CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

At the present time, there is a growing interest in studying and analyzing a language at a level higher than the sentence, i.e. the discourse level. As a result, a number of linguists have studied a language on the basis of its discourse structure.

Before the features of both notional and surface structures are analyzed and discussed, it is necessary to review the literature which deals with these two structures of the text in order that the theoretical basis of this research may be established. The theoretical foundations of discourse analysis as proposed by Kathleen Callow (1974), Joseph E. Grimes (1975), Robert E. Longacre (1983, 1985, 1996), and Mildred L. Larson (1984) will be introduced in this chapter. Due to the fact that Thai is one of the languages spoken in Asia, other discourse studies on Asian languages are also reviewed, namely the discourse analyses on Korean narratives by Shin Ja Joo Hwang (1987), an analysis of cohesion in Sgaw Karen folk narratives by Chaiyathip Katsura (1993), and Jirel narratives by Tej Bahadur Jirel (1999). Next, prior discourse work on Thai will be discussed, with special attention given to Somsonge Burusphat's work (1991) on Thai narrative. Besides Somsonge's, some considerations found in the discourse analysis of Northern Thai oral autobiographies carried out by Suzanne Renee Person (1998) are also discussed.

2.1 A typology of narrative discourse

Callow (1974:13) states that narrative discourse "recounts a series of events ordered more or less chronologically, usually in the past." It is normally told in either first or third person depending on the narrator's participation in the events narrated.

In terms of the chronological events, Grimes (1975:40) adds that "The time sequence of a narrative is rarely expressed as though events simply followed one another like beads on a string." Different languages make use of a specific set of signals that allows the events in a narrative discourse to be narrated out of order. Flashbacks, for example, are considered out of the chronological order in that they do not belong to the main stream of events which flows contiguously in time.

Larson (1984:322) adds that "Narrative and dialogue primarily consist of chronological sequences of events." In other words, the events happen one after another.

Longacre (1996:8) defines narrative discourse in terms of "two basis etic parameters: contingent temporal succession and agent orientation." Narrative discourse contains both parameters. Most of the events in a narrative discourse are "contingent on previous events or doings." (Longacre 1996:9) The events occur in chronological sequence. However, as Grimes states above, narrative discourse does not have to be presented in purely chronological fashion. The events that are organized chronologically may sometimes be interrupted by a flashback or a flash-forward. In terms of agent orientation, there is "at least a partial identity of agent reference running through" a narrative discourse. The text is typically oriented around a specific agent or agents.

2.2 The surface structure of narrative discourse

Larson (1984:3) defines the surface structure of a language as "the form of a language – the actual words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, etc., which are spoken or written." This structure is the structural part of the language which the readers actually see in print or hear in speech.

Longacre (1983:3) states that the surface structure of a narrative discourse has to do more with a discourse's formal characteristics. The surface structure is the grammatical profile of a narrative. It is considered a visual representation of the syntactic structure of the narrative. To clarify Longacre's model, Streett (2001:14) postulates that "the surface structure is what actually appears on the page – the grammatical forms, the syntax, the word order, etc. It is the language used to encode the meaning, or semantic structure." The syntactic structure of grammar is at a relatively shallow depth.

The readers are able to understand the overall grammar of the narrative discourse on the condition that they can identify a surface structure of the discourse and locate the three major sections of the discourse, namely, prepeak, peak, and postpeak. Despite its focus on grammatical features, surface structure plays an important role in story comprehension and production as mentioned by Shin Ja Joo Hwang (1987:18), who adopts the discourse framework developed by Longacre and applies his discourse typology to an analysis of eight Korean texts. In other words, narrative discourse grammar that runs on the surface structure is a necessity.

Different syntactic structure features are discovered at different points in the narrative. According to Longacre's model (1996:36), the maximal number of surface structure slots in a narrative text is nine. However, it is not obligatory for the text to contain all of the nine surface structure slots. The length of the narrative and other features which are unique to a specific language are two major factors

which greatly influence the number of surface structure slots in a discourse (Person 1998:20). The surface structure slots and their characteristics are summarized below.

Title

Normally, a title reflects the story or highlights a part of the story. It can be written in the form of a noun, a noun phrase, or a clause. Like Longacre, Jirel (1999:51) clearly states that most of the titles in Jirel narratives are not complete sentences. Ultimately, however, titles are optional.

Aperture

The aperture of a narrative is typically indicated by formulaic non-specific temporal words or phrases, such as 'Once upon a time' in English. These formulaic items indicate the beginning of a story. Like titles, apertures are optional.

Stage

The stage normally contains lots of description which gives the background of the story to the readers. "It serves as an introduction to the body of the narrative." (Chaiyathip 1993:30) At Stage, there is little forward action. A discourse's setting is provided, and major participants are introduced at Stage as well. Normally, Stage addresses the whom, where, and when of a story.

Prepeak Episodes

Prepeak Episodes are typified by the frequent occurrence of action verbs in temporal succession. This helps distinguish Prepeak Episodes from Stage; the latter typically employs stative verbs. In addition, conjunctions and back references are increasingly used as cohesive devices in Prepeak Episodes. Changes in time, location, and participants signal that this part does not belong to Stage any more.

Instead of telling about whom, where, and when, the Prepeak Episodes start telling about what, why, and how. Prepeak Episodes help build up interest, tension, or suspense.

Peak

Peak is defined by Longacre (1996:38) as "a zone of turbulence in regard to the flow of the discourse in its preceding and following parts." Peak cannot be marked by a single device. Instead, it is made outstanding by various devices. Like Longacre, Larson (1984:405) emphasizes that surface structure devices used to mark Peak are "many and varied." This makes Peak peculiar and unique. It is normally signified by a shift in the proportion of use of a particular grammatical device. In other words, Peak is marked grammatically. Routine surface features, for example, are distorted or phased out at Peak. Longacre (1985:85) indicates that, at Peak, "something new has been added to and something taken away." However, there are various ways to mark Peak, not just minus features and distortion. According to Longacre (1996:39-47), there are six kinds of peak marking devices, as described below.

a. **Rhetorical underlining**, which makes use of extra words in order to make the Peak more noticeable, may be used at Peak by a narrator to make sure that his/her readers do not miss the important point of the story. Consequently, the events at Peak are reported in greater detail. This device is also mentioned as a "slow-the-camera-down" technique by Longacre (1985:86). It is one of the simplest and most common devices used for marking Peak, not only of a narrative but also of other discourse genres.

In addition, according to Honulin (1983:5), it can be said that rhetorical underlining, or redundancy, is employed in order to:

> 1) slow the information rate, 2) clarify information, 3) amplify information, 4) give cohesion to a text, 5) group or organize information, 6) keep the theme or topic in view, 7) highlight information, and 8) give emphasis.

Rhetorical underlining can be expressed by means of several devices, but Longacre (1996:39) mentions three: parallelism, paraphrase, and tautology. Parallelism is a way of stating things which are very similar in meaning. As Callow (1974:23) states, parallelism is "related statements in the same semantic domain." Larson (1984:415) defines paraphrase as follows: "A paraphrase is a restating of the same information in another way, sometimes with the addition of some bits of information." The same thing is mentioned repeatedly, with or without slight changes of wording. According to Leaders (2002:10), tautology is defined as abundant repetition of words or close synonyms.

b. **Concentration of participants.** This device is also called a "crowded stage." It is commonly used in narrative and drama. That all or most of the participants, both important and trivial, in a story are present at Peak at once marks the concentration of participants. At Peak, either the participants already introduced are brought back to the scene or new participants are introduced (Longacre 1996:40).

c. **Heightened vividness**. The heightened vividness in a narrative can be marked by any one of several "shifts," as described below.

A shift in nominal-verbal balance. At Peak, there may be a change in the ratio of verbs to nouns. According to Jirel's study (1999:68-69), for

example, the Peaks in Jirel folk narratives are marked by a shift in verb density. At the Peaks, there are more verbs relative to nouns. The verb density reaches its maximum here.

A shift in surface structure tense. At Peak, a shift in surface structure tense may occur. For example, in a language in which tense plays an important role in determining the time of any action, far past tense which has been employed since the beginning of the narrative may change to recent past tense at Peak (Longacre 1996:40).

A shift in person and/or number. At Peak, there may be a shift in person orientation. Longacre (1996:41) emphasizes that "person shifts correlate in some texts with the onset of Peak." For example, a shift in numbers of people may occur, from plural to singular.

A shift along the narrative-drama parameter. At Peak, there may be a shift from narrative to pseudo-dialogue, which is not a true dialogue but rather reported speech or rhetorical questions, to dialogue, which is a conversation between participants in the narrative, to drama, in which participants speak out to each other in first and second personal pronouns. This is a shift from left to right along the parameter as illustrated below. Conversely, a shift from right to left may also occur at peak (Longacre, 1996:42-43).

Narrative ⟹ Pseudo-dialogue ⟹ Dialogue ⟹ Drama

d. **Change of pace.** The change of pace refers to variation in the relative speed of actions in a narrative. As stated by Longacre (1996:43), "The pace can be altered by means of the variation in the size of constructions, i.e. the unusual length of syntactic structures which can move the story forward either rapidly or slowly, and variation in the number of

conjunctions." At the Peak of the story in some languages, for example, the number of conjunctions decreases so that the action verbs are intensified. This reflects fast-moving action at Peak. In other languages, by contrast, the Peak can be marked by extra long sentences.

e. **Change of vantage point and/or orientation.** This can be achieved by any one of the "shifts" as described below.

A shift in narrator. Longacre (1996:46) states that a change of vantage point, by which he means the eyes through which the reader views the story, "most naturally occurs somewhere near the peak of the story and consequently helps mark this peak in the surface structure." For example, a third person narrator may suddenly switch to first person at Peak.

A shift in usual sentence topic. This is a change corresponding to role reversal, for example, from being a hunter to becoming the prey (Longacre 1996:47).

f. **Incidence of particles and onomatopoeia.** Larson (1984:411) indicates that "Special particles, or words, are another device for marking prominence," or the Peak, of a narrative discourse. In non-peak episodes, particles and onomatopoeia may appear only sparingly. At Peak, however, the use of these items may increase. New particles and onomatopoeia may be introduced at Peak as well. Usual particles may either disappear or be used more frequently.

Postpeak Episodes

The grammatical aspects of Postpeak Episodes are similar to those of Prepeak Episodes. Moreover, the devices that signal the beginning of the Postpeak Episodes

are also similar to those of the Prepeak Episodes (Chaiyathip 1993:40). Tension is reduced in Postpeak Episodes.

Closure

Closure is the type of conclusion that ends a narrative. According to Person (1998:21), the Closure "wraps up all the preceding events." At Closure, specific features of time, location, and participants now shift to general ones. It often contains a summary of the narrative text with or without a moral (Jirel 1999:91).

Finis

Finis, like Aperture, is optional and formulaic. It is used at the end of a narrative. For example, "It may be a formulaic sentence like *That's all*, *We're through*, or even the printed word *Finis*" (Longacre 1996:38).

2.3 The notional structure of narrative discourse

Grimes (1975:114) states that notional structure and surface structure are distinctive in that:

> The former reflects meaning; as many linguists have pointed out, meaning is possible only when a speaker could choose to say something else instead. The latter is the more mechanical components of language, the implementation process by which the results of the speaker's choices are expressed in a conventional form that permits communication with someone else.

Larson (1984:26) also claims that "there is a valid distinction between the deep (semantic) and the surface (grammatical, lexical, phonological) structures of languages." The deep or notional structure lies behind the surface structure of a narrative.

According to the model formulated by Longacre (1983:3),

> … the notional structure, i.e., plot structure, of a narrative discourse is the underlying construct of a text. In other words, it is the logical and causal structure of a narrative. The notional structure helps direct the reader to the overall understanding of the text. It behaves as a template found across languages while the surface structure of a narrative is considered language specific.

Longacre (1983:3) also adds that the notional structure of a discourse relates more clearly to the overall purpose of the discourse whereas the surface structure has to do more with a discourse's formal characteristics. The notional structure features are filled by the content of a text.

According to Chaiyathip (1993:9), the notional structure is different from the surface structure in the sense that "the notional structure belongs to the level of semantics. It involves what actually happens. The surface structure, on the other hand, deals with how the notional structure features become manifested grammatically."

In addition, Hwang (1997:4) states that any discourse has a notional structure functioning as a macrostructure which "controls the content structure and the relative elaboration of the various parts."

Table 3 presents a generic chart of notional structure slots and their respective characteristics.

Notional Structure Slots	The Characteristics of Each Notional Structure Slot
Exposition 'Lay it out'	It is an introductory part. "It contains participant orientation, which is employed in order to introduce and describe the participants, and setting, which is the information used to indicate the time, place, or circumstances that the events take place." (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001:82)
Inciting Moment 'Get something going'	It is the moment that something unusual from the daily routine begins to happen. It reports the introduction of a problem.
Developing Conflict 'Keep the heat on'	The problem which has occurred previously gets worse while the situation at this moment is intensified. Spontaneously, there is an attempt to solve the problem and improve the situation. A solution is sought. Jirel (1999:101-102) mentions that "The intensification of a problem may include heightening anger, breaking of a promise, suffering from a loss, and facing a threat to life. Similarly, seeking a solution includes making plans or playing tricks to achieve the goals intended."
Climax 'Knot it all up proper'	Somsonge (1991:40) states that "Climax involves the highest point of tension and frustration." At Climax, there seems to be no way out for the problem. The attempt to solve the problem also fails.
Denouement 'Loosen it'	According to Dooley and Levinsohn (2001:105), denouement is "an event section leading down from the Climax that spells out the final outcome." At Denouement, it seems hopeful to eliminate the tension at Climax because a crucial event unexpectedly takes place to make the solution possible. A way out can be seen.
Final Suspense 'Keep untangling'	At this point, the reader starts to wonder whether the tension can be really solved or not. A feeling of worry still lingers here even though the solution has been proposed in the previous slot. It seems as if the knot was not absolutely undone.
Conclusion 'Wrap it up'	It is the final slot. The solution to the problem might either successfully work or unfortunately fail.

Table 3: Notional Structure Slots and their Characteristics

2.4 The correlation of notional and surface structure features

Longacre (1996:34) states, "Notional structure is not necessarily in one-to-one correspondence with surface structure features. We should expect the surface structure to have features similar to those of the notional structure but to mark them less consistently." However, if there is a one-to-one correlation between these two structure features, it can be said that there is no occurrence of skewing.

All of the surface structure features have their counterparts in the notional structure, except for the title, aperture, and finis. The surface structure stage normally corresponds to the exposition in the notional structure. The surface structure prepeak episodes correspond to inciting moment and developing conflict in the notional structure. However, the stage may correlate with the inciting moment in a very brief narrative (Longacre, 1996:37). In some cases, the final part of the prepeak episodes sometimes correlates with the climax while the denouement encodes the surface structure peak (Somsonge, 1991:45). The surface structure peak corresponds to either the climax or the denouement of the notional structure. After the peak, the surface structure postpeak episodes basically correlate with the denouement and/or the final suspense of the notional structure. Lastly, the closure of the surface structure corresponds to the conclusion of the notional structure.

Based on Somsonge's analysis of four Thai narratives, the grammatical features that mark each slot in the surface structure and the characteristics of the notional structure slots of Thai climatic narrative discourse are as displayed in Table 4. The notional structure slots are displayed on the right while the surface structure slots are on the left of the table. Arrows mark encoding of the notional structure features into the surface structure features.

Surface structure slots	Notional structure slots
Title • The names of major participants accompanied by their characteristics and inanimate objects playing an important role in the story can be the titles. • The title may be a clause. • The title may give the main idea of the story.	(Surface structure feature only)
Aperture • It is a formulaic element. • Aperture may be a clause or a phrase. • Aperture may be an expository paragraph introducing the author and the main idea of the story.	(Surface structure feature only)
Stage ←	← **Exposition**
• It is realized by the first clause of the initial paragraph which contains an existential verb, a durative verb, or a possessive verb. • In a long text, it is realized by the initial paragraph which can be an identificational paragraph, a parallel paragraph, or an expository paragraph. These clauses in these paragraphs usually contain an existential verb, an equative verb, an emotional verb, or a locative verb.	• It often involves the introduction of a major participant and information about the participant. • It gives explanatory information about the situation or the problem before the sequences of events actually happen.
Prepeak Episodes ←	← **Inciting moment**
• There is frequent occurrence of action verbs and of temporal succession which is signaled by temporal clauses, phrases, and words. • They are realized by various types of narrative and dialogue paragraphs.	• It is concerned with an unusual incident that rarely happens in ordinary life. • It may state or imply a need that a main participant has. • It can involve a change of physical state. **Developing conflict** • It has to do with a conflict between two participants, an attempt to fulfill a need, or physical and emotional tension.
Peak ←	← **Climax**
• It can be marked by a quotation which is absent in the preceding and following episodes. • It is marked by a shift from left-to-right or from right-to-left across the narrative drama hierarchy. • It is marked by a packed storyline and a crowding of the stage.	• It involves the highest point of tension and frustration and a role substitution or a role reversal.

Postpeak Episodes ←	← Denouement
• It is realized by a paragraph articulated by the same means as Prepeak episodes.	• It includes an unexpected resolution which is different from the resolution of the previous event or episode.
Closure ←	← Conclusion
• It has to do with a moral or a final conclusion/resolution of a story.	• It includes a moral and summary of the main idea.
Finis	
• It may be realized by a clause, a short closing line, or just a blank.	(Surface structure feature only)

Table 4: The Surface and Notional Structures of Thai

Narrative (Adapted from Somsonge 1991:43-51)