

CHAPTER 3

OVERALL PLOT STRUCTURE OF “MOM”

3.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a description of the overall plot structure, which is seen as reflecting the deep structure, of “Mom.” The text is analyzed in regard to how it develops and organizes its content in order to identify the plot structure features as proposed by Longacre (1996:34-35). The analysis demonstrates which sentences in the text fill the plot slots of exposition, inciting moment, climax, etc. The plot slots will be described in the order in which they occur in the text as demonstrated in Figure 2, below. Then, the content associated with each plot slot will be summarized and described in detail as discussed in the following sections.

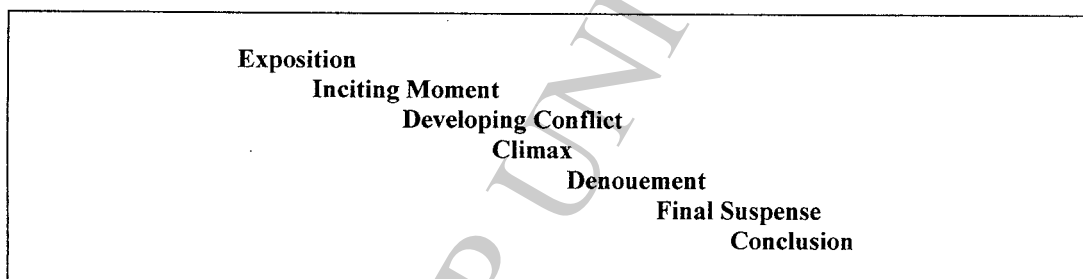


Figure 2: The Order of Notional Structure Slots in “Mom”

3.1 Exposition, ‘Lay it out’

“Mom was an only puppy born in the space under a small, two-storey, wooden house located in Makkasan. His father was an Alsatian, while his mother was a Thai dog. Mom was taken good care of by the master and his family members – the mistress and his daughter, Noo. For Mom, the master was his most beloved person. The master was Mom’s life

Sentences 1-118 mark the Exposition slot of the text¹. The major participant, Mom, is introduced. A lot of background information about Mom is also provided. The reader is oriented toward where Mom was born and who his parents were in Sentences 1-5. Later, in Sentences 6-20, how Mom's father met his mother and what Mom regarded as important during his infancy is explained. Another major participant, Mom's master, is also introduced in this part. Sentences 21-44 are mainly about Mom's toddler period. These sentences also tell about other members in the master's family: his wife and his daughter, Noo. Then, Mom's teenage life is narrated in Sentences 45-74. These sentences describe how Mom usually spent time while the master was at work. They contain a lot of explanatory information on the usual behavior of dogs, both the pros and cons. Then come Sentences 75-93, which mainly discuss about the period of time when Mom temporarily left the master when he fell in love. These sentences are included in the Exposition slot due to the fact that falling in love is considered common among teenage animals, including teenage human beings.

Sentences 94-115 give a description of what Mom always did in the afternoons. They also mention the activities Mom did with the master after the master's return home and a lesson Mom was taught by the master.

As Somsong (1991:40) mentions in regards to the Exposition in Thai folktales, the Exposition slot of "Mom" involves the introduction of a major participant, Mom, and his background information. It provides the supportive knowledge necessary for understanding the text. Sentences 116-118 are also included in the Exposition slot because they still describe the habitual situation as displayed in example (8). The words *pen pà?kà?ti?* 'as usual' in this example express that this sentence describes Mom's usual behavior. In addition, this part functions as an indicator which marks

¹ Chapter 4 will further illustrate sentence boundaries.

the end of the Exposition slot because there is the introduction of tension in the following sentence, Sentence 119, which signals the beginning of the Inciting Moment slot, which will be described in Section 3.2.

(8) Mom 116

mɔ:m	man	jù:	kàp`	naj	pen	pá?ka?ti?	sùk`	ma:	dáj	sǎ:ŋ
Mom	it	live	with	master	be	be usual	be happy	come	get	two
n	pro	v	prep	n	v	v	v	v	v	num
pi:	kwà:	tɕon	man	tè:p`to:	pen	nùm	jàj	temt`i:		
year	more than	until	it	grow up	be	teenage male	big	fully		
n	mod	conj	pro	v	v	n	mod	mod		

Mom lived happily with the master as usual for more than two years until he fully grew up.

It can be said that the Exposition slot contains both the initial introduction to the major participant, Mom, and a large amount of background information describing every period in Mom's life. Not only does it contain an orientation to the major participants, Mom and the master, but it also introduces other minor participants, namely the mistress and Noo, whom Mom regards as his beloved people as well. Apart from the information concerning the major and minor participants, the content of the Exposition slot mostly narrates Mom's daily routine. In the Exposition slot, there is no tension affecting Mom's life style. The content of the Exposition slot flows smoothly without any obstructions. Nothing particularly exciting happens in this slot.

3.2 Inciting Moment, 'Get something going'

"Then came the most important day in Mom's life. It was a day in winter. There were many unusual incidents that Mom had never experienced before happening at this period of time. But, the worst one was the master's departure from the house. In the

beginning, he left the house for several days and then returned.

But, later, he was gone for good.

The Inciting Moment spreads over eight paragraphs, from Sentence 119 to Sentence 247. Sentence 119 marks the beginning of this feature as it is concerned with an unusual incident that is not a regular activity in Mom's daily life. Mom's normal way of life is initially broken up here. Example (9) demonstrates the beginning of the Inciting Moment slot. The sentence states outright that something unusual is going to occur at the particular time narrated.

(9) Mom 119

tɕont ^h uŋ	wan	nùŋ	sũŋ	pen	wan	sámk ^h an	t ^h i:sùt'
until	day	one	that	be	day	be important	superlative marker
conj	n	num	COMP	v	n	v	mod
naj	tɕ ^h i:rwít'	k ^h ɔ:ŋ	mɔ:m				
in	life	of	Mom				
prep	n	prep	n				

Then came the most important day in Mom's life.

The content in Sentences 119-141 also describes this irregularity. According to Mom, the pedestrians looked strangely different. They looked sullen and panic-stricken. These were not the normal facial expressions that Mom was accustomed to. Therefore, it can be predicted that something bad is going to happen. Between Sentences 142-165, the irregularity is strongly emphasized. The master and the mistress did not show any interest in Mom's appearance. They looked unpleasant, instead. The most dramatic problem occurs in Sentences 166-174 when the master was conscripted as a soldier during the Second World War. Sentences 175-200, which are in Paragraph 10 of the original text, are also included in the Inciting Moment slot as they report the master's irregular dress and the pleasant family life which was temporarily restored only during the master's brief returns. Being

mobilized as a soldier, he had to dress in a military uniform which was different from his usual clothing. The normal happy life within the family did not occur quite as often as well. Then, Sentences 201-247 describe the final return of the master before his departure from the family for good. It can be seen from these sentences that the master's coming departure caused great grief to the mistress, his daughter, and Mom.

All of these sentences are classified as the Inciting Moment slot because they all share the same participants: Mom, the master, the mistress, and Noo. The unusual events that all participants had to encounter inevitably in the Inciting Moment slot were never narrated in the previous slot, the Exposition slot. Therefore, it can be said that the initial occurrence of these unusual events are the sparks that ignite the tension in the text. The text is given its initial momentum in the Inciting Moment slot.

3.3 Developing Conflict, 'Keep the heat on'

"After the master had been gone from home for more than a year, Mom began to notice more and more decline in the house each day. Without the master, the family living was tougher than before. The mistress had to sell their belongings in order to survive, but this was still not enough. The mistress, Noo, and Mom were emaciated, as a result. Meanwhile, the war was increasingly severe. The mistress had to dig an air-raid shelter in order to protect the family from air raids. But, it was in vain. Unfortunately, one of the bombs during the attack hurtled the soil burying the mistress and Noo who had been in the shelter. The house was also bombed out. Mom himself was seriously injured on his hind leg

The Developing Conflict slot contains a number of incidents that obviously complicate Mom's life. It extends from Sentence 248 to Sentence 433. Obstacle

after obstacle is introduced throughout this feature. However, there are attempts to eliminate these obstacles and improve the intense situation lying within this slot.

Sentence 248 marks the beginning of the Developing Conflict slot as it is the first spot in the text wherein the master is not on stage. The master does not take part in the family's daily life from this part forward. Two new participants, a postman and a Chinese merchant, are initially introduced in this slot. The latter plays a more important role in the survival of the family. It is he to whom the mistress sells some household things in order to earn some income. Her selling stuff to the Chinese merchant is considered one of the attempts which lessens the starvation of the family during the master's leave. Unfortunately, this still did not improve the poor situation within the family. The three of them were as hungry and needy as they had been at the beginning of the slot. Like the mistress, Mom tried to improve his own situation in Sentences 282-300. During the master's stay, Mom had never suffered from hunger at all. Now hunger forced him to search for food in garbage bins. The healthy and playful dog was apparently changed into a thin and sluggish one. Later, in Sentences 301-345, the problems worsened and intensified because an air-raid warning and an air-raid attack really frightened, shocked, and threatened the family members. All of them realized that they were now living in a war zone. Again, there is an attempted solution to the previous situation as narrated in Sentences 346-356. Like other people living in the neighborhood, the mistress dug an air-raid shelter to protect the family from air-raid attacks. Whenever Mom heard either the sound of the warning or the sound of airplanes in the distance, he had to wake the mistress up so that she and Noo could have enough time to rush down to the shelter, as narrated in Sentences 357-373. Then, in Sentences 374-400, Mom was apparently placed in a very life-threatening situation. The house was on fire because it had been bombed out. Mom himself was unconscious because of the heavy explosion of another bomb dropped exactly in the middle of the front yard. After having lost consciousness for a while, Mom finally recovered as narrated in

Sentences 374-433, which signal the end of the Developing Conflict feature. Mom, then, realized that his hind leg had been badly injured and the hurtled soil had covered half of the shelter. The mistress' protruding foot out of the pile of soil hurtled onto the shelter gave a hint to Mom that she was not alive any more. Now, Mom realized that the mistress and Noo had been killed. In the Developing Conflict feature, it can be seen that Mom's survival, together with the mistress and Noo's death, constitute an opposition to the text.

There are a number of unpleasant incidents happening repeatedly in the Developing Conflict slot. These incidents worsen the problems and intensify the tough situation that all of the family members were experiencing at that time. Even though the participants tried their best to solve the problems and improve the situation, they were still in trouble.

3.4 Climax, 'Knot it all up proper'

"At last, Mom saw the mistress lying in the pit as if she had been sleeping under the pile of soil. In the pit, Noo lay still in her mother's embrace. Mom lost everything in his life. At first, he intended to lie at the ruins of the house until the master came back. Mom lay there for several days without anyone's awareness or attention because he was just a dog. But, at last, the hunger and thirst forced him to stagger out in order to find something to eat. The dogs that used to be frightened of him now thronged to bark and bite Mom. Mom did not fight but tried to avoid them because he did not either the will power or the physical strength to fight with any dog ever again. He wandered around without any specific destination. When he became weaker and weaker, he lay under the shade in front of the gate of a big house on the road. Mom slept for a long time because he was downhearted."

The Climax slot extends from Sentence 434 to Sentence 474. It contains the most frustration and tension for Mom before the resolution can be seen. It looks as if Mom has come to a dead end. The Climax slot involves terrible physical and emotional torment in Mom's life. The torment reaches its maximum degree here as well.

In Sentences 445-449, some people took the mistress and Noo's bodies away from Mom. Having been commanded by the master to take good care of them, Mom tried everything to stop these people from doing this. But, Mom had to give up. It can be seen from these sentences that Mom has reached a dead end. He could not do anything to solve the tension. In the Climax slot, the text also suggests that the interests of the world of the people and the world of Mom are in conflict in that Mom accused the people of exploiting his world. In addition, Mom suffered immensely from both physical and emotional torment. In terms of the physical sufferings, his hind leg increasingly hurt, and he also suffered from dehydration. In regard to the emotional sufferings, he was so weak, tired, and discouraged that he had to lie in the ruins of the house for several days without anyone's awareness or attention.

At the Climax slot, a role reversal can be noticed. The text has represented Mom as a pet dog that was always taken good care of since the very beginning of the text. All of Mom's needs, his unity with others, his home, and his security, were provided for. At the Climax slot, on the contrary, Mom's role is completely changed. Mom felt that he belonged to nowhere and no one. This kind of feeling is considered the maximum emotional tension for Mom. The beloved dog is now changed to the dog of no one. Mom lost all the necessities that he used to be given. Mom became a stray dog. Examples (10) and (11) demonstrate Mom's role of being the stray dog. The adverbial phrase *do:jt^himâjmi: k^hraj rú: mâj mi: k^hraj ?awtçajsàj* 'without anyone's awareness or attention' in example (10) and the verb phrase *t^haw*

barked at and bitten by the other dogs. And, Mom is also considered cowardly in that he usually tried to avoid fighting with the other dogs.

(12) Mom 468

mă:	sũŋ	tè:kò:n	k ^h e:j	klua	man	kô:	rum
dog	that	previously	used to	be frightened	it	afterwards	throng
n	COMP	mod	aux	v	pro	aux	v

kan	hàw	rum	kan	kàt'
together	bark	throng	together	bite
mod	v	v	mod	v

The dogs that used to be frightened of him, then, thronged to bark and bite (Mom).

Mom 469

mò:m	man	kô:	mâj	sû:	k ^h ɔ:j	lòp'	lìk'	p ^h rɔʔ	man	mâj	mi:
Mom	it	also	not	fight	wait	dodge	avoid	because	it	not	have
n	pro	aux	neg	v	v	v	v	conj	pro	neg	v

kamlanɕaj	kamlanɕaj	t ^h ɪ:	tɕàʔ	tò:sû:	kàp'	k ^h raj	ʔi:k'
will power	physical strength	that	IRR	fight	with	anyone	again
n	n	COMP	aux	v	prep	n	mod

tò:paj	lé:w
henceforth	then
mod	mod

Mom did not fight but tried to avoid (the dogs) because he did not have either the will power or the physical strength to fight with any dog ever again.

At last, Mom collapsed in front of the gate of a big building. The tensions that Mom was facing at this moment seem impossible to be solved or lessened. At the Climax slot, there is still no solution to Mom's tensions.

3.5 Denouement, 'Loosen it'

"Mom woke up from his long sleep with a start when he heard the sound of people talking to each other nearby. Later, he was helped by a ten-year-old girl. He was fed good food and clean water. He was cleaned and medicine was also put on his wounds."

The Denouement slot expresses a possible solution to Mom's tensions mentioned in the Climax feature. There is a crucial event happening unexpectedly in the Denouement slot which can help alleviate the tensions. The conflicts happening previously are unraveled here. The Denouement slot is denoted by Sentences 475-502. Mom was pulled up from the bottom of a desperate and lonely life by a well-off girl. This is considered a solution to Mom's torment.

Sentences 475-476 marks the beginning of the Denouement feature. It was the first time that Mom met the girl who then became his new mistress. Then, Sentences 478-483 describe how generous and kind the girl was towards the stray dog. Sentences 484-488 contain the conversations taking place in front of the gate of the building between the girl and her father. Her father seemed unwilling to allow his daughter to raise Mom. However, because of the girl's stubbornness, her father at last permitted her to keep Mom. Mom had to clutch at straws and followed the girl into her big building, as narrated in Sentences 489-492. After that, in Sentences 493-502, it can be seen that Mom's new place was very different from his old one in that the new one was much bigger and more beautiful. Mom learned that his new mistress' name was Taew. Taew took good care of Mom. She had someone feed Mom good food and clean water. She also commanded one of her servants to clean Mom, and she herself applied some medicine on his wounds. Thinking that Taew had saved Mom from starvation, Mom decided to stay with his savior.

That the girl helped and kept Mom is regarded as an unexpected event which was crucial for Mom's survival. Without the girl's kind help, Mom would have been dead from starvation and dehydration. Therefore, the girl's help is the solution to Mom's crisis as narrated in the Climax slot. Even though Mom's physical problems were relieved, his mental trauma remained.

3.6 Final Suspense, 'Keep untangling'

The Final Suspense of the text is an embedded narrative spreading from Sentences 503-592. It consists of five notional structure sub-slots, which are exposition, inciting moment, developing conflict, climax, and denouement. Although Mom's physical problems were eliminated in this slot, his biggest problem – living without his beloved master – still remained. It looks as if the knot was not absolutely undone here. The content associated with each sub-slot will be described in detail as listed below.

3.6.1 Exposition, 'Lay it out (again)'

“Mom comfortably lived with Taew for a long time. Mom learned that he had been named Dig. While living with Taew, Mom was fed plentifully and taken good care of until he became healthy again. Despite his physical comfort, Mom was not as energetic and cheerful as he used to be. Mom would never forget the master whom he always waited for. Mom loved Taew because it was her hand that fed him. However, Taew was not Mom's life.”

The exposition sub-slot discusses what Mom was like while living with Taew, his new mistress. It is considered another exposition slot as it also explains Mom's general condition during his stay with the new mistress. The prior Exposition slot and the exposition sub-slot have something in common in that they both provide

background information before a series of unpleasant and unusual events takes place. The former slot tells about Mom's living with the master while the latter one tells about his living with the new mistress.

The exposition sub-slot contains only one paragraph spreading from Sentences 503-515. It emphasizes Mom's continuing loyalty towards his first master. Even though Mom was living physically pleasantly with Taew, he never forgot his former master. He still hoped to meet the master once again. However, in return for Taew's kindness, Mom was also loyal to her.

It can be said that the author aims to highlight an opposition between Mom's former master as an ordinary person and Mom's new mistress as a well-off person, so Taew is chosen instead of an ordinary girl.

3.6.2 Inciting moment, 'Get something going (again)'

"Two years later during a summer night, Mom was lying behind the building where a cool breeze was blowing. There were not many people in the house that night because Mom had seen several of them holding suitcases and getting into a car with Taew that morning. They were saying that they would have a holiday. It was very late at night, but Mom was not asleep yet. He lay still to listen to various sounds as usual."

Sentences 516-521 are considered the inciting moment sub-slot because the usual events are broken up here. Taew, accompanied by the other members of her family and some of her servants, was not at home as usual, as she had gone for her holiday at a beach instead. Taew disappears from the scene here.

Sentence 516 denotes the beginning of the inciting moment sub-slot as there is a time change here. Example (13) demonstrates this time change. The temporal words

sǎŋ pi: tǝma: ‘two years later’ function as a dividing line that sets the inciting moment sub-slot apart from the exposition sub-slot narrated previously.

(13) Mom 516

k ^h u:n	wan	nùŋ	naj	rúʔdu:rón	ʔi:k ^ʔ	sǎŋ	pi:	tǝma:	mǝ:m	man
night	day	one	in	summer	another	two	year	later	Mom	it
n	n	num	prep	n	mod	num	n	mod	n	pro

nɔ:n	ráp ^ʔ	lom	jen	jù:	lǎŋ	tùk ^ʔ
lie	receive	wind	cold	live	behind	building
v	v	n	mod	v	mod	n

Two years later during a summer night, Mom was lying behind the building where a cool breeze was blowing.

Both the change of time and Taew’s disappearance from the scene signal a coming of other unusual events to the readers. These two changes can be regarded as the sparks igniting a fire as those employed in the prior Inciting Moment slot. Change of time is employed in both the Inciting Moment slot and the inciting moment sub-slot as the dividing line which also identifies the beginning point of each Inciting Moment slot to the readers. Moreover, the participants’ disappearance from the scene, namely the master’s disappearance and Taew’s disappearance narrated in the prior Inciting Moment slot and the inciting moment sub-slot, respectively, is also raised as the theme in them both.

3.6.3 Developing conflict , ‘Keep the heat on (again)’

“Mom heard a sound like there was someone prying open a downstairs window at the side of the building with an iron bar. Mom thought that it could only be a thief. Mom intended to catch the thief so that Taew and all the people in this big house could recognize his skill. Mom walked extremely quietly. He

kept himself from barking. When he walked past the corner of the building, he saw a man standing on a small stool and prying the window. Mom gradually crept closer to the man. He expected to handle this unpleasant situation in a short moment.”

The developing conflict sub-slot covers twelve sentences. It extends from Sentence 522 to Sentence 533. These sentences are labeled the developing conflict sub-slot as they report the rising tension between two participants, a thief breaking into Taew’s house and Mom guarding the house. The former participant attempted to get into the building while the latter one tried to prevent him from doing this. These two participants were performing different actions which were in direct opposition to each other.

Sentence 522 identifies the beginning of the developing conflict sub-slot because it is the first place in which the attempt of the thief to break into the house is introduced. The other participants, namely Taew and the other people in her house, are out of the scene here. There are only two participants, Mom and the thief, involved in this slot. Mom was trying to get at the thief. Even though there is no direct confrontation between Mom and the thief in this sub-slot, it can be clearly seen that Mom was approaching the thief gradually.

In the developing conflict sub-slot, the conflict develops. That is, while the thief was unaware of what was going to happen, Mom felt that something was wrong. The different performances of the two participants highlight the increasing conflict in this sub-slot. The closer Mom got to the thief, the severer the tension became. In other words, the flowing stream of tension in the developing conflict sub-slot is getting stronger and stronger until it reaches the climax where the tension is entirely eliminated due to the fact that Mom eventually gets the chance to see his former master again.

3.6.4 Climax, ‘Knot it all up proper (again)’

“Suddenly, the wind blew the thief’s smell to Mom’s nose. Mom’s heart almost stopped beating – from joy. The smell blown to his nose did not belong to anyone else. Rather, it was the smell that he had known very well. It belonged to the master whom Mom had been waiting for ever since the day that the master left. The master did not recognize Mom at first. But later, the master recalled his name, Mom. Mom was so glad to see the master again that he could not be still as the master commanded him to be. Then, the master hurriedly left Taew’s house to talk with Mom. The master told Mom about his terrible fate. He tried to convince Mom that he was really at the end of his rope. The master chased Mom away several times, but Mom did not obey his command. Mom would not let the master get out of his sight ever again. Actually, the master had changed a lot; he was thinner with messy hair and ragged clothes. However, the master was still Mom’s master whom Mom could not leave.”

The climax starts at Sentence 534 and ends at Sentence 578. It describes the most important and thrilling moment in Mom’s life. Mom’s desire is absolutely fulfilled here. Mom is finally reunited with the master after having been looking forward to seeing him for years.

Sentence 534 marks the beginning of the climax sub-slot as it contains a punctiliar temporal word *t^handajnáan* ‘suddenly.’ Not only does this word signal that the event in this sentence happens at a definite point in time, but it also emphasizes the importance of the information narrated in this sentence. Somsonge (1991:100) states that a punctiliar adverb like that employed in Sentence 534, as demonstrated in example (14), below, is one of the most important markers for storyline verbs which

constitute the backbone of the text. Example (14) thus marks the beginning of the climax sub-slot.

(14) Mom 534

t^handajná	lom	p ^h át'	ma:	wû:p'		nùŋ	p ^h a:	ʔaw
suddenly	wind	blow	come	the action of blowing		one	carry	take
mod	n	v	v	class		num	v	v

klìn	tua	k ^h on	k ^h on	nán	ma:	tô:ŋ	tçàʔmù:k'	man
smell	body	man	person	that	come	touch	nose	it
n	n	n	class	det	v	v	n	pro

Suddenly, the wind blew the man's smell to his nose.

Sentences 535-542 also identify the importance of the events following Sentence 534, which contains the punctiliar temporal word. After realizing that the smell belonged to the master, Mom did not hesitate to express his extreme gladness via his physical gestures, such as his rush to the master with all of his power, his trembling body, his rapidly wagging tail, and his licking all over the master's body. On the contrary, Mom did not perform these cheerful expressions while living with Taew. This was the only moment that Mom behaved himself so happily and cheerfully after the mistress and Noo's death. He reversed his actions here. The master did recognize Mom in Paragraph 32, which covers Sentences 543-554, and the master called Mom by his old name. This doubled Mom's gladness and happiness so immensely that he could not stay still. Being afraid of being caught by other people, the master hurriedly left Taew's house. Of course, Mom followed right after him. Sentences 555-578 mark the end of the climax sub-slot as there is no complete solution suggested here. The master told Mom about his terribly poor fate which had caused him to be a thief for the first time. He was homeless, jobless, and hopeless because the war had already stolen everything of value from him. In the climax sub-slot, it can be seen that the master had an abstract conflict within his mind: he felt ashamed

of breaking into someone's house. The master also had another concrete conflict in this sub-slot: his former pet dog was now guarding this house.

As in the prior Climax slot, role reversal is employed again as a climax marker in the climax sub-slot. It is obvious that the master's role completely changes from a homeowner with a family to a thief who had to break into other people's houses for the sake of his own survival. Now, he was a homeless man wearing ragged and dirty clothes. Example (15) demonstrates the master's new role of being a thief. The master would like to convince Mom that this was the first time he had committed a burglary.

(15) Mom 566

tè:	ʔej	jà:	nuík ⁷	wâ:	k ^h â:	k ^h e:j
but	you (vulgarism)	forbid	think	that	I (vulgarism)	used to
conj	pro	v	v	COMP	pro	aux

lák⁷k^hà⁷mo:j
steal
v

But, don't think that I have ever stolen before.

The climax sub-slot can be considered a turning point for both Mom and the master. Mom had never exhibited any cheerful behavior while living with Taew, but he did not hesitate to express his cheerfulness right after seeing the master. The master also reversed his action. At first, he was determined to steal valuables from Taew's house. However, he immediately changed his mind not to do so as soon as he saw Mom at the scene. The master ordered Mom to get back to Taew's house. If Mom had obeyed his order, the master himself would have left without Mom's company. Mom would have had a healthy and pleasant life at Taew's house. The master did not want to take Mom from the world which was physically good for Mom. He preferred isolating himself from Mom to taking Mom with him. Meanwhile, Mom

also set his resolution. He was determined not to be distant from the master ever again. The master was still Mom's master even though he was too poor to keep Mom with him.

3.6.5 Denouement, 'Loosen it (again)'

"It was very late at night, and the waning moon began to rise and shine brightly all over the area. The master walked weakly and tiredly to sit at the edge of the ditch near the road. He looked into the distance. Mom sat close to the master for a short while. He noticed that the master was completely still, so an idea popped into his head. He ran to find a dry stick, held it in his mouth, and placed it on the master's lap as usual. The master threw the stick into the ditch. With a splash, Mom jumped into the ditch to fetch the stick for the master in the way that he used to do. The master buried his face in Mom's head. He whispered Mom's name several times, and he did not say anything again. Warm tears dropped on Mom's face and nose. The master sat like that for a long time. At last, the master stood up slowly, absent-mindedly fondled Mom's ears, and said, "Mom, you win. Let's go together. Come! Follow me."

The denouement sub-slot spreads over three paragraphs covering Sentences 579-592. Sentences 579-586 describe what Mom did to convince the master that he had always been Mom's most beloved person. Mom could remember the game that the master had taught him even though Mom had not been living with him for ages. Later, the master decided to take Mom with him as narrated in Sentences 587-592. This can be regarded as a reward for Mom's loyalty towards the master. Mom's desire to see the master and live with him again was fulfilled here. The master's feeling of being

alone in the world was also alleviated. Apparently, he would not spend the rest of his life by himself any more now that he would always have Mom by his side.

3.7 Conclusion, ‘Wrap it up’

“On that summer night, if someone walking along Ratchawithi Road at around 2.30 a.m., they would have seen a tall thin man wearing torn and ragged clothes walking slowly and weakly along the side of the road. Beside him was a good-looking male dog, holding a stick with his neck erect and his tail held high, running joyfully after him.”

The text ends at the Conclusion slot which covers only the last paragraph of the text spreading from Sentence 593 to the final sentence, Sentence 594. The Conclusion slot provides a conclusion of suspense. Even though Mom’s desire had already been fulfilled at the previous denouement sub-slot, the readers still wonder whether the desire can be really achieved or not. The two participants, Mom and the master, just walked together side by side and suddenly disappeared from the scene. No one knows what will happen to the two of them, but that Mom is finally happy is known for sure. The only problem Mom was dealing with in the Final Suspense slot is that he is not with his beloved master. This has totally resolved. Mom’s physical problems are very secondary to the primary issue of being with the one he loves. Mom does not care or worry about anything anymore. He is now with his beloved master. Nothing else matters.

3.8 Summary

The text analyzed for this research contains all the plot or notional structure features proposed as universal by Longacre (1996:34-35). There are seven notional structure slots in the text which are organized and move forward progressively as previously

shown in Figure 2 (see Section 3.0). These slots are Exposition, Inciting Moment, Developing Conflict, Climax, Denouement, Final Suspense, and Conclusion. The Final Suspense slot is an embedded narrative containing five sub-slots, which are exposition, inciting moment, developing conflict, climax, and denouement. Based on the levels of tension identified in each notional structure feature, the overall notional structure of the text can now be represented as a plot profile, which demonstrates two climaxes. The first one is higher than the second one due to the fact that the tensions Mom experienced at the prior Climax slot are much more immense and tense than those at the climax sub-slot, as shown in Figure 3. The flat plot lines represent the exposition, where there is no conflict, but later rises towards each climax.

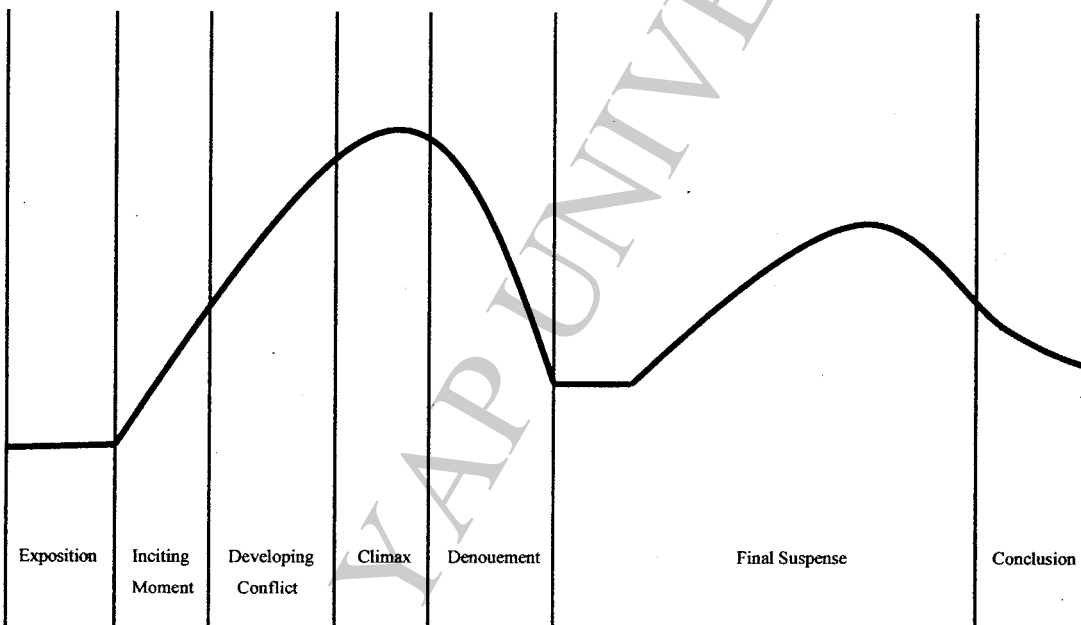


Figure 3: The Plot Line of "Mom"

A plot structure deals with the meaning of a whole discourse and forms a global theme for a text. As Somsonge (1991:39) states, the plot structure of narrative

discourse directs the readers toward the overall idea of the story. According to the text “Mom,” the readers can perceive the theme of the text, which the notional structure reflects. This text teaches us to be grateful for the help of others and to repay the favors we have received. Even an animal, especially the dog that was chosen to be the main participant in the text, knows and practices this, so we humans certainly should, too.

The overall plot structure of the text analyzed in this research is outlined as summarized in Table 5.

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Notional Structure Features	Sentence Number	Theme in Each Notional Structure Feature
Exposition	1-118	Mom was a cross-bred dog born under the space in a Thai house located in Makkasan, Bangkok. Mom was taken good care of by his master, who was Mom's most beloved person, and the master's family members – the mistress and his daughter, Noo.
Inciting Moment	119-247	Mom experienced many unusual incidents, but the worst one was the master's departure from the house. In the beginning, he alternately left and returned home. Later, he never returned home at all.
Developing Conflict	248-433	The family living was tougher than before. Meanwhile, the Second World War was increasingly severe. One of the bombs during an air raid hurtled soil to bury the mistress and Noo, who had been in an air-raid shelter. The house was also bombed out. Mom himself was seriously injured on his hind leg.
Climax	434-474	Mom realized that the mistress and Noo had been killed. The house was also completely destroyed by the bomb and the fire. He lost everything in his life. At first, he was determined to wait for the master in the ruins of the house. Hunger finally caused him to wander in search of food.
Denouement	475-502	Mom woke up from his long sleep. Later, he was helped and raised as a pet dog by a ten-year-old girl, Taew.
	503-515	Mom lived with Taew, his new mistress, for two years.
	516-521	Mom was lying behind the house at night while Taew was taking her holiday at a beach.
	522-533	Mom heard someone breaking into the house. He thought that it was a thief, so he silently walked to catch the thief for Taew.
Final Suspense	534-578	Suddenly, the wind blew the thief's smell to hit Mom's nose. Mom recognized that it was the master's smell. Later, the master hurriedly left Taew's house to talk with Mom.
	579-592	The master ordered Mom to get back to the house several times, but Mom did not obey him. After walking together for a while, they finally sat side by side at the edge of a ditch by the road. The game that the master had taught Mom popped up immediately. Mom persuaded the master to play it again. At last, the master had to give up. He permitted Mom to accompany him.
Conclusion	593-594	Whoever walked on the road at around 2.30 a.m. that night might have seen a tall thin man in ragged clothes walking slowly with a good-looking male dog running after him in great enjoyment.

Table 5: The Overall Plot Structure of "Mom"