This paper examines a sample of Micronesian folklore from Kosrae Island, Eastern Caroline Islands and from Kaban Atoll, Ratik Chain, Marshall Islands. Consideration is given to (1) characterizations of thematic manifestations which occur in both languages, (2) referential meaning which is analogous to the culture, (3) the role of folklore in these islands and (4) implications for future studies particularly the impact folklore plays during changes occurring in Micronesia.

Several years ago I introduced and proposed an idea which I defined and labeled sociosemantics. The basic concept involved looking at language as the observable link which transmits information concerning the sociocultural system. Briefly, the emphasis was on the interaction between man and his environment in terms of processes involved rather than on "things" in the culture. The problem formulated in my earlier work considered the relationship between the expression of man's language and the other components of a cultural system. I hoped by examining language in this manner that I could learn more about the interaction of the components in the total sociocultural system.

This type of research led to the present study which is based on my earlier semantics study but which has been enlarged and modified in light of new data, particularly that which has been gleaned from an on-going and in-depth study of folklore. In the present study of texts, the language used is viewed as multi-contextual with the relationship between spoken language and its referents being many-sided and holistic in nature. Thus, there is not a one to one relationship with any single referent. The study of folklore from this perspective yields some of the ways the semantic component maps various aspects of man's environment. In contrast, many other semantic approaches (e.g. Carnap 1952, Katz 1966, Lakoff, G.1971) express views which indicate that semantic significance is inherent solely in the word or sentence. Sociosemantics, on the other hand, emphasizes language as a vehicle for expressing relationships which exist outside units of word and sentence and which are grounded in the real world of the culture. Thus, we can examine these oral traditions and see that they have foundations grounded in the real world of the culture, primarily, as we shall observe, in the ideological sub-systems of the culture.
My 1976 work on Kosraen (spelled at that time as KUSAIEN, but now spelled differently to adjust to changes in the political system and other factors) in terms of cultural processes and linguistic domains examined two major divisions: (1) Utilization Processes and (2) Physiological and Psychological Processes. Because of new data, it is now evident that what I considered as sub-processes under these two major divisions still exist, in part, but as underlying thematic manifestations, which I am now calling themes. Furthermore, the modification proposed in this paper eliminates the major division labels since it has been determined that they serve little purpose. Because I consider this current research still in the early stages, there will, over the next year or so, be other modifications which will bring us closer to a fuller understanding of the relationship of folklore to cultural reality.

Methodology

First, the investigator asked the informants to look for key words in each sentence or related sentences which seem to characterize a main theme or themes. A wide range of informants was used to select these key words. The rationale for this rests in the belief that the cognitive maps in the heads of informants vary according to the kind and amount of information internalized concerning the culture and its various systems. In this present study, there also seems to be some evidence supporting Caws' explanatory model (1974), that is, the etics are the tools or metalanguage devices for interpreting the flow of knowledge which passes into the head of the anthropologist from the native's operational and representational models plus from what the anthropologist observes as a participant observer in field work. Kuhn's work on shared paradigm (1970:176) is also applied in this present study because it is apparent that in order to discuss folklore in terms of cultural reality, we need a metalanguage or vocabulary which has some semantic standardization of shared features necessary to discuss the study from a scientific point of view. However, one word of caution is necessary here. We must not rely solely on a microscopic analysis of any given set of key words. We need to keep in mind that the whole is greater than the sum of its individual components, that is, we cannot add up all the key words and arrive at a discrete interpretation of cultural reality. If we use a holistic approach here we, hopefully, will arrive at a relatively accurate inventory of themes which manifest themselves in the real world of the culture.

The second method consisted of the investigator discussing the place and function of key words with the different informants.
Analysis of Micronesian Folklore

That is, I am concerned about the cultural reality of the ideas and concepts expressed by the key words. What do these words mean to those in the culture? What does the individual think of when he hears a particular word? In theory, the key word seems to act as a cognitive trigger which in turn provides the impetus for a discussion of the data in terms of reaching a descriptive cultural reality.

The results of these two methods were then put into formalisms which were descriptive, but at the same time, categorize the data into some sort of metalanguage without destroying the cultural referents singled out by the native speakers. Keeping in mind the views of Caws and Kuhn, the terminology chosen is the same or based on that proposed by Sith Thompson's Motif-Index of Folk Literature (Dorson 1975). Additional themes may be particular to my own data until such a time other investigations cause further modifications.

Application

To illustrate the application of this framework to actual texts, I have selected passages from Kosraen and Marshallese. First, TABLE 1 provides an explanation of the phonemic symbols and special symbols used in these texts. TABLE 2 and TABLE 3 are from the Kosraen and Marshallese texts, respectively.

TABLE 1 NOTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Palatalized Consonant</th>
<th>Glottalized Sound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops and Fricatives</td>
<td>w, y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- p bilabial, t dental, k velar, s apico dental, f alveopalatal (generally retroflex), f labiodental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquids and Nasals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- r slightly retroflex, l palatal, m palatalized bilabial, n bilabial, n alveolar, f velar, r flap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Vowels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- w, y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vowels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- i high, I lower high, e higher mid, E lower mid, u high, o higher mid, o lower mid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Symbols</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// utterance boundary</td>
<td>( ) utterance number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* denotes key word</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... ellipsis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 2 KOSRAEN TEXT "NIWA"

1. Niwʌ1 el2 sίksey1 sIpE4 man5 wi6 kom7 wot8 // (2) sipE1 el2 fʌk3 sIpʌlʌk4 sanol5 swarrʌkkʌ6 // (3) lʌsʌ meyta2 niwʌ3 mʌkeynna4 lall5 // (4) el1 tɛl2 ney3 utya4 na5 fIn6 meya7 //
(5) el1 sʌkʌk2 yot3 sey4 say5 tuky6 mwεya7 sey8 key9 mεnol10 //
(6) na1 talimagkul2 sey3 sʌld4 liki5 mεnol6 // ...

. (1) Niwʌ1 el2 ora3 tol4 luwo5 sίd6 menʌ7 sIp8 kau9 // (8) el1 sʌh2 ma3 kau4 sey5 lal6 kaut7 ma8 mεnʌ9 sey10 ʌn11 talimagkul sey12 // (9) na1 eltʌl2 mεnol1 key4 for5 ʌl7 el8 ilʌ9 * * * * * * * * talimagkul sey1 ilʌ2 yot3 sʌk4 sey5 // (11) kaut el2 tʌn3 sey4 el6 ora7 lal8
kun1 lʌn10 kan11 lalt12 // ...

. (1) Niwʌ she2 asked him3 SIpE I with you6 go with7 you there8 // (2) SIpE1 he2 say3 overloaded4 wait for him5 title of man6 //
(3) all gone1 people2 Niwʌ3 left4 //
(4) she1 cried2 until3 enter4 to6 land7 //
(5) she1 picked up2 rock3, this4 give5 hit6 ripe pimple7 this8 on9 her forehead10 //
(6) then1 boy2 a3 jump off4 from5 forehead6 // ... ...
(7) woman1 she2 make3 loin cloth4 two5 one6 not strong7 one8 strong9 //
(8) she1 gave2 thing3 strong4 one5 to6 Kaut7 thing8 weak8 one10 to 11
child boy this12 //
(9) then1 they2 sleep3 at4 night5 and6 Kaut1 put his head on trunk9
of10 banana tree7 this11 //
(10) child boy this1 put head2 on rock3 rough4 this5 //
(11) Kaut1 he2 to make, to take care of3 fire4 and5 he make7 in8
extinguish9 he to10 eat11 them12 // ...
Analysis of Micronesian Folklore

TABLE 3 MARSHALLESE TEXT "JAKUNNE"

(1) Jakunne $e_{12}^{2}$ $p_{3}^{1}$ $a_{5}^{3}$ $r_{7}^{3}$ $y_{9}^{3}$ $t_{10}^{2}$ $p_{12}$

TABLE 4 on the next page provides the English glosses for the Marshallese text passages given in TABLE 3. Also, because of space limitations, the entire texts could not be given in this paper. However, I will be glad to send them to anyone. Note also the length of utterance (6) in TABLE 3. The utterance breaks in the Marshallese texts are those used by informants. A forthcoming paper will discuss the language structural breaks vs. the semantic breaks used by informants.
TABLE 4 ENGLISH GLOSSES FOR "JAKUNNE" PASSAGES

1. (1) Jakunne1he2 was3 say4 to5 people6 these7 to8 his9 not10 believe11 at12 Christmas13 //

(2) so then1 people2 these3 were4 left1 him5 to6 main1 land, island7 //

(3) so1 it2 was3 starting to get dark4 Jakunne5 he6 was7 preparing8 fishing line9 those10 his11 so12 he13 an14 to15 fishing16 //

(4) so then1 it2 was3 getting darker4 he6 was7 getting ready8 to go9 to10 the11 end12 atoll14 locative15 to, so16 he17 fishing18 //

(5) so1 Jakunne2 he3 was4 put5 fishing line6 locative7 his8 to9 inside10 lagoon11 he12 feel13 his14 fishing line15 locative16 shaky17 so then18 Jakunne19 he20 was21 pulling22 fishing line23 locative24 and25 put26 to27 behind him28 so then29 he30 was31 trying32 pull33 it34 was35 stuck36 so37 he38 turn39 look behind, look back40 he41 was42 saw43 two44 women ghosts45 //

(6) however1 there2 was3 no more4 people5 at6 so then7 he8 was9 walk in shallow water10 from11 atoll12 this13 to the second14-16 he17 was18 stay19 no more20 people21 these22 so then23 he24 was25 continuing26 his27 walk in shallow water28 in29 running place to30 place31 and32 atoll33 this34 end35 very36 to, so40 he41 mainland42 he43 was44 see (saw)45 two46 more than one person, two old people47 more than one person two old people48 these49 really50 old or very weak51, 52 they were53 cooking54 //

TABLE 5 on the next page provides paraphrased translations for the Kosraen and Marshallese text passages, respectively.
“NIWA”

...The woman asked Sipe, "Sipe? Will I go with you?" Sipe said he was overloaded. "Wait for Swarrekke." Then there were no more people, only Niwa was left. She cried until she went on the land. That is, she left the rock and went back to the land where the village stood. She picked up a rock and hit a pimple on her forehead. Then a boy jumped off her forehead. ...She made two loin cloths, one was not strong, one strong. She gave the strong one to Kaut, the weak one she gave to the boy. Then they slept at night and he (Kaut) put his head on the trunk of the banana tree. The boy rested his head on a rough rock. Kaut made the fire and then he extinguished it so it would be dark and then he could eat them.

“JAKUNNE”

...Jakunne told these people he doesn’t believe in Christmas. So the people left him on the island and went to the mainland to celebrate Christmas without him. When it began to get dark, Jakunne started to prepare his fishing line. When it was completely dark, he went to the end of the island and began to fish. Jakunne put his fishing line inside the lagoon. He felt the fishing line shaking so he pulled the fishing line and put it behind him. When he tried to pull it back, the fishing line was stuck. And when he looked back to see what was the problem (that is, what was holding the line from moving) he saw two women Ghosts. ...However, there were no people on these islands so he kept continuing walking fast in shallow water from atoll to atoll. Still he could find no one. When he reached the last atoll close to the main island, he saw two real old people at this island. These people were real weak and very old and they were cooking.

TABLE 6 on the next pages are examples of the type of notes taken during the second method used in analyzing folklore. These notes are part of a larger corpus of notes that have to do with the place and function of the key words in the culture.
TABLE 6 NOTES FROM DISCUSSION OF KEY WORDS IN THE CULTURE

A. KOSRAEN DISCUSSION NOTES

1. Ghost came and started eating the people of Kosrae but the people began to leave before the Ghost finished. Idea of "eat" here implies "kill" and some were destined to escape so the story could be told. Idea of "Evil" expressed in the "oral cavity or mouth of the Ghost" which is seen engulfing the "Good".

2. Woman needs a ride in someone's canoe and the highest ranking authority, the King, tells her he is full and she must wait for someone else. Lack of compassion and responsibility on his part. No charity for the "weak", i.e. the "woman". Each high titled man (chief) abandons her with the same excuse and she is left on the island alone with the evil. It is felt that the woman represents good and thus, no Kosraen would abandon a "good person" because there is no way for a person to survive alone in the islands.

3. In desperation, she gives "birth" to a boy child who matures quickly because he knows she needs help and he becomes symbolic of the cultural hero. (He-God; he-human child of woman). Here it is felt that the power of good magic can be seen. Also God sends the good woman a child as she won't be so lonely and will have help in surviving life as she grows older because there is a factor of family loyalty in terms of parents aging. Time and space are represented here very strongly.

4. Young boy builds canoe and familiarizes himself with island. You must know your islands if you are going to survive. To build a canoe requires strength and skill, two attributes highly praised.

5. Young boy exposes himself to the Ghost and tricks the Ghost. Competition and conflict are challenges for individual and play a strong role in character development.

6. Chase between Evil and Good. Man's constant state of struggle with these polarized characteristics.

7. Revenge of the woman. Good wins out. People who don't care about woman die, and the King is banished to the depths of the ocean forever to live with the dirtiest of all fish and garbage.
B. MARSHALLESE DISCUSSION NOTES

1. People on Kabon prepare to go to the main island for Christmas, the most important holiday of the year. Being together essential. Individuals compete in singing contests as well as whole islands competing against one another. People work together to make this day a memorable one.

2. One man says he's not going because he doesn't believe in Christmas. This makes him an "outcast" because everyone believes in Christmas.

3. So the people left him on the island. The choice was his. If he doesn't believe in cooperation, then no one wants him. If you want people to do for you, you must do for them.

4. The man apparently doesn't seem to care and prepares to go fishing. He does not know the "Marshallese Way" if he thinks he can survive alone.

5. The lagoon represents a safe place to fish. When his line is stuck magic has begun.

6. Looking back at two Ghosts can be related to story in bible about looking back. Runs in fear. Heads to water because this is considered a place where the Ghosts can not come. Water is a safe place when Evil is present.

7. Treads water island to island, looking for help but everyone has gone to celebrate Christmas like good Christians. He is being punished by God (good) because he has, defying tradition, committed sin.

8. When he reaches the last island in the chain, he finds two old people. They are allowed to stay because they are symbolic of those who would not have been any help (too old, too weak). They have done their part earlier in life so they are excused now.

9. Uttering "Help" and nothing else shows that he has lost everything because of lack of respect for tradition. Old people cannot recognize him. Anyone who defies tradition by denying obligation looks like and is treated like a stranger. He dies. Mind leaves him as Evil enters his body.
Results

Using the two methods described in this paper results in an inventory of themes. These thematic manifestations are given in TABLE 7 below. Keep in mind that the meta-language used in TABLE 7 is based on or is Thompson's suggestions for themes.

TABLE 7 THEMATIC MANIFESTATIONS

1. Spirits dwelling on island.
2. Death from contact with Ghosts.
3. Punishment by wandering.
4. Punishment by banishment.
5. Punishment of the uncharitable.
6. Murder by cutting adversary in pieces.
7. Good spirits in the form of a human(s) that matures in short time span.
9. Male child figure equivalent to Hero.
10. Evil eats Good.
11. Evil chases Good.
12. Evil has strength in size.
13. Evil has strength in Dark.
14. Evil brains absorb strength from tree(s).
15. Good absorbs strength from hard surfaces.
16. Evil lacks strength in water.
17. Good has strength in water.
18. Transformation of physical characteristics.
19. Transformation of Weak to Strong.
20. Transformation of Minds.
22. Magic food gives warning.
24. Resistance to Evil.
25. Revenge on Evil.
27. Death as punishment for greed.
29. Death as punishment for non-believers.
30. Death as punishment for non-cooperation.

Comments

Presently, there are few intensive studies of Micronesian folklore so the potential for research in this area is great. But the element of time seems crucial. My own experience has been somewhat frustrating. Since funds
Analysis of Micronesian Folklore

and time are limited for doing a folklore project in the field, one uses the informants at hand. Consequently, the mainland informants are college-age whereas the field informants ranged in age from 35 to 45 years. Many of the college age informants have not learned the traditional tales at an early age and in some cases do not place much value in learning them. In some instances, I have only parts of a legend from one informant because she can't remember "how the middle part goes." In some instances I feel I should have changed informants immediately because they lacked interest and motivation for the project. In some places the people of the islands realize how little their children know of the culture and particularly the folklore so they are teaching them in school. They write them down in the native languages and the children copy and recite them in class. Unless the teacher demands stringent memorization, the child soon forgets them. They are not presently integrated into their daily lives as they once were in the past.

On some islands the indigenous languages are being formally taught at the elementary and high school levels because it has become increasingly apparent that the young generations are unfamiliar not only with the legends but with the languages themselves. At this time it is too hard to predict whether intensive language training will bring about a renewed interest in folklore. There are attempts of revitalization of cultures and renewed feelings of nationalism all through the islands. However, those who advocate learning the language and the legends are faced with the impact of U.S. culture on the islands with all of its TV and movies and portable cassettes. There is no longer the isolation there once was even on the outer islands of the Marshalls because there is now a government owned and operated air service which services all islands.

Folklore still plays an important role in modern society whether the people on these islands are willing to admit to this or not. One example is the belief in magic. Most of the folklore I am working with involves elements of magic in them. In fact, magic often appears as the central theme and manifests itself in all aspects of the cultures. One informant who has had 3 years of university training told me that she knows her boy friend from another island country practices magic on her and that is why there is no hope of ever breaking off with him because it won't do any good.
The "magic" keeps her with him and is the reason she is carrying his child. If she tries to fight the magic, it will do no good because it will follow her to her death or it will cause the death of anyone in her family or on her island if they try to help her. For this reason she stays with him even though she is often beaten up by him. Her behavior is the best of two worlds rather than to put her family in serious danger from his magic.

Another girl with a similar education tells me she doesn't really believe in magic but, on the other hand, she won't do anything "bad" to make the people mad who make magic. "You still have to be careful", she says. In my own case, when a problem developed in my family, the informants all had the same reaction to a very sensitive situation which was: "Someone is working magic on your family!"

The island concept of magic seems to me to be almost fatalistic in nature. Once magic is "rubbed on" or "said out loud", there seems to be no way the individual can fight it off. However, if one suspects the person to be capable of making magic, the intended victim can go to someone to get counter magic and so the life producing cycle of "magic" continues to be generated in the real world of today's culture and is continuing to be reflected in the folklore of this modern world. What some of the Micronesian Senators will tell you is that their countries are young, modern and developing and they have rid themselves of all the "old ways." In contrast, the young and old continue to embellish new legends involving human conflict with ghosts who perform evil magic on good people who won't do what the society dictates as is illustrated in this paper with the story from Kabon about the man who didn't want to do his share in preparing for the most important holiday on the island. These kinds of stories are being told as modern stories all through the islands and eventually, I predict they will become the modern traditional elements of folklore which will be passed on to new generations and which will become as integral a part of the culture as the old legends once were.

The Future

This present sociosemantic study hardly scratches the surface of Micronesian folklore. My work examines legends from three islands in Micronesia. In a forthcoming paper, I present a more complete analysis of Kosraen and Marshallese folklore which, in addition to an analysis of the themes, examines syntactic and grammatical devices used
in legends. These devices in themselves yield little insight into the sociosemantic meanings of the legends but do give us a better understanding of the scope of the language with the range of linguistic style and with their cognitive switching devices embedded into variable life situation contexts.

It is too early to predict whether or not the sociosemantic analysis used in this study is satisfactory. An incorporation of the sociosemantic framework of thematic manifestations into a systematic study of more island countries' folklore is necessary before any conclusions can be drawn. By doing this, deeper insights will be gleaned into the relationships between man and his environment that, in the end, will enlarge our knowledge of cultural reality. With a concept of cultural reality in hand, we may eventually find answers to many of our questions we face and problems we encounter dealing with people from other countries.
REFERENCES

CARNAP, RUDOLF

CAWS, PETER

DORSON, RICHARD M.
1975 Folktales told around the world. Chicago. The University of Chicago.

KATZ, JERROLD

KUHN, THOMAS S.

LAKOFF, GEORGE

VESPER, ETHEL R.