leader’. Consequently, beside the respect one must have for one’s parents, one also swears allegiance to a shaykh from whom one seeks baraka and success in this life and the hereafter. Many people swear allegiance to the shaykh they have chosen to be their guide and exemplar. In the Muridiyya order for instance, before one can claim membership one must swear allegiance to a *murid* shaykh, who provides one with formulaic prayer rituals or *wird*, the permission to transmit it to others, and who guides one through one’s journey. The act of allegiance consists of the pronouncement of this vow of obedience to the marabout: “I place my soul and my life in your hands. Whatever you order I will do; whatever you forbid I will refrain from.” Villalón talks about in this in his *Islamic and Sate power in Senegal* (1995:119) and acknowledges that the Murids go much further than most Sufi orders, whether in Senegal or elsewhere, in their ideological emphasis on submission to one’s marabout’. He also points out that that submission has been overstated by some scholars like Coulon who looked at it from the disciples’ involvement in the agricultural activities held by the marabouts and not from the exchange of services that has characterizes the marabout-disciple relationship (Coulon1981). Overall, the relationship is more rigid among the *Murids* than any other Sufi orders in Senegal. For instance, the condition for claiming membership within the Tijaniyya is the daily practice of the Tijaniyya *wird*, although one must receive that *wird* from a Tijan shaykh. Afterwards, no complete allegiance to that shaykh is required. The disciples who declared allegiance to a shaykh, whether they are *Murids* or member of another order, expect that shaykh to provide them with baraka or blessing. The disciples in return make themselves available for the shaykh’s needs, including making financial contributions. In order to gain

baraka from a shaykh, a disciple must be faithful, listen to that shaykh and follow his example and recommendations.

That is the reason nine of the narratives discussed in this study feature a shaykh or *kilifa*, his charisma and extraordinary personality, which altogether make him worth following and dependable. One of the narratives is concerned with an arrogant shaykh, to show that a shaykh must be humble and grateful to his Lord who granted him knowledge and popularity. The other one, ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’, which does not include a Sufi element, deals with a mean king who was challenged by one of his subjects he was about to kill. The narrative preceding this one, from the same speaker, featured the prophet Muhammad. I picked up the non-Sufi narrative to show that there are cases where a Sufi narrator tells stories that do not have a direct religious implication.

Sufi narrators help establish and sustain the disciples’ confidence in their shaykh’s aptitude to bless them and intercede on their behalf before God on the Day of Judgment. In doing so, they highlight and extol the shaykh’s extraordinary actions as the basis of his holiness. They portray the shaykh as someone blessed by God, which gives him the capacity to perform extraordinary deeds, including that consisting of interceding on the disciple’s behalf on the Day of Judgment (Copans1980, Villalón 1995).

It is in this context, dominated by the figure of the shaykh, that Wolof Sufi narratives developed and became one of the major communicative devices between Sufi adherents and their shaykhs. Therefore, Wolof Sufi narratives fulfill the function of reinforcing the relationship between the shaykh and his disciples. The recalling of past events is indeed a way of telling people: “Look at your shaykh! Look at what he is capable of! Be proud of him!”

The following sections of this chapter consist of analyzing the narratives. In this regard, I show how the macro and micro-structure of the narratives interact with their context of production. A special emphasis will be placed on the foreground, namely the complication stage or peak of the narratives, due to the complexity of that stage and the specific preeminence given to it by storytellers as it the stage of the actions accomplished by the shaykh. The background stages in the pre-story, abstract, orientation and evaluation support the actions, which compose the complicating action.

Background Stages

The background of the narratives is composed of the pre-story, abstract, orientation and a final evaluation.

Pre-story

The pre-story is normally the first stage of the narrative although it is sometimes skipped by the speaker. In the context of an interview or lecture in which the speaker really wants to make sure his story will be understood, he generally starts with a pre-story. This provides the listener with the topic of the story in the form of a statement or, if it is a story about a particular shaykh, with praise of that shaykh. In the pre-story (1), from the narrative ‘Warning about Arrogance’, the speaker announces the topic of his story, which is ‘*Xeebaate* ‘arrogance’, by warning his audience about the potential consequences of such an attitude. He asks God to preserve him and his audience from arrogance. The use of the inclusive object pronoun ‘us’ is common in this context where the speaker does not want to exclude himself from his preaching. He usually includes himself among the addressees of his speech, so that his audience feels comfortable accepting his message. This particular speaker was also known for this practice.

(1a)

Xeebaate Yal nanu ci Yalla musal!
v.underestimate proper n.God 1s.obj prep.from proper n. God v.preserve
'May God preserve us from being arrogant'

The pre-story (1b) from 'An Example of Faithfulness' is a fairly long one in which the speaker introduces his topic, the faithfulness and discretion of his shaykh, Ababacar Sy (1885-1957), the oldest son and first khalife of El-Hajj Malick Sy (1855-1922). The speaker denied his shaykh any unfaithfulness and indiscretion, which explains the use of negative statements throughout the whole passage (e.g. *ku dul soppeeku ba abada* 'someone who never changes'). The pre-story also contains praises of the shaykh and his attachment Islamic law to *sharia* and *tariqa*¹ (e.g. *Nit ku fonk sariyaa ngoogu ak tariiqa* 'someone who respected the Islamic law, and Sufi orders'). This pre-story is a prelude to a series of anecdotes, in which Sëriñ Baabakar was warned by his father and aunt against being unfaithful. The pre-story is composed of non-narrative clauses, characterized by the presence of auxiliaries which fulfill the function of focus markers. The functions of the auxiliary **la** (3rd singular) and its equivalent **ngoogu** (3rd singular), a combined form of the presentative auxiliary **mungi** (3rd singular) and *noonu* 'there', are to put the emphasis (focus) respectively on the objects *nit ku maanuwoon* 'a faithful person' and *nit ku gore* 'an honest person', which the speaker claims to be among the qualities of Sëriñ Ababacar Sy.

(1b)

1. ku dul soppeeku ba abada
 3s.subj.rel neg v.change until end-of-the-time (idiomatic expr. Meaning
 'never')
2. Ku dul soppeeku ba abada mooy Sëriñ Baabakar Si
 3s.subj.rel neg. change adv.until end-of-the-time sfoc.1s.imperf proper.n.

¹ Tariqa is the Arabic name for path, meaning Sufi order. In Senegal, people refer to the different Sufi orders as tariqas.

3. Nit ku maanuwoon **la**
n.person 3s.subj.rel. v.be-discreet-past ofov.3s.
4. Li mu rawe ñepp, doomi soxna yi, mooy maanu
Pr.what 3s.subj. adv.all n.child-of n.saint female the sfoc.3s.imperf. v.be-discreet
5. Maa la wax loolu man
1s.subj. 3s.obj. v.tell pr.that me
6. Mboleem doomi soxna yi ci addina,
Adv.all child-of. n.saint female the prep.in n.world,
7. li leen Sëriñ Baabakar Si rawe **mooy** maanu
pr.what proper.n v.override sfoc.1s.subj.imperf. v.be-discreet
8. Li leen Xalifa rawe **mooy** maanu
pr.what proper.n. v.override sfoc.1s.subj.imperf. v.be-discreet
9. Xam nga maanu?
v.know 2s.subj v.be-discreet
10. Lool **la** rawe doomi soxna yi
pr.that ofoc.3s. v.override n.child-of n.saint-female det.the
11. Du Allaaxu Akbar, Asalaamu Aleykum²
neg.foc (Arabic formulas for initiate a prayer and closing a prayer)
12. Nit ku goree ngoogu
n.person pr.rel. v.be-honest ofoc.3s.
13. Nit ku am xam-xama **ngoogu**
n.person pr.rel. v.have n.knowledge ofoc.3s.
14. Nit ku bëgg diinee **ngoogu**
n.person pr.rel. v.like n.religion ofoc.3s.
15. Nit ku fonk sariyaa **ngoogu** ak tariiqa
n.person pr.rel. v.respect n.Islamic-law ofoc.3s. prep.and n.Sufism

Translation

1. *Someone who never changes,*
2. *Someone who never changes was Sëriñ Baabakar Si.*
3. *He was very discreet.*
4. *What he had more than all other people, all children of saint women was discretion.*

5. *I am who told you that.*
6. *All children of saint females in the world,*
7. *discretion was what Sëriñ Baabakar Si had over them*
8. *What xalifa had over them was discretion*
9. *Do you know what discretion means?*
10. *That's what he had over other kids of saint females*
11. *Not initiating and closing a prayer.*
12. *There was an honest person*

² Arabic formulae meaning respectively 'God is great' and 'Peace be with you'

13. *There was a knowledgeable person*
14. *Someone who loved religion (Islam)*
15. *Someone who respected the Islamic law, and Sufism*

In the pre-story (1c) taken from ‘The Lion Chasing the Warthog’ the speaker, Sëriñ Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba (1853-1927), claims that his grandfather, who founded the city of Touba, wanted it to be a city of pity and compassion (*yërmande* in Wolof). The pre-story is an introduction to a story about a lion chasing a warthog. The event would have happened in Touba, before it became the modern city we know today. The presence of a lion in that place is sufficient to show that it was a bush, inhabited by wild animals. Amadu Bamba and his descendents then built the place and modernized it. The function Amadu Bamba has given to the city also appears in the pre-story, *fakkub yërmande* ‘place of compassion’, which means that Touba is a city of peace where the *Murids* can live safe, just like the warthog was safe when it found refuge in Amadu Bamba. The nominal phrase, *fakkub yërmande* ‘place of compassion’ is object-focused by the focus marker **la** in clause 3 of (1c) to emphasize that Touba is that place of compassion.

(1c)

1. Fii jumaa ji ne, gayndee ngi fi woon
2. Waaye mel na ni nak bam ko fakkee
3. Fakkub yërmande **la** ko def

Translation

1. *Here where the mosque is, there was a lion*
2. *But it seems like when he (Amadu Bamba) cleared up the place*
3. *he did for compassion*

In the pre-story (1d), taken from the narrative ‘Throwing Dates’, the speaker, Sëriñ Abdul Aziz Sy Junior, grandson of El-Hajj Malick Sy, launches his narrative about miracles by arguing in favor of an esoteric or mystical knowledge as opposed to exoteric or rational knowledge. He

states that mystical knowledge is beyond rationalism, that is, beyond *lu ni fang* ‘something that is overt’. This statement prepares his audience for the series of miracles they will be hearing, which are not rational, but rather mystical. This pre-story is characterized presence of non-narrative clauses, verbal inflection (**danu** clause 1) and object focus auxiliaries (**lañu** clauses 3 and 5). The rational knowledge characteristic of western cultures is object-focused by **lañu** both in clauses 3 and 5. This helps set a barrier between Sufi believers and non-Sufi believers. The story the speaker will be telling is for Sufi believers, those who believe in mystical knowledge and not non-Sufi believers or rationalists:

(1d)

1. **Danu** nekk ci jamono boo xam ne xel dafa ubbiku lool
2. Te tubaab yi bokkul ci seen xam-xam baatin
3. Ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo **lañu** xam
4. moo tax ñi ñu jàngal ñepp
5. lool **lañu** xam
6. su ma waxee mbiru baatin sax daf leen di jaaxal
7. te baatin pourtant am na
8. am na am nan ci prëw
9. gis nañ ñu ko jëffe
10. gis nañ ñu ko wone

Translation

1. *We are in a time when people’s mind are very open*
2. *and the white people do not believe in mystical knowledge*
3. *them, they know something one can touch with his hand,*
4. *that is why the people they trained*
5. *it is what they know*
6. *Even when I talk about mysticism, it surprises them*
7. *but, mysticism does exist*
8. *it exists, we have proof of its existence*
9. *we have seen people who practiced it*
10. *we have seen people who showed it*

Sometimes, the pre-story is skipped as in the narrative ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’, which started directly with the abstract. Remember that story does not contain a Sufi

element, although it was told in a Sufi setting. Maybe that is the reason it does not contain a pre-story. That story was rather meant to entertain the audience. The story begins directly with the statement of its point as follows:

Caay-caay ga rey na waaye lay wi dafa rafet
The action was bad but the justification was beautiful

We draw from his examples that pre-stories are meant to prepare the audience for the upcoming story.

Abstract

While the pre-story prepares the listeners for the understanding of the forthcoming story, the abstract clearly states the point of that story, that is, the reason the story is worth telling and listening to. The most common abstract in Sufi stories is the one centered on the shaykh. As mentioned in first section of this chapter, the shaykh is the most important figure in this Sufi culture, and almost all stories are somehow related to him. In (2a), from the narrative ‘The Prediction’, the representative of the Tall family, from El-Hàjj Umar Tall (1797-1864), justifies his presence at the Great *Màggal* of Touba, the major event of the Muridiyya, telling people about his shaykh, Seexu Umar (El-Hàjj Umar Tall), his visit to Mbacke, the area where the city of Touba is located today, and, especially, the prediction Seexu Umar had made about the advent of Amadu Bamba. The reference to his prediction will make the audience, essentially composed of adepts of the Muridiyya, aware of the relationship between the Mbacke and the Tall families. The point of telling this story is to make people acknowledge the truth of the prediction, because Amadu Bamba came and founded one of the biggest Sufi orders in Senegal.

(2a)

1. Ndax Seexu Umar bés ba muy annoncer ñówu Seex Amadu Bamba
2. boobu dara xewagul

Translation

1. Because Seexu Umar the day he was announcing the advent of Seex Amadu Bamba
2. At that time nothing had happened yet

In the abstract (2b), the speaker announces that the point of his story is Sëñ Tuubaa (Amadu Bamba) himself (*ci boppam* in Wolof) and not anybody else. The left-dislocation of the object of that abstract, Sëñ Tuubaa, and the use of the reflexive pronoun *ci boppam*, show the emphasis put on Sëñ Tuubaa.

(2b)

Sëñ Tuubaa ci boppam, ma musal leen ci benn xisa
 Proper.n. refl.pr.himself 1s.subj. v.taste-ben 2s.obj. prep.about a n.story (Ar.)
 ‘Sëriñ Tuubaa, let me tell you a story about him’

In (2c), the abstract is in the form of a rhetorical question *lan moo ma yóbbu ci Sëriñ Baabakar* or ‘what took me to Sëriñ Baabakar?’ The point of labeling the abstract that way is to answer that question by telling the whole story of the relationship between the speaker and his marabout, Ababacar Sy, referred to in the text as Sëriñ Baabakar ‘marabout Baabakar’:

(2c)

1. Lan moo ma yóbbu ci Sëriñ Baabakar?
2. Du benn nit du benn Sëriñ du doomam

Translation

1. *What took me to Sëriñ Baabakar?*
2. *It is nobody, it is not a marabout, it is not his child*

As one can see, from the examples above, abstracts in Sufi narratives, are generally shaykh centered because Sufi narratives are meant to magnify a shaykh and his extraordinary actions. The abstract provides the listener with the purpose of the story, which is followed by the orientation.

Orientation

The orientation is the stage where the narrator gives information about time, place, and the people involved in the story. If it is a Sufi story, a shaykh is always involved with others characters. The orientation is important for the audience to know where and when the event happened, and who were involved. Sometimes the speaker cites his sources in the orientation to show some credibility. In (3a), from the story ‘When the shadows will be the same’, Amadu Bamba, referred to here as *sëriñ bi* ‘the marabout’, is involved with his disciple called *Tafsiir Muse Paate Daraame*, from Saalum (Saloum in French spelling), a region located in the central Senegal, north of the Gambia.

(3a)

1. Ku ñuy wax Tafsiir Muse Paate Daraame ab seexub
2. seex bu dëkk Saalum la bu bokk ci taalibey sëriñ bi
3. daa xorumuwoon lool man a waxak sëriñ bi nak

Translation

1. *Someone called Tafsiir Muse Paate Daraame,*
2. *a shaykh from Saalum, who was among his students.*
3. *He was a very funny person, capable of talking with the marabout though*

One can also find an orientation within the complicating action, as in (3b), from the story ‘The Prediction’, where the speaker wanted to inform his audience that Amadu Bamba’ brother, Maam Seex Anta, owned a house in Dakar, when the former came there to meet with the colonial governor:

(3b)

Maam Seex Anta jëndoon na fa kër
Maam Seex Anta bought a house there

As stated earlier in this study, sometimes, the story does not have a Sufi element; it is just made up by the storyteller or derived from sources other than the Sufi repertoire. The setting in

the ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’ story as will be recalled, features a king and one of his subjects, who, accidentally, poured some sauce over the king’s coat. The latter, upset, commanded his guards to kill the waiter. Knowing that he would die anyway, the waiter poured the rest of the sauce over the king’s coat. When the king asked him why did such an action, he responded wisely saying it is because he did not want the king to kill for minor action, but a major one. The final evaluation of the story preceding ‘The clumsy waiter and the mean king’ served as abstract to the following one. Indeed, the story preceding ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’ concerns a woman who attempted to poison the prophet Muhammad but was denounced by the poisoned food. She was excused by the Prophet thanks to her wise argument that she wanted to challenge the Prophet and see if he was a real one. After telling this religious story, the speaker wanted to entertain his audience with another, non-religious story, but on the same topic. Hence, he used the final evaluation of the story as the point (abstract) of the following one. The audience’s reaction to second story is telling of its function. They laughed heartily to death after hearing the ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’. The fact that this story and the previous are on the same theme may also explain why ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’ does not include a pre-story, to announce the topic. Below is the abstract of ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’:

(3c)

Caay-caay ga rey na waaye lay wi dafa rafet (evaluation from previous story)
The action was bad but the justification was beautiful

Evaluation

There are two types of evaluation in Sufi narratives, an embedded climactic evaluation, within the climax or complicating action, and a final or post-climactic evaluation, after the complicating action. The division is based on the function of the evaluation.

Climactic evaluations

Climactic evaluations usually consist of praises and genealogies found within the complication stage and are meant to highlight and magnify specific actions accomplished by a shaykh. The function of praises and genealogies is twofold: first they are used to extol a shaykh's great actions; second, they justify the performed actions by the shaykh's family lineage.

For instance in (4a), from 'The Prediction', the storyteller praised his shaykh, Seexu Umar Taal to legitimate his capacity of making true predictions. In referring to Seexu Umar as *Amiirul Moominun* or 'commander of the faithful' in Arabic, a title given to some highly ranked Sufi leaders, the speaker intends to justify his capacity to perform miraculous actions. In the same praise passage the speaker refers to his shaykh as 'kodd Aadama Aycha' 'youngest son of Aadama Aycha'. In fact, it is common in this West-African matrilineal culture to praise someone via his or her mother. It is also a common belief in that society that the success of a child relies on the quality and personality of his or her mother. While in western societies the logic seems to be 'like father like son', in this matrilineal society it is 'like mother like child'. The speaker, a multilingual communicator, uses Arabic and Pulaar when praising his shaykh who is a Pulaar speaker. The rest of the story is in Wolof. The use of Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, shows the speaker's knowledge of that language. Note the use of the subject focus marker **moo** in (4a) clause 3 to emphasize that Seexu Umar is the author of the Arabic words reported by the speaker. The use of Arabic in citations also gives authority and sacredness to the message since Arabic is the language of the Qur'an and the *hadiths* or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad.

(4a)

1. kodd Aadama Aycha
2. *Amiirul Moominun* (Arabic, 'Commander of the faithful')
3. Nga xam ni moo daan wax:

4. ³*yaqoolul Fuutiyyu wazaakal afharu al qadariiyu ibn Seyiidu Umaru*

Translation

1. *The youngest son of Aadama Aysa*
2. *Commander of the faithful*
3. *You know that he used to say:*
4. *yaqoolul Fuutiyyu wazaakal afharu al qadariiyu ibn Seyiidu Umaru*

The speaker in (4b) is the same speaker as in (14a). In (4b) he praises his host at the Great Mànggal of Touba, Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke, as someone whose testimonial cannot be wrong because of his holiness. The praises followed the recounting the prediction of El-Hàjj Umar Tall. According to the speaker, Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke, a son of Amadu Bamba, at that time supreme leader of the Muridiyya, gave his testimony to the prediction, the first time the speaker told it in his presence, and the marabout's testimony was sufficient to grant the narrator's story truth and reliability. In the praise the speaker also says that Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke does not speak for his own pleasure, but only under God's control. Such a statement corresponds to what is expected from a Sufi in this culture, that is, to not do anything for one's pleasure, but only for God's pleasure.

(4b)

1. Ku mel ni Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke
2. Dóotul waxe bakkanam
3. Lu mu wax rekk Yàllaa moo ko deside ca Hazal
4. Yàll na ko fi Yàlla yàggal

Translation

1. *Someone like Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke*
2. *Does not speak anymore for his own pleasure*
3. *Whatever he says, God has decided it in Hazal⁴*
4. *May God leave him here (in this life)*

³ Translation: he is saying, the person from the region of Futa, the poor servant of his lord, the son of Seyiidu Umaru

⁴ This is an Arabic word which refers to the place where God is said to have made all the decisions about our lives

Finally, in (4c) below, from ‘The governor’s office’, the narrator, a griot who was telling a story about a meeting between Amadu Bamba and the colonial governor in Dakar, mentions that another griot, Góor gi Mapaate Mbaay, a witness of that meeting, praised Amadu Bamba. It seems as if the narrator appropriated the praises to magnify Amadu Bamba. It would be interesting to see whether the praises are the narrator’s praises or the eyewitnesses’ ones since this way of praising Amadu Bamba has become very common. Góor gi Mapaate Mbaay found Amadu Bamba very audacious when he performed, unexpectedly, two long *rakkas* in the governor’s office. So, he praised him. The narrator reports the praise in the form of an embedded evaluation. The subject focus marker **yaa** (2nd singular) helps the speaker or the griot identify the subject, Amadu Bamba, from among other possible subjects, as the only who first prayed in the governor’s office.

(4d)

Complicating action

1. Góor gi Mapaate Mbaay daadi koy daadi koy woy foofa, tagg ko, ne ko

Embedded praise

2. Balla Aysa Buri Sëñ Mbakke Maaram fii nga taxaw fattaliku sa boroom, ku fi mësa taxaw fätte nga sa boroom ndax sa moroom, yow rekk **yaa** fi njëkk a taxaw fattaliku sa boroom”

Translation

Complicating action

1. *the man Mapaate Mbaay then sung him, sung him there, praised him, told him*

Embedded praise

2. *Balla Aysa Buri Sëñ Mbakke Maaram, here you step and recall your master, whoever stepped here before, forgot about his creator/owner because of someone, you are the first one to step here and recall your creator/owner.*

Final evaluation

The final evaluation serves as a closing statement for Wolof oral Sufi stories. It consists of the speaker's personal remarks and conclusion about the story. In effect, since Sufi stories give preeminence to the complicating action which contains the actions and the teachings of Sufi leaders, speakers evaluate those actions and teachings and provide their audience with a take home message. One of the forms this evaluation can take is a simple statement, which rephrases the abstract of the story as in (5a), from the narrative 'The governor's office'. Note the use of object focus construction in this evaluation. The expression, 'képp kuy wax: *'Assadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa'*⁵, 'whoever says: "*Assadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa*", is object-focused by means of the object focus marker nga (2nd singular) and sent to the beginning of the clause.

(5a)

1. kon nag képp kuy wax *Assadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa* ,
2. ci njabootu Sëñ Tuubaa nga bokk

Translation

1. *Therefore whoever says: "Assadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa"*
2. *You belong to Sëñ Tuubaa's family*

Note the resemblance between this evaluation in (5a) and to the abstract in (5b), which it rephrases. The expression 'whoever says: "*Assadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa*" in (5a) refers to all Muslims as mentioned in (5b). This is the evidence of the close relationship between the abstract and final evaluation in Sufi narratives. The abstract, to which this evaluation is tied, is in (5b) below:

(5b)

1. Sëñ Tuubaa ñówu fi ngir Murid yi rekk

⁵ Arabic formula translated as 'I bear witness that there is no god but God'. This Arabic formula is what one says when embracing Islam.

2. Sëñ Tuubaa dafa fi ñów ngir jullit yépp

Translation

1. *Sëñ Tuubaa did not come here just for the Murids*
2. *Sëñ Tuubaa came here for all Muslims*

The final evaluation can also be composed of praises in honor of the shaykh as in (5c), from ‘Staying with the Shaykh’, in which, the speaker, after he finished telling about his companionship with Sëriñ Baabakar Si, his shaykh, who trained and educated him, praises that shaykh for his personal success:

(5c)

1. Waaye fii ma toog ba Màkka
2. Benn fóore yabu ma
3. Loolu dama leen koy seede
4. Ngeen dolli ko ca la ngéen xam

Translation

1. *From here to Mecca*
2. *No savant undermines me*
3. *This, I am sharing it with you*
4. *So that you can add it to what you already know’*

Foreground Stage: The Complicating Action

This is the stage that everybody looks forward to hearing. It is a complex section which includes embedded text types such as dialogue, monologue, praise, and genealogy at the macro-level, and narratives clauses, characterized by a subject-verb-object structure and the absence of focusing auxiliaries, at the micro-level. In narrative clauses verbs occur in their bare form, without any tense or inflection marker. The function of the foreground is to highlight the actions a shaykh is said to have performed in a particular context, and also his teachings and ways of thinking, through dialogues and monologues. These actions and philosophical thoughts are constantly assessed by the speaker in the form of embedded praise evaluations.

Embedded Text Types

Monologue

A monologue consists of an uninterrupted speech in which a speaker communicates his thoughts to himself or an audience. The purpose of attributing a monologue to a shaykh in Wolof Sufi narratives is to justify upcoming actions and also to highlight that shaykh's philosophical teachings. The justification of actions is a way for the speaker to tell the audience that all a shaykh has done, was done for a reason, which always has to do with his relationship with God. A shaykh does not act for his own sake, but for the sake of serving God and other believers. The example we have already talked about in chapter 3, in which Amadu Bamba, justifies his decision to go to the water, is telling. The monologue is from the narrative 'Praying on the Water'. All the actions of the story are suspended during this monologue, composed of non-narrative clauses, in first person. Below is an excerpt from this monologue:

(6)

1. mu wax nag ne bëgg sa bakkan warta tax
2. ma faat waxtu yàlla wii
3. ndox mi jaamu yàlla ni man la
4. suuf si mu lalu nga xam ne moo ko lal
5. jaamu yàlla la ne man
6. defu ma ko ngir ndam
7. defu ma ko ngir xarbaax
8. dama koy def ngir bañ a faat waxtu yàlla wi
9. leegi dinaa sannu der bi
10. mu dem ci ndox mi
11. lu yagg yagg dina dem ca ci suuf sa
12. ma man ca taxaw julli
13. wala ndox mi taxaw ngir ndigalu Yàlla
14. ndax ab jaam la
15. ma man a taxaw ci ndox mi julli
16. wala sama baat bi, sama bakkan bi ma ñakk ko ci ndigalu yàlla
17. waaye lépp a ma gënal bëgg sama bakkan
18. tax ma bañ a julli waxtu wi

Translation

1. *Then he said that to like my nose (my life)*
2. *should not allow me to skip this prayer of God.*
3. *The water is a slave of God like me.*
4. *The sand that lays on it, that you know, covers it*
5. *Is a slave of God like me.*
6. *I am not doing for pride,*
7. *I am not doing for miracle,*
8. *I am doing it to avoid skipping God's prayer (time).*
9. *Now I am going to throw down the prayer skin,*
10. *it will go in the water.*
11. *It will surely reach the shore*
12. *So that I can stand up and pray.*
13. *Or the water will stop at God's will*
14. *because it is a slave,*
15. *So that I can step on the water and pray.*
16. *Or my neck, my life, I will lose it in following God's recommendation.*
17. *But, all this will be better for me than hanging on to my nose (life)*
18. *Causing my refusal to pray on time.*

There is another monologue in ‘Throwing Dates’, when Aliw Tamaasiina entered the date palm field, found a bunch of dates, and wanted it for his shaykh, Seex Axmet Tijaan. Before grabbing the bunch of dates, he expressed his intention to send it to his shaykh in a short monologue. The focusing auxiliary **laa** (1st singular) serves to object-focus the expression *Sama seriñ bi rekk*, literally ‘my master only’, the only one who deserves that bunch of dates. The narrator justifies the success of Aliw Tamaasiina’s action by his faith in Seex Axmet Tijaan and the blessing he received from God.

(7)

mu ni kii daal sama seriñ bi rekk laa ko yeene
he said, this, I want it for my shaykh only

Beside the monologues, in which the shaykh communicates his thoughts to himself, there are also dialogues involving the shaykh and the other protagonists. Dialogues are a tool used by Sufi narrators to highlight some of the attitudes, sayings, and teachings of the shaykh during his

life, and through his exchanges with others. By talking to the other protagonists, the shaykh appears to reveal himself, not only to his interlocutors, but, indirectly, to anyone who listens to the story. Some of the sayings attributed to a shaykh were passed down through oral tradition and are still current. The next section addresses the role of dialogues in the complicating action.

Dialogue

It is very common to have dialogues in Sufi narratives, in which a shaykh speaks directly to other protagonists, instead of having his speech indirectly reported by the narrator. Dialogues convey Sufi morals as is the case for monologues. Both dialogues and monologues interrupt the storytelling and, therefore, the sequence of actions.

In (8), from ‘The Prediction’, the dialogue between Seexu Umar and the people seated on the bench in Mbakke is meant to let the audience listen to Seexu Umar’s prediction of the advent of Amadu Bamba as if they were present when the event happened. Recalling the prediction also gives a credit to its author and pride to his adepts, those who believe in his holiness.

(8)

1. Mu ne leen: “ndaw see
2. Am na ku nekk ci moom
3. Su ñówee Baayam sax di na ko topp
4. Waxumalaak keneen

Translation

1. He told them: “that woman
2. There is someone in her
3. When he comes, even his father will follow him
4. A fortiori someone else”

The next dialogue (9) features Amadu Bamba and the colonial governor. The rationale for having this dialogue was to give Amadu Bamba an opportunity to tell what this movement, the Muridiyya Sufi order, meant to him. Amadu Bamba’s answer to the governor’s question about the Muridiyya was also a pretext for the narrator to remind his audience of the key elements of

that order. The narrator did not talk about the necessary allegiance to a shaykh in this definition. Maybe Amadu Bamba’s response was contextual since he did not want to differentiate himself from the other Muslims, or, maybe, the speaker wanted his report of that conversation to accommodate the non-Murids present at his lecture. The grammatical features of the dialogue include non-narrative clauses and presence of a focus construction. The subject focus marker **ñoo** (3rd person plural) in clause 6 helps identify the shaykh’s community *ñan ñoo di sa njaboot* ‘who your people are’. Similarly, the object clause 8 containing the answer, *képp kuy wax Asxadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa, wa asxadu ana Muxamada Rassuulula, iqamu salaat, itaamu xakaat, sayru ramadaan, xajul bayti*⁶, ‘whoever says there is only one God and Mohamed is his prophet, prays, helps the poor, fasts during the month of Ramadan, accomplishes the pilgrimage to Mecca’ is object-focused by means of the object focus marker **nga** (2nd person singular). Subject and object markers are in bold characters in (9):

(9)

Dialogue

1. Tubaab ne ko:
2. “li ma lay doye du lenn.
3. Li may doye du dara ludul rekk takkal la medaayu *legion d’honneur*”
4. Sëriñ Tuubaa ne ko yittewoowu ko.
5. Mu **ne** ko:
6. “agit di la laaj ñan ñooy say njaboot, ñan **ñoo** di say njaboot, ba nu xammee leen ci nit ñi, ba am nu nu jëflanteek ñoom ci xeetu teraanga”
7. Sëñ Tuubaa **ne** ko:
8. - “képp kuy wax *Asxadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa, wa asxadu ana Muxamada Rassuulula, iqamu salaat, itaamu xakaat, sayru ramadaan, xajul bayti*, ci sama njaboot **nga** bokk”

Translation

1. *The Tubaab said to him:*
2. *“the reason I wanted you to come here is nothing.*

6 Arabic expressions for the five pillars of Islam

3. *The reason I wanted you come here is nothing other than to give you the legion d'honneur medal”*
4. *Sëriñ Tuubaa told him that he did not need it.
He [the Tubaab] said to him:*
6. *“and also to ask who your people are, who your people are, so that we recognize them among others, so that we treat them with lots of hospitality”*
7. *Sëñ Tuubaa said to him:*
8. *“whoever says there is only one God and Mohamed is his prophet, prays, helps the poor, fasts during the month of Ramadan, accomplishes the pilgrimage to Mecca, it is to my family that you belong”*

The dialogue in (10), from ‘When the shadows will be the same’ features Amadu Bamba and one of his disciples, Tafsir Muse Paate Daraame, presented by the narrator as full of humor, *daa xorumuwoon lool ‘he was a very funny person’*, who came to complain about the fact that people compare Amadu Bamba with the other shaykhs, as it usually happens between followers of different Sufi leaders. Amadu Bamba’s reaction was to give to his disciple the assurance that all these people will ultimately join his movement. The dialogue is characterized by presence of the presentative auxiliaries **ñungi** and its copula form **di** (clause 4), subject focus markers **a** (clause 5) and its variant **moo** (clause 6), and verb focus marker **daa** (a short version of dafa) (clause 7). These markers are characteristics of non-narratives clauses found in areas other than the sequences of actions, which we will discuss in the next section. Below is the dialogue between Amadu Bamba and Tafsir Muse Pate Daraame:

(10)

Complicating action

1. mu ñów nuyu sëriñ bi daad ni ko:
Dialogue
2. “mbakke” sëriñ bi nuyu ko
3. mu ne ko : “waaw tafsir lu réew mi wax nak ? ”
4. mu ne ko ah réew mi ñungi wax rekk di sant rekk
5. waaye man de lenn rekk a ma metti
6. tudd giñ lay tudd di kenn rekk moo ma metti
7. sëriñ bi ne ko booba ker yi daa doonul genn rekk
8. bés bu ker yi doone genn wax ji doon jenn (laughs)

Translation

Complicating action

1. He came, greeted the shaykh, and told him:

Dialogue

2. “Mbakke”, the shaykh greeted him back ,
3. told him: “Tafsir how are people in the country doing?”
4. He told him: “people talk and are thankful only.
5. But only one thing bothers me
6. the fact they talk about you and someone else at the same time, bothers me”.
7. *The marabout said to him: “it is because the shadows are not the same, yet.*
8. *The day the shadows will be the same, the talk will be the same, as well”*

Narrative Clauses

The main grammatical feature of the complicating action is the presence of narrative clauses which contain sequences of actions. Those clauses are characterized by their relative simplicity: they contain no inflection and have a subject-verb-object structure. The emphasis is on the sequence of actions performed by the characters, mostly by a shaykh.

Example (11), from ‘The Prediction’ is a sequence of actions accomplished by El-Hàjj Umar Tall and the young woman who gave him water to drink. The actions are expressed by the use of narrative clauses in which there is a subject, that is, the neutral personal pronoun *mu* referring to the woman *ndaw si*, right-dislocated at the end of the clause; a verb, *taxaw* ‘stand’, and the locative expression *ci wetam* ‘near him’. The lexical subject, left-dislocated, ‘*ndaw si* ‘the woman’, helps identify the real subject of the verb, since *mu* is neutral, meaning it can be used for both male and female. Once the real subject is identified, there is no need to use a lexical subject in the next clause. That information has been stored in the listener’s discursive memory, which includes information gleaned from previous clauses, the non-linguistic context and the listener’s knowledge of the world.⁷

(11)

⁷ For information in discursive memory see Roulet (1999:210)

1. Mu ñów taxaw ci wetam ndaw si
3s.subj v.come v.stand prep.by n.side-poss-3s n.water det.the
she came close to him, the woman
2. mu jox ko mu naan
3s.subj v.give 3s.obj 3s.subj v.drink
she gave him to drink

The next example (12), from ‘Throwing Dates’, features the sequence of actions performed by the character, Aliw Tamaasiina. The character (1) enters in the field, (2) finds the dates, (3) throws them, and then the dates (4) arrive to his shaykh, referred to informally as Seex. The narrative clauses are composed of subject, verb, and object, which include locative expressions (e.g. *ci tool bi* ‘in the field’ and ‘*ci kaw, kanamu Seex*’ ‘on, before Seex’) or a direct object (e.g. *tiggu tandarma* ‘a bunch of dates’):

(12)

1. mu dugg ci tool bi rekk
2. gis benn tiggu tandarma (...)
3. mu sannu ko rekk
4. tigg bi dal ci kaw kanamu Seex

Translation

1. *he entered the field*
2. *and saw a bunch of dates (...)*
3. *he just threw it*
4. *the bunch arrived before Seex*

Sample Narrative Analysis

In this section I will apply the form-function analysis defined in the introductory chapter (chapter 1) to one of the narratives, ‘Throwing Dates’, by Abdoul Aziz Sy Junior, a grandson of El-Hàjj Malick Sy. In my analysis I will to show evidence of the relationship between the context of the storytelling and the form and functions of the narrative units. Below is the entire narrative ‘Throwing Dates’:

(13)

The narrative ‘Throwing Dates’

Pre-story

1. Danu nekk ci jamono boo xam ne xel dafa ubbiku lool
2. te/ tubaab yi bokkul ci seen xam-xam/ baatin
3. Ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo/ lanu xam
4. moo tax ñi ñu jàngal ñepp
5. lool lañu xam
6. su ma waxee mbiru baatin sax daf leen di jaaxal
7. te baatin *pourtant* am na
8. am na am nan ci prëw
9. gis nañ ñu ko jëffe
10. gis nañ ñu ko wone
11. ma nga *commencer* ca yonent yalla Isaa
12. *Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bimaa takuloona wamaa tadahuroon!*
13. kooku ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
14. yalla mayoon ko loolu
15. wéral gaana yi
16. fekk ku dee mu ni ko jógal mu jóg
17. wax ak moom soxlaam
18. bayyiwaat ko mu tëdd
19. loolu yépp ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
20. yonent bi itam sax am na ay *miracles/*
21. waaye moom dafa nekk *superieuru* yonent yi
22. mootax nanguwunu waxal ko benn *miracle* bu ëpp alxuraan
23. *monumaa jizatuhood alxuraanul karim (Arabic language)*
24. bañ ca jógee
25. nitu yalla dañuy am ay *miracles* yu ñuy wone di ko def
26. nekk fii wax ag ku sori
27. gis nañ ñu ci def ba bayyi

Abstract and Orientation

28. Seex Axmat Tijaan toog na bés ci buntu këram néegam
29. yore kurusam
30. aliw Tamaasiina a nga ca Tamaasiina ak fa mu nekk ak Faas ni mu soree
31. combien de kilometres

Complicating Action + Evaluation

32. mu dugg ci tool bi rekk gis benn tiggum tandarma
33. yeene ko ko
34. mu ni kii daal sama seriñ bi rekk laa ko yeene
35. daadi ko jël
36. pas-pas boobu ak yeene bi mu am
37. ak li ko yalla defal

38. mu sannu ko rekk
 39. tigg bi dal ci kaw kanamu Seex
 40. Seex ree ni kii de xam naa Aliw Tamaasiina la
 41. bim ko gisee ni ko :
 42. gis naa tigg bi
 43. wante nag maangi lay ñaan bu ko defati

Translation

Pre-story

1. *We are in a time when people's minds are very open*
 2. *and the white people, do not believe in mystical knowledge*
 3. *them, they know something one can touch with his hand,*
 4. *that is why the people they trained*
 5. *it is what they know*
 6. *Even when I talk about mysticism, it surprises them*
 7. *but, mysticism does exist*
 8. *it does exist; we have proof of its existence*
 9. *we have seen people who practiced it*
 10. *we have seen people who showed it*
 11. *It started with the prophet of God, Jesus*
 12. *Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul*
akmaha wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bima takuloona
wamaa tadahuroon (Arabic language)
 13. *that is among his miracles*
 14. *God gave him that capability*
 15. *to heal the leper*
 16. *to find a dead person and tell him to wake, and then he wakes up*
 17. *talk with him about his needs*
 18. *let him sleep (lay down) again*
 19. *All that is among his miracles*
 20. *Even the prophet also had miracles*
 21. *but, him, he is superior to other prophets*
 22. *that is why we do not accept to talk about any that he did, which is superior*
to the Qur'an.
 23. *monumaa jizatuhoo alxuraanul karim*
 24. *after him*
 25. *people of God have miracles that they show and perform*
 26. *are here and speak with someone far away*
 27. *we have seen people who did it already*

Abstract and Orientation

28. *Seex Axmat Tijaan one day sat here at his doorstep his room,*
 29. *holding his prayer breads*
 30. *aliw Tamaasiina was in Tamaasiina, which was far away from Fez (where*
Seex Axmat Tijan was)

31. *how many kilometers! (in French)*
Complicating action + evaluation
32. *he entered the field and saw a bunch of dates*
 33. *he wanted for him (Seex Axmet Tijaan)*
 34. *he said, this, I want it for my shaykh only*
 35. *then took it*
 36. *that determination and the intention he had*
 37. *and what God blessed him with*
 38. *he just threw it*
 39. *the bunch arrived on before Seex*
 40. *Seex laughed and said, this, I know is from Aliw Tamaasiina*
 41. *When he saw him, he said to him:*
42. *I saw the bunch*
43. *but I beg you to not do it again.*

Context of the Narrative Performance

The context of this narrative performance is the *Gàmmu* 2007, which took place in Tivaouane, the headquarters of the Sy branch of the Tijaniyya in Senegal. The *Gàmmu* celebrates Mawlid al-Nabi, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. The 2007 *Gàmmu* was dedicated to Ababacar Sy (1885-1957), the first caliph or successor of El-Hàjj Malick Sy (1855-1922). Ababacar Sy was in office from 1922 to 1957. The narrator is his son, Abdoul Aziz Sy Junior, who is also the current spokesman of the caliph of the Tijaniyya, Mansour Sy. As such, he speaks before, during, and after the *Gàmmu* to welcome the pilgrims and the government officials coming to Tivaouane to participate in the celebration. The narrative under study is from an interview he gave before the *Gàmmu*. The interviewer was the television broadcaster Ahmet Bachir Kunta, from the Kunta family of Ndiassane, whose ancestor was married to Ababacar Sy. The interview was about the life and teachings of Ababacar Sy. But, before talking about his father, the interviewee initiated a discussion about *baatin* (from Arabic) or mysticism or mystical knowledge, which enables Sufi shaykhs to perform miracles. In the passage following the

narrative ‘Throwing Dates’, he talked about some miracles his father performed, such as being able to know what a person came to tell him before actually talking to that person.

The Macro-structure of the Narrative

The macro-structure of this narrative divides into two sections: the background and foreground. The background is made up of a pre-story, and abstract, combined with the orientation and final evaluation, while the foreground consists solely of a complicating action. The particularity of this narrative is the inclusion of the final evaluation (the last utterance of the complicating action).

Background stages

The pre-story. The speaker launches the pre-story with a statement about people from western cultures who would not believe in *baatin* or mysticism. The speaker affirms the existence of mysticism, ‘*te pourtant baatin am na*’ ‘but, mysticism does exist’. He then enumerated examples of miracles performed by religious figures beginning with Jesus Chris, who healed lepers, talked to dead people, and so on.

The pre-story clauses are non-narrative clauses, that is, containing focusing auxiliaries such as the verb focus marker **dafa** (clause 1), the object focus marker **lañu** (clause 3), and perfective markers **na** (3rd singular) and **nañ** (from 2nd plural **nañu**) respectively in clauses 8 and 9; and distal presentative **ma nga** (3rd singular) in clause 11. The focusing auxiliaries serve to mark a constituent of the clause as rheme or new information as opposed to the theme or given information (Robert 2000). For instance in clause 3, *ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo lanu xam* ‘them, they know something one can touch with his hand’, the new information is the fronted object ‘*lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo*’ or ‘*something one can touch with his hand*’, which is object-focused by the object-focus marker’ **lanu**. The given information is in the theme, that is, the rightmost, ‘*xam*’ or ‘*knowledge*’. Indeed, the speaker acknowledges the fact that

people from western cultures do have rational knowledge, that is, knowledge based on observation and experience, but he assumes they do not believe in mystical knowledge.

As for the perfective marker **na** used with the stative verb, 'am' or 'have' in clause 7, it serves to make a statement. In clause 8, the speaker makes a general statement about the existence of miracles using perfective **na**.

To give evidence of that existence, the speaker refers to some popular stories about Jesus Christ (clauses 11 to 19). The embedded story about Jesus Christ is composed of an abstract, clause 11, followed by a sequence of actions (clause 12) and final evaluation (clauses 13 and 14). The clause 12, in Arabic, is translated into Wolof in clauses 15 through 18, and contains non-inflected verbs followed by nominal phrases. The function of this embedded narrative is to support the speaker's assertion that mysticism exists. For him Jesus Christ was able to perform these miraculous actions thanks to the mystical knowledge he received from God, *Yalla mayoon ko loolu* 'God gave him that capability.'

After talking about Jesus Christ the speaker moves on to the Prophet Muhammad, whose miracle, according to him, was the Qur'an (clause 23). The speaker refers to the illiteracy of the Prophet Muhammad when he received and transmitted the Qur'an. As in the story about Jesus Christ, the miracle about Muhammad is also told in Arabic. The function of the Arabic language is to add authority to the citation. The speaker wants to show his knowledge of the Qur'an and its original message, and not just its translation. This is reason he starts his story with its Arabic version before translating it into Wolof for those who may not understand Arabic.

The function of this long pre-story is to prepare his audience for the recounting of the upcoming story of a miracle performed by a Tijaniyya shaykh, Aliw Tamaasina, a disciple of Ahmad al-Tijani.

(14)

Pre-story

1. Danu nekk ci jamono boo xam ne xel dafa ubbiku lool
2. te tubaab yi bokkal ci seen xam-xam baatin
3. Ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo **lanu** xam
4. moo tax ñi ñu jàngal ñepp
5. lool lañu xam
6. su ma waxee mbiru baatin sax daf leen di jaaxal
7. te baatin *pourtant* am **na**
8. am **na** am nan ci prëw
9. gis nañ ñu ko jëffe
10. gis nañ ñu ko wone
11. ma nga *commencer* ca yonent yalla Isaa
12. *Wa ubriu al-akmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bima takuloona wamaa tadahuroon/*
13. kooku ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
14. yalla mayoon ko loolu
15. wéral gaana yi
16. fekk ku dee mu ni ko jógal mu jóg
17. wax ak moom soxlaam
18. bayyiwaat ko mu tēdd
19. loolu yépp ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
20. yonent bi itam sax am **na** ay *miracles*
21. waaye moom dafa nekk *superieuru* yonent yi
22. mootax nanguwunu waxal ko benn *miracle* bu ëpp alxuraan
23. ⁸*monumaa jizatuhoo alxuraanul karim (Arabic language)*
24. bañ ca jógee
25. nitu yalla dañuy am ay *miracles* yu ñuy wone di ko def
26. nekk fii wax ag ku sori
27. gis nañ ñu ci def ba bayyi

Translation

Pre-story

1. *We are in a time when people's minds are very open*
2. *and the white people, do not believe in mystical knowledge*
3. *them, they know something one can touch with his hand,*

⁸ For the miracle of the Qur'an see Surat Al-'Isrā', verse 88, which translates as : "Say: If the mankind and the jinns were together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another."

4. *that is why the people they trained*
5. *it is what they know*
6. *Even when I talk about mysticism, it surprises them*
7. *but, mysticism does exist*
8. *it does exist; we have proof of its existence*
9. *we have seen people who practiced it*
10. *we have seen people who showed it*
11. *It started from the prophet of God, Jesus*
12. *Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bima takuloona wamaa tadahuroon (Arabic language)*
13. *that is among his miracles*
14. *God gave him that capability*
15. *to heal the leper*
16. *to find a dead person and tell him to wake, and then he wakes up*
17. *talk with him about his needs*
18. *let him sleep (lay down) again*
19. *All that is among his miracles*
20. *Even the prophet (Muhammad) also had miracles*
21. *but, him, he is superior to other prophets*
22. *that is why we do not accept to talk about any that he did, which is superior to the Qur'an.*
23. *monumaa jizatuhoo alxuraanul karim*
24. *after him*
25. *people of God have miracles that they show and perform*
26. *be here and speak with someone far away*
27. *we have seen people who did it already*

Abstract and orientation. Although the story is about Aliw Tamaasiina, the abstract starts with Seex Axmet Tijan (Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani (1739 – 1815)). The rationale for doing this is certainly to respect the hierarchy between Aliw Tamaasiina, the disciple, and his shaykh, Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani. The story could have started with Aliw Tamaasiina, that is clause 3, and that would not change the meaning. The order of the string of clauses 1 and 2, and that of clauses 2 and 3, could be reversed without altering the meaning because they are non-narrative clauses. But the speaker has chosen to start with clauses 1 and 2 (15a) instead of 3 and (15b) to put the focus on Seex Axmet Tijan instead of his disciple.

The abstract is combined with the orientation, which describes the setting and introduces the characters beginning with Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani, holding his prayer beads, the emblem of the Tijaniyya, which the Tijan use to practice their *wird* (formulaic prayer rituals); and Aliw Tamaasiina, who was located kilometers away from his shaykh (clauses 1 through 3). The use of perfective **na** (3rd singular) and distal presentative **a nga** (3rd singular) helps locate the two characters. The name of the city of Fez, provided by the narrator in the orientation, also helps locate geographically where the event actually took place.

(15a)

1. Seex Axmat Tijaan toog **na** bés ci buntu këram néegam
2. yore kurusam
3. aliw Tamaasiina **a nga** ca Tamaasiina ak fa mu nekk ak Faas ni mu soree
4. combien de kilometres

Translation

1. *Seex Axmat Tijaan one day sat here at his doorstep his room,*
2. *holding his prayer breads*
3. *aliw Tamaasiina was in Tamaasiina, which was far away from Fez (where Seex Axmat Tijan was)*
4. *how many kilometers!*

(15b)

1. Aliw Tamaasiina **a nga** ca Tamaasiina ak fa mu nekk ak Faas ni mu soree
2. combien de kilometres
3. Seex Axmat Tijaan toog **na** bés ci buntu këram néegam
4. yore kurusam

Translation

1. *Seex Axmat Tijaan one day sat here at his doorstep his room,*
2. *holding his prayer breads*
3. *aliw Tamaasiina was in Tamaasiina, which was far away from Fez (where Seex Axmat Tijan was)*
4. *how many kilometers!*

Final evaluation. The final evaluation consists of Seex Axmet Tijan's recommendation to his disciple to not perform this kind of miracle anymore. The presupposed information beneath that recommendation is that Aliw Tamaasiina was capable of performing miraculous deeds, certainly, thanks to his shaykh. The speaker opens his narration with Seex Axmet Tijan (see abstract) and closes it up with him (see final evaluation). Although it is Aliw Tamaasiina who performed the miraculous action, Seex Axmet Tijan gets the credit as he seems to be the provider of this power. By directly reporting directly his speech in the final evaluation, the narrator also wants to let people know about his position with regard to performing miracle. The audience of the interview given by the speaker would likely be composed of adepts of Seex Axmet Tijan, including the speaker himself, because of the context of the *Gàmmu*.

Another possible reading of the final evaluation is that a Tijan should not show miracles, although he or she might be capable of doing so. It seems that the rules of the Tijaniyya Sufi order are against showing miracles. In fact, in a passage following this narrative, the speaker stated that his father, Ababacar Sy, did not want people to know that he could perform miracles although he did some miraculous actions, such as telling a disciple what is wrong with him before hearing it from that disciple.

The evaluation is composed of a non-narrative or canonical clause which contains the perfective auxiliary *naa* (1st singular), and the presentative auxiliary **mangi** (1st singular proximal), which are among those found in such clauses. The speaker is directly addressing his disciple in first person and gives him recommendations. However, Aliw Tamaasiina may not be the only addressee of these recommendations; all the Tijans may be included. Indeed, in the passage following the evaluation, the speaker talks about his father's refusal to show miracles, making a link with the teachings of Seex Axmet Tijan.

(16)

1. Gis naa tigg bi
v.see perf.1s. n.bunch det.the
I saw the bunch
2. wante nag maangi lay ñaan bu ko defati
conj.but prep.and pres.1s 2s.Obj.imperf v.beg neg.2s. 3s.Obj v.do.anymore
but I beg you to not do it again

Foreground or complicating action

The foreground in this narrative corresponds to its complicating action, which consists of a sequence of actions performed by the protagonists. The focus is more on Aliw Tamaassina than his shaykh, because the former is the one who performed the miracle. The action begins when Aliw Tamaassina entered the field; saw the bunch of dates, expressed his intention to have it for his shaykh, grabbed it, and then threw it to him. These actions are in sequential order, that is, the verbal sequence of the narrative clauses corresponds to the order of the events, which defines narrative (Labov & Waletzky 1967) as opposed to non-narrative. The sequence of actions is interrupted by a short embedded monologue (clause 3) in which Aliw Tamaasiina expresses his intention to send the bunch of dates to his beloved shaykh. That monologue contains non-narrative clauses as opposed to the narrative clauses in the sequence of actions. The monologue clause is made up of a verb inflected with the focus marker, **laa** (1st singular). In contrast, the verbs within the narrative clauses are not inflected with tense, aspect, or focus. The inflections are present in non-narrative clauses only, for instance in the monologue in clause 3. The complicating action is character-centered and the third person singular pronoun **mu** (3rd singular) and subject or object lexical items, Aliw Tamaasiina, and Seex, are used:

(17)

1. Mu dugg ci tool bi rekk gis benn tiggu tandarma
3s.Subj. v.enter prep.in field det.the adv.only v.see num.a n.bunch.of n.date
2. yeene ko ko
v.wish 3s.Obj 3s.Obj

3. mu ni kii daal sama seriñ bi rekk laa ko yeene
3s.Subj v.say dem.this daal poss.my n.master the adv.only ofoc.1s 3s.Obj. v.wish
4. daadi ko jël
adv.then 3s.Obj v.take
5. pas-pas boobu ak yeene bi mu am
n.determination dem.that prep.and n.intention ret.that 3s.Subj v.have
6. ak li ko Yalla defal
prep.and pr.what 3s.Obj proper n.God v.do.ben
7. mu sanni ko rekk
3s.Subj. v.throw 3.s.Obj. adv.only
8. tigg bi dal ci kaw kanamu Seex
n.bunch det.the v.arrive prep.on prep.before proper n. Seex
9. Seex ree ni kii de xam naa Aliw Tamaasiina la
Prop n. Seex v.laugh v.say dem.this de v.konw perf.1s. proper n.Aliw Tamaasiina ofoc.3s.
10. bim ko gisee ni ko :
adv.when 3sg v.see.fut v.say 3s.Obj

Translation

1. *he entered the field and saw a bunch of dates*
2. *he wanted for him (Seex Axmet Tijaan)*
3. *he said, this, I want it for my shaykh only*
4. *then took it*
5. *that determination and the intention he had*
6. *and what God blessed him with*
7. *he just threw it*
8. *the bunch arrived on before Seex*
9. *Seex laughed and said, this, I know is from Aliw Tamaasiina*
10. *When he saw him, he said to him:*

This chapter has dealt with the analysis of Wolof Sufi oral narratives. The sample analysis proposed for ‘Throwing Dates’ showed evidence of the difference between background and foreground and the grammatical features of each of these two entities. In addition, the analysis showed the impact of the context of production of Sufi narratives on their structure and content. The next chapter will address the significance of this study and look at perspectives for further inquiry on narrative and narrative structure.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation I raised four research questions, which this study aims to answer. These questions were concerned with (1) the structure of Wolof Sufi oral narratives and the formal characteristics of the narrative units of that structure, (2) the functions of the units, (3) the extent to which the context of the narrative performance, audience, and speaker's goals have shaped the narratives and their structure, and, finally, (4) the linguistic strategies in use in the complicating action for highlighting the shaykh and his actions. In the course of this study and throughout the different chapters, I here attempted to give answers to these questions. My goal in this concluding chapter is to stress the major points this dissertation has come up with concerning not only Wolof Sufi oral narratives, but also narrative in general. I will finish with ideas about new avenues and possibilities for further inquiry on the study of narrative structure.

Role of the Context

In the course of this study I have shown that the cultural context of the Wolof Sufi oral narratives has shaped their structure. I defined context, as both a global and local concept.

Globally, the Sufi narratives are rooted in the long tradition of stories about the Prophet Muhammad and his hadiths or sayings within Islam, to which many Muslims are accustomed. This tradition also prevails in other religions such as Christianity and Judaism.

Locally, Sufi storytelling has developed within a West-African Sufi culture dominated by the figure of the shaykh, who is the center of the stories. The life itineraries of previous shaykhs are related to their adepts by other Sufi shaykhs or disciples during Sufi events such as *Gàmmu* and *Màggal*. The purpose of telling such stories is to enhance the disciples' faith in their shaykhs and their attachment to a particular Sufi order. The content and quality of the storytelling vary according to the setting and the speaker. The norms for telling stories in West-African culture

were set by the griot, an important figure known for his speaking skills. However, Sufi stories are not told by griots only. Moreover, most of the speakers in the corpus of narratives collected for this study were told by non-griots, members of the leading Sufi families in Senegal, namely the Mbacke and the Sy lineages.

Six-stage Narrative Structure

The Sufi context of Wolof Sufi oral narratives has given shape to a six-stage narrative structure. This structure is made up of a pre-story, which announces the theme or subject of the story; an abstract, which introduces the point of the narrative; an orientation, which sets the time, place, and context of the story, a complicating action, which is composed of miraculous deeds and teachings of a given Sufi shaykh; and a final evaluation, which contains the speaker's personal assessment of the whole story.

The complicating action is the most important stage of Wolof Sufi oral narratives, and, as such, is given prominence by means of various linguistic mechanisms, which include a shift of clause structure, and presence of embedded dialogues, monologues, genealogies and praise-evaluations of the shaykh's actions and philosophical stance.

The final evaluation, which follows the complicating action, is tied to the abstract. In this final evaluation, the speaker rephrases and sometimes elaborates more on his abstract. Figure 6-1 shows a complete Wolof Sufi oral narrative:

Pre-story

The first important conclusion that derives from this study of the structure of Wolof Sufi oral narratives is the presence of a pre-story unit, which comes before the actual storytelling, in the form a statement of the topic of the story or a long paragraph in which the speaker elaborates on that topic. In this context of oral culture, everything is verbalized for the sake of better communication between speakers and listeners. The length of the pre-story, therefore, varies

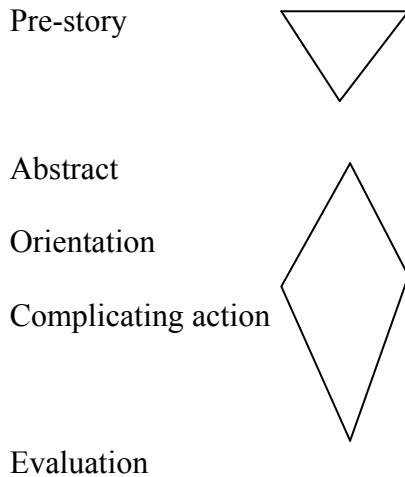


Figure 6-1. Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure

according to many factors, including the topic, the speaker, and the context. My concept of pre-story diverges from the Labovian concept of narrative pre-construction, in that the Labovian concept is a cognitive one, meaning a pre-construction of the story in the speaker's mind before the actual telling. As Labov stipulates in the abstract of his article, Narrative pre-construction (Labov 2007):

Before a narrative can be constructed, it must be pre-constructed by a cognitive process that begins with a decision that a given event is reportable. Pre-construction begins with this most reportable event and proceeds backwards in time to locate events that are linked causally each to the following one, a recursive process that ends with the location of the unreportable events- one that is not reportable in itself and needs no explanation.'

My concept of pre-story may also be cognitive from the beginning, that is, the speaker must have pre-constructed his pre-story before verbalizing it in the form of a statement as in (1a) or a more elaborated introduction on the topic covered by the narrative as in (1b). Example (1a) is the pre-story from the narrative 'Warning about Arrogance' while (1b) is from 'Throwing Dates':

(1a)

Xeebaate yal nanu ci yalla musal!
'May God preserve us from being arrogant!'

(1b)

1. Danu nekk ci jamono boo xam ne xel dafa ubbiku lool
2. Te tubaab yi bokkul ci seen xam-xam baatin
3. Ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo lanu xam
4. moo tax ñi ñu jàngal ñepp
5. lool lañu xam
6. su ma waxee mbiru baatin sax daf leen di jaaxal
7. te baatin *pourtant* am na
8. am na am nan ci prëw
9. gis nañ ñu ko jëffe
10. gis nañ ñu ko wone
11. ma nga *commencer* ca yonent yalla Isaa
12. *Wa ubriu al-akmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul
akmaha wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bimaa
takuloona wamaa tadahuroon*
13. kooku ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
14. Yalla mayoon ko loolu
15. wéral gaana yi
16. fekk ku dee mu ni ko jógal mu jóg
17. wax ak moom soxlaam
18. bayyiwaat ko mu tëdd
19. loolu yépp ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
20. yonent bi itam sax am na ay *miracles*
21. waaye moom dafa nekk *superieuru* yonent yi
22. mootax nanguwunu waxal ko benn *miracle* bu ëpp alxuraan
23. *monumaa jizatuhood alxuraanul karim (Arabic language)*
24. bañ ca jógee
25. nitu yalla dañuy am ay *miracles* yu ñuy wone di ko def
26. nekk fii wax ag ku sori
27. gis nañ ñu ci def ba bayyi

Translation

1. *We are in a time when people mind is very open*
2. *and the white people, do not believe in mystical knowledge*
3. *them, they know something one can touch with his hand,*
4. *that is why the people they trained*
5. *it is what they know*
6. *Even when I talk about mysticism, it surprises them*
7. *but, mysticism does exist*

8. *it exists, we have proof of its existence*
9. *we have seen people who practiced it*
10. *we have seen people who showed it*
11. *It started from the prophet of God, Jesus*
12. *Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bima takuloona wamaa tadahuroon/ (Arabic language)*
13. *that is among his miracles*
14. *God gave him that capability*
15. *to heal the leper*
16. *to find a dead person and tell him to wake, and then he wakes up*
17. *talk with him about his needs*
18. *let him sleep (lay down) again*
19. *All that is among his miracles*
20. *Even the prophet also had miracles*
21. *but, him, he is superior to other prophets*
22. *that is why we do not accept to talk about anything he did, which is superior to the Qur'an.*
23. *monumaa jizatuhoo alxuraanul karim// after him*
24. *when we left there*
25. *people of God have miracles that they show and perform*
26. *be here and speak with someone far away*
27. *we have seen people who did it already*

Final Evaluation

The second conclusion which derived from this study is concerned with the function of the evaluation in Sufi narratives. Indeed, there are two types of evaluations in this narrative genre: the climactic evaluation, which is found in the complicating action or climax – it plays a role of assessment of the actions performed by the different protagonists - and the final evaluation, which contains the speaker's closing message. In the example below, from 'Praying on the Water', the narrator makes a climactic evaluation, in which he comments on Amadu Bamba's insistence on praying aboard, because he is among those who cannot skip a prayer. He then asks several times for permission to pray on the ship:

(2a)

1. Te nag moxtaaru tisbaar ak mum takkussan
2. Dañoo lënkëloo
3. Fa muxtaarum tisbaar yem

4. Ca cat la fa la moxtaarum takkusaan tàmbalee
5. Te moom dafa bokk ci ñi nga xam ne sañuñoo julli waxtu
6. ca njëlbéenu waxtu waxtu wa
7. xam ngeen aqsaabi yépp
8. loolu dafa bokk ci seeni kii waxtu wu ne
9. ca njëlbéen ga lañu koy julli
10. ak luñu tabdi tabdi
11. ak fu ñu man a ne rawatina Sëriñ bi

Translation

1. *and the ideal time to perform the afternoon prayer and that of the evening prayer*
2. *overlap with each other.*
3. *Where the afternoon prayer finishes*
4. *is where the evening prayer starts.*
5. *And him (Amadu Bamba) he is among those who have not the right to pray*
6. *past the beginning of the timeline of that prayer.*
7. *You know, all the aqsaabi,*
8. *it is among their things that for each prayer,*
9. *they do it at the beginning,*
10. *no matter how busy they are*
11. *and where they can be, especially the master (Amadu Bamba).*

The next example is a final evaluation. It is from the story ‘Warning about Arrogance’.

The speaker warns his audience about arrogance, which explains his prayer, *Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!* ‘May God preserve us from being arrogant!’ which is repeated three times. This is a common pattern in preaching in this Sufi religious context:

(2b)

1. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
2. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
3. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
4. LéppiYalla yal na rey ci nun niYalla reye ci nun!
5. Nit ak kam moom noo yem
6. Bu dee fas wi
7. Yeen a bokk ku leen bind
8. Kenn ku ne ci yeen am nga bisub juddu
9. Na la wóor ne sa besub de ngi sa kanam yaag fas wi

Translation

1. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
2. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
3. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
4. *May all about God be big to us like God!*
5. *A person and his belonging*
6. *If it is a horse*
7. *You belong to the same creator*
8. *Each of you has a day of birth*
9. *Be sure that your day of death is forthcoming you and the horse."*

Evaluating Narrative Structure

Points in Common with Labov and Longacre

Both Labov and Longacre have posited about a model of six stages, but refer to those stages using different terms: Labov's abstract, orientation, climax, resolution, evaluation, and coda correspond respectively to Longacre's aperture, stage, episode or peak, denouement, conclusion, and finis. Both models share some features with Wolof Sufi narratives. Labov and Longacre's abstract/aperture, orientation/stage, episode or peak/complicating action, and evaluation/conclusion are present in Wolof Sufi oral narratives as in Figure 6-2:

abstract/aperture

orientation/stage

complicating action/peak episode

evaluation/conclusion

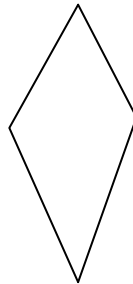


Figure 6-2. Using Labov and Longacre to account for Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure

Points of Difference with Labov and Longacre

The points of difference between Labov and Longacre's model and Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure are as follows: First, Labov's narratives are reported while Wolof Sufi narratives are known and shared stories. Second, there is a pre-story stage in Sufi narratives,

which does not correspond exactly to Labov’s cognitive concept of narrative pre-construction, but is an actual stage where the general topic is stated, sometimes developed, for the sake of preparing the hearer for the recounting of the forthcoming story. Third, the final evaluation serves as an ending point of the story and displays the form of a moralizing lesson for the audience. Figure 6-3 shows a complete version of a Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure:

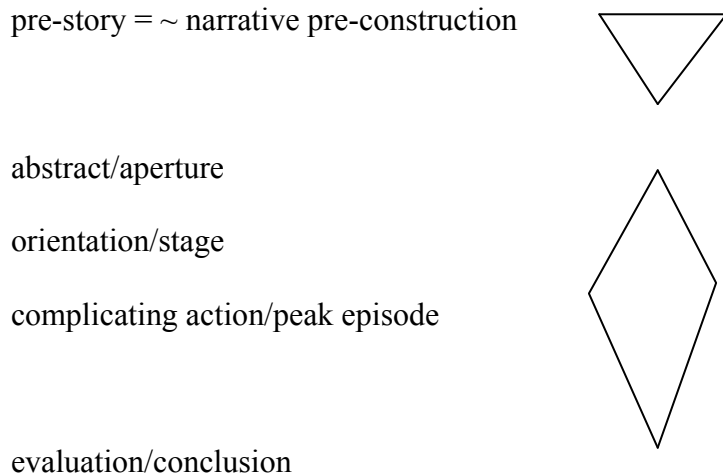


Figure 6-3. Wolof Sufi oral narrative structure

General Conclusion

To conclude this study I want to focus on three major issues: narrative/narrative structure, the contribution to scholarship on narrative structure, and the perspectives for further examination.

The definition of narrative must be restricted to a temporal sequencing of at least two events in a chronological order (Labov and Waletzky 1967). A narrative clause advances the story while a non-narrative clause interrupts it. The syntax of narrative clauses varies from one language to another. In some Western languages such as French and English, it is characterized by a shift to the past tense or the historical present while in other languages such as Wolof, for instance, it is marked by a shift to subject-verb-object sentence structure.

If there is a common view of what makes a narrative, that is a temporal sequencing of two successive events, it is not the case with respect to narrative structure. The latter may vary according to many factors, among which are the context of production and reception of the narratives as well as cultural values and goals of the speaker and audience. The structure of the narrative can be as short as a sequence of two actions but as complex as a sequence of episodes (Longacre, 1976). It can be a complete text or an open ended text, to which other speakers will contribute. In this regard the following example is a string of Wolof narrative clauses, composed of a sequence of three actions: the arrival, the throwing down of the prayer skin, and the performing of the two prayer steps:

(3)

Sëriñ ñów, sanni der bi, julli ñaari *rakka*
'*The shaykh came, threw the prayer skin, perform two prayer steps*'

However, many narratives go beyond the narrative clause to include different narrative units or episodes such as abstract or aperture, orientation or stage, complication or peak, denouement or resolution, evaluation or conclusion, and coda or finis. Yet, not all these stages are necessarily present. Their presence depends on many factors including the context, audience, and storyteller's personal skills. Consequently, narrative structure should be defined culturally and contextually. The cultural context and the audience seem to determine the shaping of the narrative and selection of the narrative units.

First, the cultural context of the Wolof Sufi narratives explains the presence of a pre-story stage. This is a new component of the structure of narrative that this study has helped discover.

Second, the cultural context has given shape to a rich complicating action, which contains monologue, dialogue, and praise-evaluations. This is also an opportunity for the speaker to magnify the shaykh and his deeds.

Third, the Sufi cultural context and the speaker's goals justify the closing status of the post-climactic evaluation, that is, the evaluation that follows the complicating action. In fact, the actions accomplished by the shaykh within the complicating action provide the speaker with the opportunity to reach his goal, which is to teach Sufi lessons to his audience. These lessons close up the story and serve as transition to a new episode or story.

Future Research

In general, this study illustrates the necessity of pursuing reflection on narrative structure, especially when dealing with non-Western cultures. Indeed, many studies on narratives are concerned with Western cultures and languages such as English, Spanish and Catalan. However, fewer works have focused on non-Western languages such as Wolof. Therefore this study provides new data and findings to scholarship on narrative and narrative structure. My findings shows the existence of a new narrative unit, namely the pre-story stage, which differs from Labov's narrative pre-construction. Labov was concerned more with the cognitive process of pre-constructing a narrative before its actual telling, while the Wolof pre-story consists of a statement of the general theme of the forthcoming story. In addition, this study demonstrates that not all the units of the Labovian model are necessarily present in all narratives. In Wolof, for instance, the evaluation stage serves as an ending point, while in Labovian narratives the resolution and coda close the account.

Finally, this study has shown another way of granting preeminence to the complicating action or peak of the storytelling. In Wolof, the complicating action includes subject-verb-object

clause structure as opposed to clauses containing verbal inflections (canonical clauses) and embedded text types such as dialogue, monologue and praises.

In terms of perspectives, this study can be extended in future research to encompass narratives told about female shaykhs or recounted by female speakers. Indeed, some female characters, such as Mame Diara Bousso and Fa Wade Wele, respectively the mothers of Amadu Bamba and El-Hàjj Malick Sy, are generally mentioned in Wolof Sufi stories (see narrative ‘The Prediction’). It would be interesting to look at the narratives about these female characters and the structure of these narratives. It would be equally interesting to look at the Sufi narratives told by female speakers. I heard a few of them when I was collecting data for this study, which I have not yet had a chance to look at. This gender aspect of Wolof Sufi narratives should be examined in further work.

Further inquiry into other non-Western languages spoken in Senegal and the neighboring area could also be conducted. In effect, Wolof shares many linguistic features with other Niger-Congo languages such as Pulaar. Among these features are focus and its marking. Therefore, a comparative study between Wolof and this language could lead to some interesting findings.

Similar work should be done on Mande languages and culture where the griot, an influential figure, plays a specific role in narratives. A cross-linguistic study would surely open new avenues for the study of narrative structure.

Finally, this linguistic study of Sufi narratives can be extended into the fields of anthropology, psychology, and cultural and religious studies. It launches a reflection on Sufi orders, the organization of their discourse and the perspectives and socialization of their disciples through stories.

APPENDIX A
THE NARRATIVES

Narrative 1 ‘Throwing Dates’

Speaker: Abdoul Aziz Sy Junior, grandson of El-Hàjj Malick Sy, son of Ababacar Sy

1. Danu nekk ci jamono boo xam ne xel dafa ubbiku lool
2. Te tubaab yi bokkul ci seen xam-xam/ baatin/
3. Ñoom lu ni fàng nit man caa teg loxo lañu xam
4. moo tax ñi ñu jàngal ñepp
5. lool lañu xam
6. su ma waxee mbiru baatin sax daf leen di jaaxal
7. te baatin *pourtant* am na
8. am na/am nan ci prëw
9. gis nañ ñu ko jëffe
10. gis nañ ñu ko wone
11. ma nga *commencer* ca yonent yalla Isaa
12. *Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bimaa takuloona wamaa tadahuroon*
13. kooku ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
14. yalla mayoon ko loolu
15. wéral gaana yi
16. fekk ku dee mu ni ko jógal mu jóg
17. wax ak moom soxlaam
18. bayyiwaat ko mu tëdd
19. loolu yépp ci ay *miraclam* la bokk
20. yonent bi itam sax am na ay *miracles*
21. waaye moom dafa nekk *superieuru* yonent yi
22. mootax nanguwunu waxal ko benn *miracle* bu ëpp alxuraan
23. *monumaa jizatuhood alxuraanul karim (Arabic language)*
24. bañ ca jógee
25. nitu yalla dañuy am ay *miracles* yu ñuy wone di ko def
26. nekk fii wax ag ku sori
27. gis nañ ñu ci def ba bayyi
28. Seex Axmat Tijaan toog na bés
29. ci buntu këram néegam
30. yore kurusam
31. Aliw Tamaasiin a nga ca Tamaasiin ak fa mu nekk ak Faas ni mu soree
32. *combien de kilometres*
33. mu dugg ci tool bi rekk gis benn tiggum tandarma/
34. *yeene ko ko*
35. mu ni kii daal sama seriñ bi rekk laa ko yeene
36. daadi ko jël
37. pas-pas boobu ak yeene bi mu am
38. ak li ko yalla defal

39. mu sanni ko rekk
40. tigg bi dal ci kaw
41. kanamu Seex
42. Seex ree ni kii de xam naa Aliw Tamasiina la
43. bim ko gisee ni ko gis naa tigg bi wante nag maangi lay ñaan bu ko defati

Translation

1. *We are in a time when people mind is very open*
2. *and the white people, do not believe in mystical knowledge*
3. *them, they know something one can touch with his hand,*
4. *that is why the people they trained*
5. *it is what they know*
6. *Even when I talk about mysticism, it surprises them*
7. *but, mysticism does exist*
8. *it exists, we have proof of its existence*
9. *we have seen people who practiced it*
10. *we have seen people who showed it*
11. *It started with the Prophet of God, Jesus*
12. *Wa ubriu al-akhmaha, wa al-abrasa, wa uhyi al-mata, bi izni allahirhul akmahaa wal abrasa wa ahil mawta bi izni laha bi nabii ikum bimaa takuloona wamaa tadahuroon/ (Arabic language)*
13. *that is among his miracles*
14. *God gave him that capability*
15. *to heal the leper*
16. *to find a dead person and tell him to wake, and then he wakes up*
17. *talk with him about his needs*
18. *let him sleep (lie down) again*
19. *All that is among his miracles*
20. *Even the prophet also had miracles*
21. *but, him, he is superior to other prophets*
22. *that is why we do not accept to talk about any that he did, which is superior to the Qur'an.*
23. *monumaa jizatuhood alxuraanul karim// after him*
24. *when we left there*
25. *people of God have miracles that they show and perform*
26. *are here and speak with someone far away*
27. *we have seen people who did it already*
28. *Seex Axmat Tijaan one day sat here*
29. *At his doorstep, his room,*
30. *holding his prayer breads*
31. *Aliw Tamaasiin was in Tamaasiin, which was far away from Faas (where Seex Axmat Tijan was)*
32. *how many kilometers! (in French)*
33. *he entered the field and saw a bunch of dates*
34. *he wanted for him (Seex Axmet Jijaan)*

35. *he said, this, I want it for my shaykh only*
36. *then took it*
37. *that determination and the intention he had*
38. *and what God blessed him with*
39. *he just threw it*
40. *the bunch arrived on*
41. *before Seex*
42. *Seex laughed and said, this, I know is from Aliw Tamaasiina*
43. *When he saw him, he said to him, I saw the bunch but I beg you to not do it again.*

Narrative 2 ‘The Prediction’

Speaker: Ahmet Iyane Thiam, a disciple of the Tijaniyya affiliated to the Tall family

branch of the Tijaniyya order in Senegal

1. Céy waay gaa ñi su ngeen seetee tey li xew Tuubaa
2. Céy su ngeen gisee li xew Tuubaa
3. Li fi ñów tey
4. Ci ayDoomu Aadama
5. Ak boroomi may
6. Ñu jóge fu ne
7. Indi lu ne
8. Fekk fi ku ne
9. Ngir Yàllaag Seex Axmadu Bamba
10. ¹Radiyàllahu Tahla Anxu (Arabic)
11. Loola ma ne nag
12. Lii delegation Cerno Muntagaa Taal mi nga xam ne
13. Mooy xalifaab Seexu Umaru Fuutiyu Taal tey
14. Ma ne buñ ko fi buñ ko fi
15. Moo fi wara jiitu ñépp
16. Te moo fi wara mujj ñépp
17. Ndax Seexu Umar bés ba muy *annoncer* ñówu Seex Amadu Bamba
18. boobu dara xewagul
19. Na ma ko waxe
20. Ñów na rekk ci Mbakke
21. Fekk ay mag tóog ci ngenn tóoc
22. Mu jàdd fa ame yoqam ak padam Njaxéen
23. Laaj ndox
24. Mag bu baax ca tóoc ga daldi woo kenn ca xaleyay wol dëbb
25. “meyal sa maam jee ndox”
26. Xale ba daldi gaaw indi ndox indin wu rafet wu mag
27. Ñów taxaw ci kanamu Seexu Omarul Fuutiyu

¹ May Allah, the Most High, Have merci on him

28. kodd Aadama Aycha
29. Amiirul Moominun (Arabic formula)
30. Nga xam ni moo daan wax :
31. “yaqoolul Fuutiyyu wazaakal afharu al qadariiyu ibn Seyiidu Umaru”
32. Mu ñów taxaw ci wetam ndaw si
33. mu jox ko mu naan
34. Mu bàyyi ko
35. Seexu Umar walbatiku daldi koy joxaat bàttu bi
36. Mu ni wélbat di dem soxna soosu moom ndaw soosu
37. wàlla moom xale boobu na ma Yàlla jéggal
38. Seexu Umar daldi walbatiku wax waa tóoc gi
39. Mag ñi toogoon ci tóoc gi
40. Ci ron garab gi
41. Mu ne leen “ndaw see
42. Am na ku nekk ci moom
43. Su ñówee Baayam sax di na ko topp
44. Waxumalaak keneen
45. [fu ma tollu woon?]
46. [mu ne ndaw see di dem] (someone from the audience)
47. Mu ne : “ndaw sii” Yàlla na ma Yàlla jéggal
48. Bam ko xoollee mu ne kii ma jox ndox mii ma naan
49. xool leen ko
50. Yeen mag ñii ci tóoc gi
51. Bu èllégee nit ñi... am na ku nekk ci moom
52. Koo xam ne bu dikkee
53. Waajuram wu góor sax dina ko topp
54. Waxumalaak keneen
55. Xam ngeen xale boobee
56. Moo doonoon Soxna Maam Jaara Buso
57. Ba ma koy wax ci kanamu Sëriñ Tuubaa Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke
58. Ma foogoon ni man maa ko gën a xam nettali wi
59. Mu tegal ma ci ne : « at mooma sax de ku juddu ci Mbakke
60. Seex Umar lan la tudde”
61. Man ma xam ne sama nettali wi dëgg la ndax ku mel ni Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke
62. Man may wax ne ² “laa yanfixu anil xawwaa in xuwwa ilaa faqqun mu xarra”
63. Ku mel ni Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke
64. Dóotul waxe bakkanam
65. Lu mu wax rekk Yàllaa moo ko decide ca *Azal*
66. Yàll na ko fi Yàlla yàggal
67. Mu ne : “ndaw see
68. Am na ku nekk ci moom
69. Su ñówee, baayam sax dina ko topp

² From sourate 53 verses 3 of the Qur’an: ‘La yantiq ‘anil hawa in huwa illa wayun yuha meaning’: ‘he does not speak for his own pleasure, it is indeed a revelation from God’.

70. Waxumala keneen
71. Kon nak besub fatteliku bii
72. dama ne delegation Seexu Umaru Fuutiyu
73. moo fi wara jëkk moo fi wara mujj

Translation

1. *oh my God, guys, if you look at today what happened in Touba*
2. *If you really see what happened in Touba*
3. *If you really see what happened in Touba*
4. *What (people) came here today*
5. *As children of Adam*
6. *And owners of blessings*
7. *They come from everywhere*
8. *Bring everything*
9. *Find everybody here*
10. *In the honor of God and shaykh Amadu Bamba*
11. *may God have mercy upon him*
12. *This, a delegate of Cerno Muntaga Taal, which you know,*
13. *is the khalif of Seexu Umaru Fuutiyu Taal today*
14. *I say if we don't (have) him here ... I say if we don't (have) him here*
15. *He (the delegate) must show up here first*
16. *And must be the last to leave*
17. *Because Seexu Umar the day he announced the advent of Seex Amadu Bamba*
18. *At that time nothing had happen yet*
19. *The way I said it*
20. *He came to Mbakke*
21. *Found old people sitting on a bench*
22. *He stopped there holding his walking stick and wearing his Padam njaxéen shoes*
23. *Asked for water*
24. *A good old person at the bench then called a young woman among those who were pounding.*
25. *"Give your grandfather some water to drink"*
26. *The young woman then hurried, brought the water in a beautiful way*
27. *Came, stood up before Seexu Omarul Fuutiyu*
28. *The youngest son of Aadama Aysa*
29. *Commander of the faithful*
30. *You know that he used to say*
31. *he is saying, the person from the region of Fuuta, the poor servant of his lord, the son of Seyiidu Umaru*
32. *she came stood next to him, the young woman*
33. *she gave him to drink*
34. *she let him drink*
35. *Seexu Umar turned around and then returned the container to her*

36. *Then she turned around to leave, that saint Woman, her, that woman*
37. *Or her that young woman, may God forgive*
38. *Seexu Umar then turned around and told the people at the bench*
39. *The old people who were seated at the bench*
40. *Under the tree*
41. *He told them: "that woman*
42. *There is someone in her*
43. *When he comes, even his father will follow him*
44. *A fortiori someone else"*
45. *Where was I*
46. *(from the audience) he said: that woman who is leaving*
47. *he said : "this woman, may God forgive me*
48. *when he looked at her, he said this woman who gave me this water to drink*
49. *look at her*
50. *You, the old people, seated on the bench*
51. *Later, the people... there is someone in her*
52. *That you know when he'll come*
53. *His even his father will follow him*
54. *In fortiori someone else*
55. *Do you who that young woman was?*
56. *It was Maam Jaara Buso*
57. *When I said that before Sëriñ Tuubaa Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke*
58. *I thought that I knew the story better than he did*
59. *He added : « In fact that year, whoever was born was in Mbakke*
60. *was named after Seex Umar "*
61. *Me, I knew that my story was true because someone like Sëriñ Saalixu Mbakke*
62. *Me I say that ³"laa yanfixu anil xawwaa in xuwwa ilaa faqqun mu xarra"*
63. *Someone like Sëriñ Saaliwu Mbakke*
64. *Does not speak anymore for his own pleasure*
65. *Whatever he says, God has decided it in Hazal*
66. *May God leave him here (in this life.)*
67. *He told them: "that woman*
68. *There is someone in her*
69. *When he comes, even his father will follow him*
70. *A fortiori someone else"*
71. *therefore, this day of remembrance*
72. *I said that a delegate of Seexu Umaru Fuutiyyu*
73. *Must show up before anyone else, must leave after everybody else has left'*

3 Arabic: he does not speak for himself

Narrative 3 ‘In the Governor’s Office’

Speaker: Mouhamadou Thioune, a griot murid follower, living in New York City

1. Bi ko gouverneur bi woowee Dakaar,
2. goor gu ñuy wax Mapaate Mbaay moo doonoon cuisinier ba.
3. Ba ñu ñówee ba woo Sëñ Tuuba,
4. Maam Seex Anta la àndal dem,
5. Sëñ Móodu Mustafa yóbbu ko,
6. bi mu ñówee,
7. fekk bi mu jógee ci géeej gi
8. Maam Seex Anta jëndoon na fa kër
9. waaye Sëñ Tuubaa dafaa wacc
10. waaye fanaanu fa.
11. Bi mu ñówee
12. fanaan
13. ba xéy dem wuyuji gouverneur
14. jëkk a ñow sanni der bi
15. daadi julli ñaari rakka yu yàgg,
16. matoon na 45min,
17. di sëlmal ne:
18. ‘ana yeen nii nit ku ma woo ci yeen?’.
19. Tubaab ne ko:
20. ‘li ma lay doye du lenn, li may doye du dara ludul rekk takkal la medaayu legion d’honneur’
21. Sëriñ Tuubaa ne ko yittewoowu ko.
22. Mu ne ko:
23. ‘agit di la laaj ñan ñooy say njaboot,
24. ñan ñoo di say njaboot,
25. ba nu xammee leen ci nit ñi,
26. ba am nu nu jëflanteek ñoom ci xeetu teraanga’
27. Sëñ Tuubaa ne ko:
28. ‘képp kuy wax Asxadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa, wa asxadu ana Muxamada Rassuulula, iqamu salaata, itaamu xakaat, sayru ramadaan, xajul bayti, ci sama njaboot nga bokk’
29. kon nag képp kuy wax Asxadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa, ci njabootu Sëñ Tuubaa nga bokk

Translation

1. *‘When the governor asked him to come to Dakar,*
2. *A man called Mapaate Mbaye, he was the cook.*
3. *When they asked Sëñ Tuubaa to come,*
4. *it was with Maam Seex Anta that he went.*
5. *Sëñ Móodu Mustafa took him there.*
6. *When he arrived,*

7. *in fact, when he returned from the ocean,*
8. *Maam Seex Anta bought a house there.*
9. *But Sëñ Tuuba just arrived there*
10. *but did not spend the night’.*
11. *Then when he came,*
12. *he spent the night,*
13. *left in the morning to go to respond to the governor.*
14. *He first came, threw the prayer rug,*
15. *then performed two long rakkas,*
16. *which amounted to 45 minutes,*
17. *then he finished and said:*
18. *‘who among you has called me’*
19. *The Tubaab said to him:*
20. *‘the reason I wanted you to come here is nothing.*
21. *The reason I wanted you come here is nothing but to give you the legion*
d’honneur medal’
22. *Sëriñ Tuubaa told him that he did not need it.*
23. *He (the governor) said to him:*
24. *‘and also to ask who your people are,*
25. *who your people are, so that we recognize them among others,*
26. *so that we treat them with lots of hospitality’.*
27. *Sëñ Tuubaa said to him:*
28. *‘whoever says there is only one God and Mohamed is his prophet’ prays, helps the*
poor, fasts during the month of Ramadan, accomplishes the pilgrimage to Mecca, it
is to my family that you belong’
29. *‘Therefore whoever says “Assadu Anlaa Ilaaxa Illalaa’ it is to Sëñ Tuuba’s family*
that you belong’

Narrative 4 ‘The lion chasing of warthog’

Speaker: Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba

1. Fii jumaa ji ne, gayndee ngi fi woon
2. Waaye mel na ni nak bam ko fakkee
3. Fakkub yërmande la ko def
4. Ndax fii kër Sëñ Saaliw gi ne
5. Sëñ Saaliw dégg naa ci lammañam mu ni
6. Sëñ bi toog na fii di bind
7. ci garab gii mu taalife *Mat la bul fawseeni*
8. lu mel nig dimb la woon
9. mu toog fii
10. ag ngara gaynde di ko daq
11. ba fekk Sëñ bi gott bi ba ñów
12. waaye ngara gi daldi yewwu
13. daldi fap tank yi aj daadi koy taxaw teg ko ci kaw Sëñ bi
14. Ñaari tanki kanam yi
15. Gaynde gi di ko xool

16. Ba yàgg mu ne waññit
17. Mbaam àll laa wax mbaam àll
18. Léegi nak ci ngay daadi xame ni kon
19. Moom bi mu fakkee dëkk bi rekk
20. Ci la ko def muy dëkkub yërmande
21. Nga xam ne rabi rabi njaay àll yiy fàdde sax
22. Bu ñuyfàdd ba agsi fii taxaw
23. Loolu nga ciy daldi dégge

Translation

1. *Here where the mosque is, there was a lion*
2. *But it seems like when he (Amadu Bamba) cleared up the place*
3. *he did for compassion*
4. *Because here where the home of Sëñ Saaliw is*
5. *I heard Sëñ Saaliw say that*
6. *the shaykh sat here to write*
7. *Under this tree, where he wrote his poem Mat la bul fawseeni (Arabic)*
8. *It was something like a pear tree*
9. *He sat here*
10. *A lion was pursuing a donkey*
11. *Until he found the shaykh, in the bush, he arrived*
12. *But the donkey was smart*
13. *He then raised his feet, stepped on the shaykh*
14. *His forward feet*
15. *The lion looked at him*
16. *And after a moment, returned back (Laughs)*
17. *I am talking about a wart-hog, a wart-hog*
18. *Now, you know,*
19. *As soon as he created the city,*
20. *He made it a city of compassion*
21. *So that, you know, even predators*
22. *When they come here, they stop*
23. *That is what you learn from this story*

Narrative 5 ‘Staying with the Shaykh’

Speaker: Abdou Karim, disciple and companion of Ababacar Sy

1. mu ubbi bunt tēj ubbiwaat bunt tēj ubbi palanteer
2. nu bokk ca toog
3. mu jox ma materyel bi moo waaje waxtu julli yépp
4. won ma benn siwo ne ma :
5. « Roqaya Si mu Alaaji Maalik, ca kër góorgi Madun Saar,
6. boo demee nga laajte doomam ju nuy wax Ndey Sofi Saar,
7. am naa fa ndaa loo xamne kenn du ca dem
8. nañu ko tijji nga wax leen maa la yebal
9. nga duy ci siwa bi bu guddee doom

10. nga ñów sottil ma ko ci ndaa li ci laay naan.
11. Su ndaa la amulee ndox nga dem simonj Bawal
12. Moo fi nekk teen bu neex
13. Nga seet ku la gunge nga dem rooti ca paan
14. Sottil ma ko ci ndaa lii
15. keroog laa gëj a jàng Alxuraan ci jataay boobu
16. booba sama boppu àlluwa *xul wa iyya* (in sourate al-Jinn 72) a ci ne
17. ma nekk ak moom ay at
18. dëkk bii ma toog tey
19. booba ñu bari jóge na fi di jàngi
20. ñu yónneewaat ca sam Pàppa
21. ne ko jëlal sa doom
22. Baabakar Si da koy yónni rekk
23. Coow lay waaxu ba yegsi ca Sëñ Baabakar
24. Mu woo ma ba ma ñów ne ma :
25. « dégg naa dañu ne sa Pàppa na la jëlsi
26. Loo ci xam? »
27. Ma ne ko : « nga ñaanal ma ma toog ci yów »
28. Mun ma : « moo gën nak »
29. Ma toog ci moom
30. Bi ma dellusee ci dëkk bii ma toog
31. Te ñepp noon na du ma xam dara
32. Ku fi gag te demoo Tiwaawan
33. Boo ñówee ci man ma gagganti la
34. Lool la Yàlla dogal nak
35. Waaye booba nak jàngul dara jooja
36. Moo naqadi Sëñ Baabakar
37. Ñu wax ko sam Pàppa
38. Mu woo ma ba ma ñów
39. Mu jël kaas def ci soow ba mu fees
40. Teg ko taburye
41. Summi mbaxanaam
42. Keroog laa mës a gis boppuneenam
43. Keroog laa ko mujj a gis ba fii may waxeek yeen
44. Ak bonekaareem ba
45. Mu toog ci diggu lalam
46. Joxoñ ma kaas ba ne ma:
47. “doom jëlal kaas boobu nga naan ko”
48. Ma naan ko ba noppi
49. Mun ma: « demal teg ko fi mu nekkoon
50. Te nga yëg ne doom jàng Yàllaa kay joxe
51. Te dina la ko jox ».
52. Waaye fii ma toog ba Màkka
53. Benn fóore yabu ma
54. Loolu dama leen koy seede
55. Ngeen dolli ko ca la ngéen xam

Translation

1. *He opened a door, opened another door , opened a storage room,*
2. *we both sat down*
3. *He gave me the material he uses for getting ready for the prayer*
4. *He showed me a bucket and told me:*
5. *“Roqaya Si of El-Hàjj Malick, at Góorgi Madun Saar’s*
6. *When you go there, you ask her daughter, called Ndey Sofi Saar,*
7. *I have there a water jar that no one uses*
8. *Tell them to open it for you, that I sent you there*
9. *To get a bucket of water from it, and at night, my child,*
10. *you come and pour it into this jar, that’s my drinking water*
11. *If that jar does not have water, go to Cement Bawol*
12. *It is the well in this neighborhood that has good water*
13. *You find someone to accompany you to go there and get a basin of water*
14. *And pour it into this jar for me”*
15. *I haven’t been studying Qur’an since that day.*
16. *That day, on top of my wooden tablet, there was xul wa iyya (a passage from the*
sourate Al-Jinn)
17. *I stayed with him for years.*
18. *The city I am at today*
19. *At that time, many kids had left it to go study*
20. *They sent someone to my father*
21. *To tell: “take your child back”*
22. *Baabakar Si keeps sending him for commission*
23. *The rumor went on until it got to SëriÑ Baabakar*
24. *He called me, I come, he said:*
25. *“I heard that they told your father to take you back (from me)*
26. *What do you think about it”?*
27. *I said: “so, pray for me so that I stay with you”*
28. *He said: “that’s better”*
29. *I stayed with him*
30. *When I came back to this city*
31. *And people predicted that I would know nothing*
32. *Whoever is stuck/confused and cannot go to Tiwaawan*
33. *If he comes to see me, I help him*
34. *That is what God has decided*
35. *But, at that time, though, it was the prediction that I know nothing*
36. *that upset Sëñ Baabakar*
37. *They told my father about it*
38. *He called me, I come*
39. *He took a cup; fill it up with sour cream*
40. *Put it on a tabouret*
41. *Took his hat off*
42. *That day was the first day I saw his uncovered head*

43. *That day was the last day I saw it up to now that I am talking to you*
44. *With his square hat*
45. *He sat in middle of his bed*
46. *Point his finger to the cup and said to me:*
47. *“my child, grab this cup and drink it”*
48. *I finished drinking it*
49. *He said to me: “go and put it back where it was*
50. *But you have to understand that knowledge is supplied by God*
51. *And He will give it to you”*
52. *But, from here to Mecca*
53. *No savant can undermine me*
54. *This, I am sharing it with you*
55. *So that you can add it to what you already know*

Narrative 6 ‘An Example of Faithfulness’

Speaker: (name is unknown) A disciple of Ababacar Sy, oldest son of El-Hàjj Malick Sy

1. ku dul soppeeku ba abada
2. Ku dul soppeeku ba abada mooy Sëriñ Baabakar Si
3. Nit ku maanuwoon la
4. Li mu rawe ñepp, doomi soxna yi, mooy maanu
5. Maa la wax loolu man
6. Mboleem doomi soxna yi ci addina, li leen Sëriñ Baabakar Si rawe mooy maanu
7. Li leen Xalifa rawe mooy maanu
8. Xam nga maanu?
9. Lool la rawe doomi soxna yi
10. Du Allaaxu Akbar, Asalaamu Aleykum
11. Nit ku goree ngoogu
12. Nit ku am xam-xama ngoogu
13. Nit ku bëgg diinee ngoogu
14. Nit ku fonk *sariyaa* ngoogu ak tariiqa

Translation

1. *Someone who never changes,*
2. *Someone who never changes was Sëriñ Baabakar Si.*
3. *He was very discreet.*
4. *What he had more than all other people, all children of saint women was discretion.*
5. *I am who told you that.*
6. *All children of saint females in the world, discretion was what Sëriñ Baabakar Si had over them*
7. *discretion was what Sëriñ Baabakar Si had over them*
8. *Do you know what discretion means?*
9. *That’s what he had over other kids of female saints*
10. *Not initiating and closing a prayer.*

11. *There was a honest person*
12. *There was a knowledgeable person*
13. *Someone who loved religion (Islam)*
14. *Someone who respected the Islamic law, and Sufism*

Narrative 7 ‘The Mean King and the Clumsy Waiter’

Speaker: El-Hajj Ibou Sakho, disciple Tijan, affiliated to the Sy branch of the Tijaniyya

order in Senegal

1. Caay-caay ga rey na waaye lay wi dafa rafet (evaluation from previous story)
2. Gisoo buur bi ma waa ji doon nettali,
3. dafa def inwitasijon bu rëy,
4. dafa wex, ku wex nak la,
5. njaboot gi yépp ko ragal,
6. waa ji ñow di versi, di serwi di serwi ba tollook buur bi,
7. manto bu weex bi mu sol, tuuti ci neex mi tax ca,
8. mu dal ci kowam tiim ko ni ko : “danga dof ?”
9. daldi woo ñaari sandarma ni nan ko rendi
10. ñu génne waaji pur reyi ko ñépp ni tekk,
11. bam ko wóore ni ci dee la jëm ,
12. mu ni wëlbit fap li desoon ci ñeex mi sotti ko buur bi
13. jallaabi baak manto baak karawaat yaag lépp a tooy nak faf.
14. “Waaw yow danga dof xanaa?”
15. mu ne déédéet dama la bëgg rekk te bañ ku la xas,
16. soo ma reye ngir toq bu bon, toq-toq sii rekk,
17. ñépp ni danga soxor waaye bu ma la sottee ñeex mi yépp,
18. ku ko dégg ni moo yey,
19. bañal la xay rekk, banal la noon rekk, ay reewu noon rekk,
20. bañal la ko rekk, moo tax ma def jëf jii,
21. mu ni ko yaa rëy tooñ te rafetu lay, bayyi leen ko mu dem (laughs from people).

Translation

1. *The action was bad but the justification was beautiful*
2. *Don’t you see the king that the guy was telling a story about?*
3. *he invited people to a big party*
4. *he was severe, he was very severe*
5. *his family feared him*
6. *A guy came to serve and serve until he got to him*
7. *the white role that he wore (the king) is dirtied by the food*
8. *he shouted at him : “Are you crazy ? ”*
9. *he called the guards and ordered them to kill the waiter*
10. *they took him out to slaughter him, everybody was quiet*
11. *when it was clear to him that he would die*
12. *he turned around and got the rest of the sauce and threw it over the king*

13. *The caftan and the robe and the tie all became wet*
14. *“Are you crazy?”*
15. *he said to him : “no, I just like you and do not want you to be criticized*
16. *if you kill me for this little drop*
17. *all the people would think you were mean but if I throw the whole sauce on you*
18. *whoever hears that would agree with you*
19. *I just do not want you to be criticized, I don’t want to have enemies, enemies that*
20. *would laugh at you*
21. *I just don’t that to happen, that’s why I did such a thing”*
22. *He said to him: “what a great offense but what a great justification? Let him go.*

Narrative 8 ‘Praying on the Water’

Speaker: Abdou Samade Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba

1. foofa fekk na lu ko sabab
2. benn labbe moo leen wax/
3. jox ndigal
4. ni leen kii ma gis
5. leer gi gis naa fu mu tambalee
6. waaye amul fu mu yem
7. su ngeen ko bëggee lor
8. dangeen koy faatloo waxtu
9. wala moy looko Yàlla
10. tubaab yi natt waxtu yi
11. julli tisbaar jot
12. ñu ne ko
13. boo jullee ci gaal gi
14. daŋ ñu tooñ
15. te boo julliwul wóor nanu ne
16. danga tooñ sa boroom
17. Tisbaar jot muy naxanteek ñoom
18. Ngir ñu may ko mu julli
19. *Trois heures* jot mu jàppaat bëgg a tekk der bi
20. Ñu gântu
21. Mu dem ba *quatre heures* jot ci misaal
22. Mu waajaat bëgg a julli
23. Ñu gântu
24. Te nag moxtaaru tisbaar ak mum takkusan
25. Dañoo lënkëloo
26. Fa muxtaarum tisbaar yem
27. Ca cat la fa la moxtaarum takkusaan tàmbalee
28. Te moom dafa bokk ci ñi nga xam ne sañuño julli waxtu
29. ca njëlbéenu waxtu waxtu wa
30. xam ngeen aqsaabi yépp
31. loolu dafa bokk ci seeni kii waxtu wu ne
32. ca njëlbéen ga lañu koy julli

33. ak luñu tabdi tabdi
34. ak fu ñu man a ne rawatina Sëriñ bi
35. mu wax nag ne bëgg sa bakkan warta tax
36. ma faat waxtu yàlla wii
37. ndox mi jaamu yàlla ni man la
38. suuf si mu lalu nga xam ne moo ko lal
39. jaamu yàlla la ne man
40. defu ma ko ngir ndam
41. defu ma ko ngir xarbaax
42. dama koy def ngir bañ a faat waxtu yàlla wi
43. leegi dinaa sanni der bi
44. mu dem ci ndox mi
45. lu yagg yagg dina dem ca ci suuf sa
46. ma man ca taxaw julli
47. wala ndox mi taxaw ngir ndigalu Yàlla
48. ndax ab jaam la
49. ma man a taxaw ci ndox mi julli
50. wala sama baat bi, sama bakkan bi ma ñakk ko ci ndigalu yàlla
51. waaye lépp a ma gënal bëgg sama bakkan
52. tax ma bañ a julli waxtu wi
53. bi loolu amee mu sanni der bi
54. mu war a dem ci ndox mi
55. boobu Sëñ bi ci *quarante ans* la tollu
56. ci *zaayir* am na kàttan lool
57. dafa dafa dafa dajele kaamil bi ak der bi
58. jiital der bi
59. boq kaamil bi
60. meeb mbubb mi
61. daadi cëppeelu ak doole
62. tubaab yaan̄ koy xool ñoom
63. seen xol sedd lool defe ni leeg mu génn àddina
64. Sëriñ bi wax na ne diggante boobii
65. Fi la suñ boroom wax sey dinaa jibril
66. Ne ko sama jaam bii nga xam ne
67. Fonk sama ndigal
68. Jaral na ko mu faat bakkanam
69. Der boobe bu tooyee ca ndox mi kepp
70. Wala moom waxuma la mu loru
71. Waaye bu tooyee ca ndox ma kepp
72. Duma yem ca far la nekk gi nga nekkoon njiitu maleyka yii
73. Di seen kilifa
74. Waaye dama lay tàbbal safara
75. Kàttan ju ma mas a jox nanga ko jëffandikoo tey
76. Balaa yegsi ci ndox ma
77. nañ ko dab
78. nañ ko gatandu

79. laaj ko san suuf la bëgg a jullee
80. te jox ndigal suuf si ak ndox mi
81. ñu jëffandikoo ndigal li
82. na fap deram boobee
83. tegal ko ko fam ko bëgge
84. mu jullee ko fa
85. Sëriñ bi nee na li muy gatt gatt
86. diggante bu muy wàcc ci bato bi
87. di wàcc ci suuf ci ndox mi
88. li muygatt gatt seydaynaa jibril gatanu na ko
89. laaj ko ne ko
90. san suuf nga bëgg ñu tegal la fa der bi nga julli
91. mu ne suufas Tuubaa
92. Seydayna Jibril ñoddi na suufas tuubaa indi ko ba ci ron der bi
93. fekk ko fi sēñ bi tegu ci mu àndak moom
94. làngak moom
95. fu gaal gi jēm der bi
96. jēm fa ak suuf si
97. te it li ci gēn a yéeme mooy
98. fu gaal gi di deme moom
99. ci biir julli googu
100. fi dul xibla
101. Sēñ bi moom ak der bi
102. Dañuy walbatiku orientewuwaat
103. Jēm ci xibla
104. ndax seydaynaa jibril a yor xibla gi
105. di ko jemale ci kaaba gi
106. diggante boobii lu yéeme am na ci
107. ndax moo di Sëriñ bi gis nañ ne
108. rab yi nee nañ
109. xam nañ ne kii nitu yàlla piir la ndax
110. dafa àndak rabi yi ci li muy def

Translation

1. *there what explained it*
2. *a missionary told them it*
3. *give them recommendation*
4. *told them :*
5. *“the light I saw where it started*
6. *but it does not have an end*
7. *if want to get him*
8. *you have to make him miss the prayer time*
9. *or make him commit a sin”*
10. *the white counted the hours*
11. *it was time for the afternoon prayer*

12. *they told him:*
 13. *“if you pray on this ship*
 14. *you will offend us*
 15. *and if you do not pray, we are certain that*
 16. *you will offend your lord”*
 17. *It was time for the afternoon prayer and he negotiate with them*
 18. *For them to let him pray*
 19. *It was three o’clock, he did his ablutions again and wanted to set his prayer skin*
 20. *They refused*
 21. *He went until say four o’clock*
 22. *did his ablutions again to get ready for the prayer*
 23. *They refused*
 24. *and the ideal time to perform the afternoon prayer and that of the evening prayer*
 25. *overlap with each other.*
 26. *Where the afternoon prayer finishes*
 27. *is where the evening prayer starts.*
 28. *And him (Amadu Bamba) he is among those who have not the right to pray*
 29. *past the beginning of the timeline of that prayer.*
 30. *You know, all the aqsaabi,*
 31. *it is among their things that for each prayer,*
 32. *they do it at the beginning,*
 33. *no matter how busy they are*
 34. *and where they can be, especially the master (Amadu Bamba).*
 35. *Then he said that to like my life*
 36. *should not allow me to skip this prayer of God.*
 37. *The water is a slave of God like me.*
 38. *The sand that lays on it, that you know, covers it*
 39. *Is a slave of God like me.*
 40. *I am not doing for pride,*
 41. *I am not doing for miracle,*
 42. *I am doing it to avoid skipping God’s prayer (time).*
 43. *Now I am going to throw down the prayer skin,*
 44. *it will go in the water.*
 45. *It will surely reach the shore*
 46. *So that I can stand up and pray.*
 47. *Or the water will stop at God’s will*
 48. *because it is a slave,*
 49. *So that I can step on the water and pray.*
 50. *Or my neck meaning my life, I will lose it in following God’s recommendation.*
 51. *But, all this will be better for me than hanging on to my life*
 52. *Causing my refusal to pray on time.*
 53. *Once that happened, he threw his prayer rug*
 54. *he had to go the water*
 55. *at that time, the shaykh was forty years old*
 56. *in zaayir (overtly) he was very strong*
 57. *He he he wrapped up the Quran book and the prayer skin,*

58. *threw the prayer skin on the water first,*
 59. *held the holy book under his shoulder,*
 60. *pulled up his robe a little bit,*
 61. *and then dismounted with strength.*
 62. *The white people, them, looked at him,*
 63. *with happiness, hoping that he would soon leave this world (die).*
 64. *The shaykh said that, although the time was very short,*
 65. *between his dismounting from the ship*
 66. *to the shore, the water,*
 67. *despite the short time, Archangel Gabriel came to rescue me,*
 68. *asked him, told him:*
 69. *“which sand would you like your prayer skin to be dropped at, for you to pray”.*
 70. *He told him: “the sand of Touba”.*
 71. *Master Gabriel pulled over the sand of Touba, slid it underneath the prayer skin,*
 72. *joined the shaykh, who stood upon it”*
 73. *Sir Gabriel pulled over the sand of Touba, brought it under the prayer skin*
 74. *found him, the shaykh stood up on it, he went with him*
 75. *he was by his side*
 76. *whatever direction the ship moved to*
 77. *he moved to that direction with the sand*
 78. *and also what is really amazing*
 79. *whatever direction the ship moved to*
 80. *in that prayer*
 81. *that was not the East (the right direction for prayer)*
 82. *The shaykh and the prayer skin*
 83. *They reoriented themselves*
 84. *Facing east*
 85. *because Sir Gabriel had the direction*
 86. *guided him towards east*
 87. *In that particular time something amazing happened*
 88. *because the Shaykh swore and said*
 89. *the animals swore and said*
 90. *we know that this person is a friend of God*
 91. *he was followed by the animals in his prayer*
 92. *Sir Gabriel pulled over the sand of Touba, bring it under the prayer skin*
 93. *found him, the shaykh stood up on it, he went with him*
 94. *he was by his side*
 95. *wherever the ship moved to*
 96. *he moved on that direction with the sand*
 97. *and also what is the really amazing*
 98. *wherever the ship moved to*
 99. *in that prayer*
 100. *that is not the east (the right direction for prayer)*
 101. *The shaykh and the prayer skin*
 102. *They turn over and reoriented again*
 103. *Facing east*

104. *because Sir Gabriel had the direction*
105. *direct him to the east*
106. *At that particular time something amazing had happened*
107. *because the Shaykh swore and said*
108. *the animals said*
109. *we know that this person is a friend of God*
110. *he was doing the same thing followed by the animals*

Narrative 9 ‘Investing in Amadu Bamba’

Speaker: Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba

1. Moom kat ubbil na boppam ci Njaaréem
2. Mag ñepp toog muy bésub am céébo ñów
3. Sëriñ bi ubbil boppam ñów
4. Daal di wax ne
5. mu ni ana nit ñi
6. ñu ni ko ñoom de Mbakke dañoo dem ci céébo ma
7. mu ne móone man de am céébo laa
(laughs)
8. kon lu waay bëgg mu saxle rekk
9. nanga ji ci sëñ Tuubaa.
10. Loo ji ci sëñ Tuubaa rekk dina sax.
11. Te moom ku waaxu jëm ci moom moo lay gatanul boppam
12. te boo ko defalee loo man
13. mu defal la loo mënul
14. boo ko defalee loo mënul mu defal la lu la jomm.

Translation

1. *He once opened his door in Njaaréem (Diourbel in French, one of the Senegalese regions)*
2. *All the old people sat down on first rain day*
3. *The shaykh opened his door and came out*
4. *Then said:*
5. *He said: “where are the people”*
6. *They told him “Mbacke, they went to the celebrate the first rain”*
7. *He said I am a first rain day myself*
8. *Then whatever you want to grow*
9. *Plant it in Sëriñ Touba*
10. *Whatever you plant in Sëriñ Touba it will grow*
11. *And whoever walks towards him, he, himself, will welcome you*
12. *If you do whatever we can for him, he does for you what you could not accomplish by yourself*
13. *If you do something for him that you normally cannot do,*
14. *he will do for something you do not deserve*

Narrative 10 ‘When the Shadows Will Be Same’

Speaker: Moustapha Mbacke Ibn Abdoul Khadre Mbacke, grandson of Amadu Bamba

1. Sëñ Tuubaa ci boppam, ma musal leen ci benn xisa
2. Ku ñuy wax Tafsir Muse Paate Daraame ab seexub seex bu dëkk Saalum la bu
3. bokk ci taalibey sëriñ bi daa xorumuwoon lool
4. te man a waxak sëriñ bi nak
5. mu ñów nuyu sëriñ bi daad ni ko mbakke de sëriñ bi nuyu ko
6. mu ne ko waaw tafsir lu réew mi wax nak
7. mu ne ko ah réew mi ñungi wax rekk di sant rekk
8. waaye man de lenn rekk a ma metti
9. tudd giñ lay tudd di kenn rekk moo ma metti
10. sëriñ bi ne ko booba ker yi daa doonul genn rekk
11. bés bu ker yi doone genn wax ji doon jenn (laughs)
12. Ku am ku tol noonu nak nga xam ne wóor na ne
13. bés bu ker gi doone genn wax ji doon jenn
14. boo ci amee war nga ñëp ci moom
15. war nga ñëp ci ay wasaayaam manaam ay recommandaasiyoom,
16. war nga ñëp ci ay ndigalam,
17. war nga ñëp ci njaboot gi mi fi bàyyi
18. ndax ku am koo xam ni bés bu ker gi doonee genn
19. wax jépp ci moom lay ne (laughs)
20. am nan lu rëy am nan lu rëy lu kenn amul

Transation

1. *“Sëriñ Tuubaa, let me tell you a story about him.*
2. *Someone called Tafsir Muse Paate Daraame, a shaykh from Saalum,*
3. *who was among his students. He was a very funny person,*
4. *capable of talking with the marabout though.*
5. *He came, greeted the shaykh, and told him: “Mbakke”, the shaykh greeted him back*
6. *told him: “Tafsir how are people in the country doing?”*
7. *He told him: “people talk and are thankful only.*
8. *But only one thing bothers me*
9. *the fact they talk about you and someone else at the same time, bothers me”.*
10. *The marabout said to him: “it is because the shadows are not the same, yet.*
11. *The day the shadows will be the same, the talk will be the same, as well”*
12. *Whoever has someone who reaches that level, that, you know for sure,*
13. *the day the shadows will be the same,*
14. *if you have someone of that level, you must hold on to him,*
15. *you must hold on to his wasaayaam, meaning his recommendations,*
16. *you must hold on to his recommendations,*
17. *you must hold on to the family he left with us.*
18. *Because whoever has someone which, the day when the shadow will be the same,*
19. *all the talk will be about him.*
20. *We have something big; we have something big that no one has.”*

Narrative 11 ‘Warning about Arrogance’

Speaker: Abdoul Aziz Sy Dabakh (1904-1997), son of El-Hàjj Malick Sy

1. Xeebaate yal nanu ci yalla musal!
2. Am na kenn ku ñu daan wax Abdulahi al andalusi
3. Ay talibeem *isna ashara ar fan* la woon [fukki junniy taalibeek ñaar]
4. Am na ca ku ñuy wax Sibluun
5. Wattuwoon na ci addiisu Rasululahi fanweeri junni
6. Nekkoon na it koo xam ni
7. juróom-ñaari jangini alxuraan yépp, wattuwoon na ko
8. Mbolloom ma bari woon na lool lool
9. Waaye yalla nattu ko
10. Jaarale nattu ba nit ñi mu gis xeeb leen
11. Ne: “man daal àgg naa ci baax goo xam ne
12. kenn ci sama mbolloo mii rekk wecci na mbooloo mii”
13. Sama boroom dal koy nattu
14. Rékki addiis yépp
15. Rékki Alxuraan ca dënn ba
16. Ba mu koy rékki nag, bi loolii duggee ci xolom,
17. mooy xeeb mbolloo moomii
18. Mu daldi yék xolom di yengu mel ne garab
19. Ndeke xol baa
20. Am lu ca naawe
21. Mu yék ne “lii de dafa am lu naaw”
22. Ndeke liimaan ba la moom la Yalla rékki
23. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
24. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
25. Yal nanu Yalla musal xeebaate!
26. LéppiYalla yal na rey ci nun niYalla reye ci nun!
27. Nit ak kam moom noo yem
28. Bu dee fas wi
29. Yeen a bokk ku leen bind
30. Kenn ku ne ci yeen am nga bisub juddu
31. Na la wóor ne sa besub de ngi sa kanam yaag fas wi

Translation

1. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
2. *There was a man called Abdulaay Al Andulisi*
3. *His disciples amounted to 12000*
4. *There was one of them called Sibluun*
5. *He mastered the 30000 of teachings of the servitor of God (Prophet Muhammad)*
6. *He also was someone*
7. *who knew all the 7 ways of reading the Qur’an*
8. *(He had) a lot of disciples”*
9. *But God challenged him*

10. *Made him arrogant to other people*
11. *Says: "I really reached a certain level in goodness so that*
12. *Someone from my people can be equal to this whole group of people*
13. *Then, God punished him*
14. *Took away all his knowledge of the Prophet's teachings*
15. *Took away all the knowledge of the Qur'an*
16. *When He was taking this away, when arrogance entered his heart,*
17. *which is underestimating this group of people*
18. *He then felt that his heart was shaking like a tree*
19. *In fact it was his heart*
20. *Something flew from it*
21. *He felt that "something has flew away"*
22. *In fact his faith in God was taken back away by God*
23. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
24. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
25. *May God preserve us from being arrogant!*
26. *May all about God be big to us like God!*
27. *A person and his belonging*
28. *If it is a horse*
29. *You belong to the same creator*
30. *Each of you has a day of birth*
31. *Be sure that your day of death is forthcoming you and the horse."*

APPENDIX B
GLOSSARY

- Baadolo* : commoners
Baay Faal: sub-group of the Muridiyya
Bakkkat: praise-drummer
Barke, Baraka: blessing
Bokkale: to associate someone or something with God
Daara: Qur'anic school
Daayira: Sufi association
Dhikr: the act of recollecting and meditating upon the names of God
Doomi buur: notable
Gàmmu: celebration of the birthday of the prophet Muhammad, Tijaniyya event in general
Garmi, gellwaar: royals
Geer: noble born
Gewel: griot, verbal specialist
Jaam: slave or descendents of slaves
Jaar-jaar: itinerary
Jambur, gor: freeman
Jëf-lekk: the one who makes a living with his/her hands
Jeli: griot
Jihad: saint battle
Jiin, kañ: praise-drum
Jottalikat: transmitter
Keemtaan: miracle
Kersa: honor, self-respect, sense of shame
Kilifa, khalifa (French spelling): supreme leader
Layene: follower of the Layene order
Màggal: remembrance of the day of departure of Amadu Bamba into exile
Muqadam: alumnus of El-Hajj Malick Sy's school
Murid: follower of the muridiyya order
Ñeeño: casted people
Nettalikatu cosaan: historian
Qadir: follower of the Qadiriyya order
Qidma: work for the shaykh
Rabb: weavers
Sab-lekk: the one who makes a living with his/her singing
Sëriñ or Sëñ: Qur'anic master, shaykh, sir
Shirk: seen as heretical
Soxna: saint woman
Taggaatekat: praise-singer
Talibe: student, disciple
Tarbiya: Sufi education
Tëgg: blacksmith
Tijan: follower of the Tijaniyya order
Wird: formulaic prayer rituals
Wuude: leatherworker

Yalla: God

Zawiya: mosque, headquarters

Ziar: visit to the living marabouts, holy cities, and toms of past shaykhs

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Mamaramé Seck, a native of Senegal, West-Africa, did his undergraduate studies with a concentration on the French language and French and francophone literature at the University of Dakar, where he obtained his *Maitrise en Lettres Modernes*. After teaching French for five years in Senegal, he went to the University of Geneva, Switzerland in 1999 and obtained a DEA (*Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies*), an equivalent of a master's degree in the United-States, in linguistics in 2003. He subsequently came to the United-States through an exchange program between the University and the University of Pennsylvania (UPENN) to teach French at the Department of Romance languages. After a year at UPENN, he went to Indiana University to pursue a master's degree in French linguistics, which he obtained in 2005. Mamaramé transferred to the University of Florida in the fall of 2005 to pursue a Ph.D. in linguistics with a focus on the Wolof language. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Florida in the fall of 2009 on the topic *Structure of Wolof Sufi Oral Narratives: Expanding the Labovian and Longacrean Models to Accommodate Wolof Oral Tradition*. In the fall of 2008, he was appointed by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to serve as African language coordinator in the Department of African and Afro-American Studies, where he currently works. His areas of research are Wolof language and literature, African linguistics, Sufi Islam in West-Africa and Wolof oral discourse.