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Proceedings of the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society (1976), pp. 59-77

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WHY THE WHATS ARE WHEN:
MUTUALLY CONTEXTUALIZING REALMS OF NARRATIVE

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In this paper I will be arguing for the need for a pragmatic theory of narrative to account for the surface structure phenomena which are common in the narrative texts of real speakers. Pragmatic analysts consider the organization and performance of discourse to be crucially constrained by such real world considerations as interpersonal relating and ways of framing real world information in accordance with the cultural conventions of how such information is arranged in nature (Hymes 1962, 1971; Labov and Waletzky, 1967; Labov, 1972a, b; Linde, 1974a, b, c, 1975; Deutsch, 1974, 1975; Eisner, 1975; Bowditch, 1976). Narrative is seen as a social phenomenon which can not be studied profitably unless linguists consider to be of basic importance

concepts of shared or social knowledge, the roles of speaker, addressee and audience, their rights and obligations, and other constraints which have not appeared before in the array of linguistic primitives (Labov, 1972, pp. 359-60).

Since linguists are concerned with what people do with language, a study of narrative is a proper linguistic endeavor because people do produce narratives; however, the thrust of a linguistic theory of narrative must be to describe "how" and "why" people encode information in narrative form and to account for all of the structures which appear in the surface structure of narrative texts.

Traditional narrative analysts have concerned themselves with narrative as a formal system to be studied without regard to real world or extra-systemic constraints. They conclude that narrative structure should be described in terms of a sequence of changes of state brought about through the action of a character. Their analysis reduces to stating that in narrative the action of a character changes the narrative situation from one of Lack to one of Lack Liquidated (Dolezel, 1972; Prince, 1973; Bremond, Todorov and Greimas in Scholes, 1974; Knapp, 1976). To me this seems to be a description of what a narrative may be about and not a description of how it is structured as a form of language encoded discourse.

I hope to show that this formal approach is inadequate to account for the fact that people regularly

understand a given narrative text to be about something other than the events or changes of state in the narrative. Perhaps the narrative merely describes a mood (such as: I'm in such a rotten mood today followed by a string of illustrative examples); or, as in the case of the narrative which we will be examining in some detail later, the point of the story may be encoded in the non-temporal, descriptive part of the narrative.

Before I go any further, I think it is necessary to define a few of the nearly homophonous terms I will be using: "narrative," "the narrative text," and "the narrative." Throughout this paper, I will adopt Labov's definition of narrative as a linguistic structuring of events in which the order in which the events are told recapitulates the order in which they actually, or supposedly, occurred (Labov, 1972a). For Labov, narrative order signals when an event happened relative to other events which occurred at definite times in the text.¹ "What happened?", "why?", "to whom?", "where?", and "in what circumstances?" make up the narrative, while the narrative text is the complete utterance which conforms to the basic narrative constraint, recognized by speakers as constituting a linguistic unit. The unit of the written narrative text is usually the length of the written material. It begins on the first page and ends on the last. Oral narrative texts, too, are marked units recognized by speakers as units by suspending rules for turn-taking (Eisner, 1975). The narrative, a more restricted term, only refers to those parts of the text which are part of the temporal, spatial, or rhetorical world created in the narrative text. An interjection such as

and here's the funny part

in the midst of a narrative is clearly part of the narrative text, but it is not part of the narrative since it is a comment about something within the narrative from a vantage point located outside the narrative.

Producing a narrative text, like creating other linguistic texts which involve imparting information from speaker to hearer, is a social act which takes place between people. And exactly as one does not give directions (Hobbs, 1975), describe an apartment (Linde, 1974 a, b, c) or talk about taking apart a water pump (Deutsch, 1974, 1975) for no reason at all, one does not produce a narrative text for no reason at all. The kind of narrative which formal analysts examine, such as this one by Prince, are somehow not the kind of narrative people tell to one another.

A man was unhappy, then he fell in love, then as a result, he was happy (Prince, 1973, p. 21).

Although this narrative conforms to Labov's basic narrative constraint of narrative ordering, it is not what he would call a "well formed narrative" but is rather a "So what?" narrative which no one would care to produce, because no one would stand still to hear it. Labov terms a narrative text which is worth telling a well formed narrative. A well formed narrative must contain evaluation devices which point out "its raison d'être: why it was told and what the narrator was getting at" (Labov, 1972a, p. 366). These devices, are conventions understood by the participants in the narrative situation to signal to the hearer that there is some point to what the narrator is saying, lest the audience feel itself deluged with a mindless stream of details of various sorts.

So far, though I have mentioned the need for evaluative devices, I have said nothing of what they evaluate. Narrative, as distinct from narrative text, is composed of two kinds of structures: temporal structure which charts the progress of the narrative through time by presenting a series of events which are understood to occur sequentially; and durative/descriptive structure which provides a spatial, characterological, and durational context for which the temporal structure marks time and changes of state. Both events from the temporal structure and details from the durative/descriptive structure may be pointed out by evaluators in the evaluation structure as particularly important. Other details, both temporal and descriptive, will remain unevaluated and function only as descriptive, contextualizing background material. It must be emphasized that there is no structural difference between the clauses and sentences which are evaluated as encoding the meaning or "why" of the text, and those clauses and sentences which contextualize the "why."

The only difference between crucial and background information is that one is seen as important within the context of the narrative text and the other is not. Crucial details are crucial only because they are evaluated by the narrator as important or because they are believed to be crucial by both narrator and audience because they contain material which would be important if it occurred in "real" or extra-narrative life. The importance of investigating the belief systems of the participants in the narrative situation in order to understand why the surface structure of the text is as it is argues persuasively for the need for a pragmatic analysis of narrative. An analysis which is simply

syntactic or even "semantic" will never be able to explain the choices which speakers make between seemingly indistinguishable alternatives and will necessarily consign much real-world linguistic behavior to a garbage can marked "stylistics" and glossed "random" (Linde, 1974a).

Temporal, durational/descriptive and evaluative structures should be considered mutually contextualizing structures of different logical types. The participants in the narrative situation rely upon each of these structures to provide context in which information from the other structures makes more sense. The evaluative structure selects some details to be crucial from the temporal and durative/descriptive structures. Those crucial details contextualize the rest of the text because they are the reason why the narrator has bothered the audience with all the other narrative text materials, including the evaluative devices themselves. Without some details singled out as crucial and providing a meaning structure against which to try and understand what is going on, details in the temporal and durative/descriptive structures are merely trivial and uninteresting. The evaluators themselves are also contextualized by the crucial details since, without something to evaluate, they obviously could not function. The temporal and durative/descriptive details which are not singled out as crucial continue to fulfill their expected contextualizing functions of giving the crucial material and the evaluators a framework in which to take place.

Each of these structures is encoded in a distinctive form. Temporal structure most often encodes events which occur at a definite time relative to each other in main clauses in the present or past tense. Descriptive/durative structure encodes descriptions of states, places, people, or lengths of time in clauses containing copula constructions, durational adverbial constructions, or verb forms of a durational nature (continue, stay, etc.). Many durative/descriptive details are described with participles, nominals, and in subordinate clauses. Unlike the other two structures, evaluation is properly seen as a structure of narrative text, not limited to the narrative itself. Evaluative devices have no fixed form but may be of many forms, some which manifest themselves within the text (direct and indirect discourse, change of tense or person, unusually florid or terse language) and others which are observed as being within the text by the observer (repetition or redundancy of information is not marked in English by a particle which announces: "this is being repeated") (Pyle, 1976).

Redundancy must be seen as, paradoxically, the most powerful evaluator and the most powerful inhibitor of evaluative effect. I have argued elsewhere (Bowditch, 1976) that redundant use of a device at crucial moments in the text reinforces the evaluative effect of the device because the device becomes increasingly associated with crucial material. However, if a device is one of the normal structures of the text (direct discourse in dialogue, for example), it is not available to the narrator as a way of commenting on the text. An attempt to use the device evaluatively would fall flat since it would be seen as "Crying wolf."

It must be emphasized that there is no reason for a given sentence, clause, or word to be exclusively of one logical type. For example:

and then she said. "John, I have always loved you, too."

contains the word said which is a time definite event, and therefore a constituent of the temporal structure, and an evaluator because it is a signal of reported speech (in this case, direct discourse) which evaluates text material. In the text which we will be examining in an attempt to make all this a bit clearer, there are several examples of constituents from the temporal structure and from the durative/descriptive structure functioning evaluatively at the same time as they perform their normal functions. Repetition, in fact, is most commonly an evaluator with this confusing dual nature. Part of the text is considered repeated because there is a repetition of something previously mentioned in the text. Both the first and subsequent mentions may be constituents of either the durative/descriptive or temporal structures, and probably do belong to one of these since the presence of purely evaluative material in a narrative text is relatively rare. A great deal of work remains to be done to clarify this whole matter of being a member of two structures simultaneously. Russell's theory of logical types should help the barber get shaved.

Although a great many events happen in "The Lady and the Housefly," (text follows paper) readers agree almost without exception, that the story is not primarily concerned with the peripatetic life style of a nameless fly but is a love story--Lady meets Fly. How do they know this? I would like to try and answer that question by looking first at the temporal and durative/descriptive structures of the narrative and then examining in some detail the evaluative structure to try and establish exactly what details and events are

evaluated as crucial and by which devices.

The movement of time within the narrative is accomplished through a recital of events arranged sequentially. All of these events are encoded in main clauses with verbs in the simple past. A cursory examination of a list of the events encoded in the temporal structure indicates how uninteresting a narrative it is:

- (2) Luba Harrington returned to her New York apartment
- (4) When she began to arrange the flowers in a bowl
- (5) a small fly flew out
- (10) Mrs. Harrington noticed the fly hovering here and there
- (21) One day Mrs. Harrington opened a window
- (22) And the fly flew out
- (25) and she said to the fly
- (26) as it left
- (27) and she shut the window
- (29) Mrs. Harrington came back to the room
- (34) So I opened the window
- (35) and it flew in
- (36) went straight to the lamp on the desk
- (40) and then it flew over to me
- (41) and finally landed on my knee

As formal narrative analysts would predict, the temporal structure of this narrative can be characterized as encoding changes of state brought about through the actions of a character. However, an analysis which posits the "structure of narrative" to be merely a description of its temporal structure is unable to account for the intuition of native speakers that this narrative is not about a fly buzzing around in any particular fashion but it is about the emotional attachment between Mrs. Harrington and the fly. An adequate theory of narrative must posit as the "structure of narrative" theoretical constructs which, at the very least, contain the information of what the narrative is all about.

The durative/ descriptive structure of a narrative text contains all the narrative material other than the temporal events. In this story, the "why" of the narrative text, that the Lady and the Fly have a deep attachment for one another, is contained in this structure which gives the reader all the details of the usual activities of Mrs. Harrington and the fly, the appearance of the fly, events which took place over time, and explanatory or justifying information. For example:

Usual activities

- (16) Subsequently, she began to leave crumbs in a dish for the fly to eat. (17) The fly, by then, was following Mrs. Harrington from room to room,
 (18) when she sat down (19) it would light on her shoulder, or her hand, or her knee.

Descriptive Details

- (8) It was such a small fly

Events which took place over some duration of time

- (9) The days passed
 (28) Plastered against the window (29) was the fly
 (43) The attachment deepening

Explanatory or Justifying Information

- (6) I didn't bother killing it
 (37) where the temperature was warm

Without the evaluative structure, however, it would be almost impossible to pick out the crucial facts and events. Direct discourse, indirect discourse, change of tense from past to present, and repetition are the major evaluative devices in this text. It is important to notice that all of these devices operate contrastively in some sense. They may be contrastive in form (reported speech in a descriptive text; use of present tense in a text set in the past; use of first person singular in a largely third person text) or in content (explaining events which deviate from what one would expect either from the world of the text, or from the real world). (For the following discussion, refer to Chart B).

Direct discourse (and indirect discourse) can operate either deictically or contentially as an evaluator. Deictic evaluation functions by quoting material which points beyond itself to relevant information elsewhere in the text. (A) is a deictic use of direct discourse.

- A. (23) "So, if that's what you want, (24) that's what you want," (25) she said to the fly.

The material quoted points back to (22) the fly flew out as the information being evaluated. As with a pronoun, a hearer does not know what a deictic evaluator is talking about without making connections to what is

evaluated. (B) is a contential evaluator, in which the quoted material itself has "meaning" without referencing any other textual materials.

- B. (34) "So, I opened the window, (35) and it flew in (36) and went straight to the lamp on the desk, (37) where it was warm" (38) Mrs. Harrington says. (39) "It stayed there a while, (40) and then it flew over to me (41) and finally landed on my knee."

Sometimes the distinction between the two forms is very fuzzy. For example, (C) which is the only other instance of direct discourse in the text could be seen both as standing independently (contential) and as so crucially contextualized by preceding material that it should properly be seen as deictic.

- C. (6) "I didn't bother killing it." (7) Mrs. Harrington says. (8) "It was such a small fly."

(C) evaluates (5) a small fly flew out. By explaining why she did not do something which would be normally expected, the narrator establishes simultaneously the importance of (5) and the storyworthiness of the narrative (Labov, 1972a). (5) is seen as important because it is singled out for comment. A fly flying out of a bouquet of flowers is not normally an important enough event to tell a story about, nor are any of the other details which the audience has learned so far. Through the device of direct discourse emphasizing what she did not do, the narrator is assuring the audience that his story is an interesting one, worth telling and worth hearing about.

Like other evaluative devices, direct discourse may work either anaphorically or cataphorically in text. In (B) we have a complex use of direct discourse in which the material quoted is itself evaluated and yet the So which begins the quote deictically evaluates the importance of its referent situation (31) and it was (32) beseeching her which caused her to open the window and let the fly in.

There is a contrastive use of direct and indirect speech in this text. While direct discourse evaluates events from the temporal structure, indirect discourse evaluates emotional states and customary events from the descriptive/durative structure:

- D. (12) Mrs. Harrington says (13) she became attached to it (14) She does not explain the

attachment (15) she states it simply as a fact.

- E. (31) and it was (32) she insists (33) beseeching her
- F. (44) when friends visited (45) she told them
(46) to be careful not to swat a fly
- G. (47) although the friends looked at her a little oddly (48) she says (49) she does not care.

Due to space limitations, I will only analyze the first two instances of indirect discourse functioning. Since (E) is simpler than (D), I will begin with it. (E) operates both deictically and contentially. It provides cataphoric motivation for the actions described in (B) as was mentioned above as well as contains the contential information that the fly should be seen anthropomorphically since beseeching is normally marked human. Since person-like flies are not ordinary, then their activities are not ordinary and are thus reportable. The shift into the present tense further underlines the importance of the evaluated material. The narrator brings Mrs. Harrington directly to the audience. She insists to the audience in its own time-frame and from a vantage point beyond the text.

Similarly (D) is not part of the narrative, because the change in tense from past to present signaled by (12) Mrs. Harrington says shifts the statement from the time of the narrative to the present in which the narrative text is being read. The redundant use of indirect discourse to impress upon the audience the most reportable aspect of the text, namely that a lady and a fly have fallen in love, evaluates this section as the most crucial part of the text. (12-13) contentially evaluates the attachment: (12) she became attached to it. (14) she does not explain the attachment operates similarly to (6) "I didn't bother killing it" by detailing that she did not do what the narrator assumed his audience would imagine to be the normal thing to do in her situation, namely, explain why she became attached to the fly. Both (14) and (15) repeat the message of (13).

The repetition of a device is a powerful evaluative device in itself as is shown by the example above. The audience is insistently battered with the device (indirect discourse) and with the message of the device (there is an attachment between this lady and this fly). When indirect discourse is encountered later in the

text at (F) and (G), the distinctive nature of the attachment evaluated earlier by this device together with the intensity with which it was applied (a triple repetition) serve to lend weight to the device and therefore to the importance of what is evaluated later in the text.

Repetition of a particular word, phrase, or message impresses the audience with the importance of what is being repeated. In this text, in addition to the repetition of (D) there are two other times when material is repeated:

H. (20) the attachment, in fact, was deepening

I. (43) the attachment deepening

Significantly for this text, this attachment is the oddest aspect of the story because the world of the narrative deviates most in this aspect from the one in which the narrator believes his audience lives. The combination of the oddness of the attachment and the fact that it is impressed upon the audience more than any other fact leads the audience to see it as the point of the story.

Let us summarize this evaluation section (See Chart C). Only a few events from the temporal structure are evaluated. All the other temporal details are not evaluated and serve only to give temporal context to the text. The few crucial temporal events, in addition to being temporally contextualizing, are the key events in the text. These are the important changes of state.

- (5) a small fly flew out [of the flowers]
- (22) the fly flew out [of the window]
- (34) I opened the window
- (35) and the fly flew in

The narrative world is a very different place on either side of one of the temporal junctures separating these events, while it really makes no difference to the progress or meaning of the narrative if the other events encoded in the temporal structure are reversed in relation to one another.

Only one aspect of the durative/descriptive structure is evaluated--the attachment between Mrs. Harrington and the fly. Yet, as was argued above, this is the point of the text. It is the aspect of the text which is most storyworthy and most insistently evaluated.

A question arises about the generalizability of this approach to other texts and to texts produced in

other languages. Certainly, the relative importance of the specific evaluative devices varies from text to text, and the specific nature of the devices included in the battery of possibly evaluative devices differs from language to language and from culture to culture. But it is my claim that each well formed way of telling other people about things which have happened will include analogs of all three structures: temporal, durative/descriptive, and evaluative. The temporal structure may well not be temporal in nature, but built around some other text-building principle of the language (Becker, 1974; Morrison, 1976; Zubruchen, 1976). The descriptive/durative structure will be present contextualizing the text-building structure and the evaluative structure will be present contextualizing the entire narrative act. Evaluation should be seen as a pragmatic necessity related to the social nature of the narrative situation and not a constraint limited to a particular genre or language.

I have thought a great deal about the proper formalism for the presentation of these structures. Grammars on the transformational model seem to be all wrong.

Narrative → Temporal + Descriptive + Evaluative

seems inadequate to describe the complex social, interpersonal, and content constraints on narrative or to be able to include adequately the underlying semantic structure of what the narrator is telling the story about. A performative model as suggested by Longacre (forthcoming) is highly unsatisfactory. A high order predicate labeled NARRATE would need an entire lending library of felicity conditions and constraints hidden somewhere behind the scenes. I would suggest a formalism built on the concept of mutually contextualizing frames--each frame containing a structure governed by its own rules, and the three frames as a whole constituting a narrative frame operating within the communicative structure as one way of encoding and reporting information to other people. This idea is still in the preproto model stage and needs a great deal of thought and work before I can even tell if this would be a reasonable way to frame a discussion of narrative pragmatics.

THE LADY AND THE HOUSEFLY
by John Corry

(1) A woman named Luba Harrington (2) returned to her New York apartment from her summer home last fall, (3) bringing with her some flowers from a garden. (4) When she began to arrange the flowers in a bowl, (5) a small fly flew out. (6) "I didn't bother killing it," (7) Mrs. Harrington says. (8) "It was such a small fly."

(9) The days passed, (10) and Mrs. Harrington noticed the fly hovering here and there, (11) and in time, (12) she says, (13) she became attached to it. (14) She does not explain the attachment; (15) she states it simply as a fact. (16) Subsequently, she began to leave crumbs in a dish for the fly to eat. (17) The fly, by then, was following Mrs. Harrington from room to room, (18) and when she sat down (19) it would light on her shoulder, or her hand, or her knee. (20) The attachment, in fact, was deepening.

(21) Then one day Mrs. Harrington opened a window (22) and the fly flew out. (23) "So if that's what you want, (24) that's what you want," (25) she said to the fly (26) as it left, (27) and she shut the window. (28) About thirty minutes later, however, (29) Mrs. Harrington came back to the room. (30) Plastered against the outside of the window was the fly, (31) and it was, (32) she insists, (33) beseeching her. (34) "So I opened the window, (35) and it flew in (36) and went straight to the lamp on the desk, (37) where it was warm," (38) Mrs. Harrington says. (39) "It stayed there a while, (40) and then it flew over to me (41) and finally landed on my knee."

(42) And the fly continued to live in Mrs. Harrington's apartment, (43) the attachment deepening. (44) When friends visited, (45) she told them (46) to be careful not to swat a fly (47) and, although they looked at her a little oddly, (48) she says (49) she does not care.

(c) 1974

("The Lady and the Housefly" was originally printed in The New York Times and reprinted in The Reader's Digest [October, 1974], p. 182). It appears here with their permission.

CHART A
TEMPORAL STRUCTURE

- (2) Luba Harrington returned to her New York apartment
- (4) When she began to arrange the flowers in a bowl
- (5) a small fly flew out
- (10) Mrs. Harrington noticed the fly hovering here and there
- (21) One day Mrs. Harrington opened a window
- (22) and the fly flew out
- (25) she said to the fly
- (26) as it left
- (27) and she shut the window
- (29) Mrs. Harrington came back to the room
- (34) So I opened the window
- (35) and it flew in
- (36) went straight to the lamp on the desk
- (40) and then it flew over to me
- (41) and finally landed on my knee

(All of these clauses contain verbs in the simple past which are not of a durative or habitual nature. A change in order of any of these clauses relative to any of the others would change the original semantic interpretation of the text. Disturbing clauses encoding durative or habitual events do not necessarily disturb the temporal order of the narrative) (Labov, 1972a).

CHART B: EVALUATION STRUCTURE OF "THE LADY AND THE HOUSEFLY"

EVALUATING CLAUSE

TYPE OF DEVICE

EVALUATED MATERIAL

Number	Content	Number	Content
C (6-8)	(6) I didn't bother killing it {7} She says {8} It was such a small fly	Direct Discourse Direct Discourse Contential	(5) a small fly flew out
D (12-15)	(12) She says (13) she became attached to it	Indirect Discourse Contential	(13) the attachment
	(14) She does not explain the attachment	(Very) Indirect Discourse	(14) the attachment
	(15) She states it simply as a fact	Contential Repetition	(13) the attachment (13) the attachment
H (20)	(20) The attachment, in fact, was deepening	Repetition	(13) the attachment
A (23-25)	(23) So, if that's what you want, (24) that's what you want (25) she said to the fly	Direct Discourse Deictic	(22) the fly flew out

EVALUATING CLAUSE

Number	Content	TYPE OF DEVICE	EVALUATED MATERIAL
A	(24) that's what you want (26) As the fly flew out	Repetition	(23) the fly flew out
E	(31) and it was (32) she insists (33) beseeching her	Indirect Discourse Contential	(31) (33) it was beseeching her
B	(34) So I opened the window (35) and it flew in (36) and went straight to the lamp on the desk (37) where it was warm (38) Mrs. Harrington says (39) It stayed there a while (40) and then it flew over to me (41) and finally landed on my knee (34) So I opened the window	Direct Discourse Contential	(34-35) opening the window the fly flying in
	DIRECT DISCOURSE DEICTIC	(31-33)	Fly's beseeching her

EVALUATING CLAUSE

Number Content

TYPE OF DEVICE
Number Content

B (41)

(41) and finally landed on my knee

Repetition

(19)

fly would light on her knee

I (43)

(43) the attachment deepening

Repetition

(13)

the attachment

F (45-46)

{(45) she told them {46) to be careful not to swat a fly

Indirect Discourse
Contential(43)
(46)the attachment
didn't kill the fly

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G (47-49)

(47) Although the friends looked at her a little oddly

Indirect Discourse

(46)

don't kill the fly
(the attachment){(48) she says
(49) she does not care

Deictic

CHART C: EVALUATORS AND EVALUATED

<u>EVALUATED (E₁)</u>	<u>EVALUATOR (E₂)</u>	<u>STRUCTURE OF E₁/E₂</u>
(5) A small fly flew out	Direct Discourse	Temporal/ Evaluative
(13) the attach- ment	Indirect Discourse Contential	Descriptive/ Evaluative (12, 13, 14)
	Repetition: five times	Descriptive/ Descriptive (19-40)
(22) the fly flew out (of the window)	Direct Discourse	Temporal/Temporal
(33) the fly be- seeched her	Indirect Discourse Contential	Descriptive/ Evaluative
(34- opening the 41) window	Direct Discourse	Descriptive/ Evaluative
the fly flew in	Direct Discourse Contential	Temporal/ Evaluative
(41) the fly landed on her knee	Direct Discourse Repetition (of 18)	Temporal/ Evaluative
(46) don't kill the fly	Indirect Discourse	Descriptive/ Temporal

NOTE

¹To clarify this constraint on narrative chronology, let us consider the following three sets of clauses:

- (1) I ate dinner, went over to John's house, then saw a movie.
- (2) I went over to John's house, ate dinner, then saw a movie.
- (3) I saw a movie, ate dinner, then went over to John's house.

Clearly, they are not telling the same story. Switching the clauses around alters our understanding of what went on. Narrative is only one kind of linguistic encoding of experience in which the order of recital of events in the discourse mirrors the conventional conceptualization of a structure in the real world. Other discourse types so constrained include giving directions (Hobbs, 1975), describing one's apartment (Linde, 1974a, b, c), or conversing about a physical task being performed (Deutsch, 1974, 1975; Langacker, forthcoming). This definition of "narrative" does not necessarily apply to non-Indo-European languages. But in all ages and cultures people tell each other "what happened" and tell stories with fixed formal structures.

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