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Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experience

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Most attempts to analyze narrative have taken as their subject matter the complex products of long-standing literary or oral traditions. Myths, folk legends, histories, epics, toasts, and sagas seem to be the results of the combination and evolution of simpler elements; they contain many cycles and recycles of narrative structures; in many cases, the evolution of a particular narrative removed it so far from its originating function that it is difficult to say what its present function is.

In our opinion, it will not be possible to make very much progress in the analysis and understanding of these complex narratives until the simplest and most fundamental narrative structures are analyzed in direct connection with their original functions. We suggest that such fundamental structures are to be found in versions of personal experiences: not the products of expert storytellers that have been retold many times, but the original production of a representative sample of the population. By examining the actual narratives of large numbers of unsophisticated speakers, it will be possible to relate the formal properties of narrative to their functions. By studying the development of narrative technique from children to adults, and the range of narrative techniques from lower-class to middle-class speakers, it will be possible to isolate the elements of narrative.

In this article, we will present an analytical framework for the analysis of versions of personal experience in English. We will first introduce definitions of...
nits of narrative and then outline the normal structure of the narrative as a
Finally, we present some general propositions about the relation of formal
ities to narrative functions, based on our examination of a moderate body of
analysis will be formal, based upon recurrent patterns characteristic of
ve from the clause level to the complete simple narrative. We will rely upon
ic techniques of linguistic analysis, isolating the invariant structural units,
are represented by a variety of superficial forms. From this analysis it is
e to derive a considerable amount of information on the syntax and semantics
below the sentence level, but this direction of research will not be
ed here. We will be concerned primarily with the characteristics of narrative
analysis is functional: Narrative will be considered as one verbal technique
putating experience—in particular, a technique of constructing narrative
match the temporal sequence of that experience. Furthermore, we find
arrative that serves this function alone is abnormal: it may be considered
less important, determined by a stimulus in the social context in which the
occurs. We therefore distinguish two functions of narrative: (a) referential
ost previous studies of folk narrative, the basic unit for analysis has been a
ial piece of thematic material, defined at various levels of abstraction by
of action referred to. Thus the work of Propp (1958) was devoted to the
structure of such large semantic units. The present study assumes as a basic
analysis of narratives that might appear as fundamental, unanalyzable units
p’s scheme. We will be concerned with the smallest unit of linguistic
ion that defines the functions of narrative—primarily the clause, although
refer to cases where phrases and words are relevant to evaluative function.
work (1966) took as data the frequencies of individual words according to
tic subcategorization; a linguistic approach is quite opposite in direction,
upon the syntagmatic structure of words and phrases operating in clauses
her levels of organization. Schatzman and Strauss (1955) studied class
es in narrative technique by informal means; it is hoped that the methods
ed in the present discussion will permit a more reliable and objective
h to studies of this type.
will be dealing with tape-recorded narratives taken from two distinct social
related to the narrator’s primary group. In the second
, the narrator is recorded in interaction with his primary group; he is
part to the members of his group, and in part to an outsider on the
of the group, who provides only a part of the stimulus for the narrative.

The following pages provide 14 examples of the data on hand, drawn from about
600 interviews gathered in the course of four linguistic studies.\(^1\) The narrators
include speakers from Black and White communities, rural and urban areas, and
they range in age from 10 to 72 years old. In one respect the range is limited: There
are no highly educated speakers represented here; in fact, none of the narrators
finished high school.

The ultimate aims of our work require close correlations of the narrator’s social
characteristics with the structure of their narratives, since we are concerned with
problems of effective communication and class and ethnic differences in verbal
behavior.\(^2\) In this article, however, we are concerned with the narratives themselves,
and so these fourteen examples appear as anonymous narrations, arranged in
descending order of the speakers’ ages.

**Narrative 1**
(Were you ever in a situation where you thought you were in serious danger
of getting killed?) I talked a man out of—Old Doc Simon I talked him out of
pulling the trigger. (What happened?)

Well, in the business I was associated at that time, the Doc was an old man
... He had killed one man, or—had done time. But he had a—young wife,
and those days I dressed well. And seemingly she was trying to make me.

I never noticed it. Fact is, I didn’t like her very well, because she had—she
was a nice looking girl until you saw her feet. She had big feet. Jesus, God,
she had big feet!

Then she left a note one day she was going to commit suicide because he
was always raising hell about me. He came to my hotel. Nice big blue 44,
too.

I talked him out of it; and says, “Well, we’ll go look for her, and if we
can’t find her, well you can—go ahead, pull the trigger if you want to.” I was
maneuvering.

So he took me up on it. And we went to where they found her handker-
chief—the edge of a creek—and we followed down a little more, and we

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\(^1\)The materials include: 70 interviews with speakers from various occupations, ethnic membership,
and ages on Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts; 230 interviews with speakers representing a stratified
random sample of the Lower East Side of New York City; 250 interviews of children and adults from
our current research in Central Harlem; and 50 interviews from exploratory work in Cleveland, Boston,
Philadelphia, Chicago, Phoenix, and Beaufort County, South Carolina. The basic interview techniques
are described in Labov (1964, 1966) and Labov, Cohen, and Robins (n.d.).

\(^2\)In our current research in Central Harlem, we are concerned with the functional conflicts between
standard English and the nonstandard English of Black and Puerto Rican children. Many of these
children show great verbal ability in many areas, including the construction of narratives, but cannot
read at all. One purpose of this work on narrative analysis is to show how children use language to carry
out the functions that are important in their system of values.
couldn’t find anything. And got back—it was a tent show—she was laying on a cot with an ice bag on her head. She hadn’t committed suicide.

But—however—that settled it for the day. But that night the manager, Floyd Adams, said, "You better pack up and get out because that son of a bitch never forgives anything once he gets it in his head."

And I did. I packed up and got out. That was two.

That was two.

After I came out from New York ...

Narrative 2

I had dogs that could do everything but talk. And by gory, sir, I never licked ‘em.

(When you have small kids, they’re always asking for one more thing, like a drink of water, to keep from going to bed at night. I wonder if you had that problem, and what you did about it?) Yeah, but—a lot of the children I’ve seen, that their excuse they’ve got to go to the bathroom, and they don’t have to go at all. (How do you cope with it. You can’t—you never know ...) No. I don’t remember how we coped with it. I never believed a whole lot in licking. I was never—with my children, and I never—when it was with my animals, dogs; I never licked a dog. I never had to. A dog knew what I meant; when I hollered at a dog, he knew the—what I meant. I could—I had dogs that could do everything but talk. And by gory, sir, I never licked ‘em.

I never come nearer bootin’ a dog in my life. I had a dog—he was a wonderful retriever, but as I say he could do everything but talk. I could waf him that way, I could wai him on, I could wai him anywhere. If I shot a crippled duck he went out after it; he didn’t see it in the water, he’d always turn around look at me, and I’d wail him over there, if the duck was there, or if it was on the other side of where we’re on, I could wail him straight ahead, and he’d turn and he’d go. If he didn’t see me, he’d turn around, he’d look at me, and I’d keep a-waifin’ him on. And he’d finally catch sight of him, and the minute he did, you know, he would bee-line and get that duck.

I was gunnin’ one night with that dog—we had to use live decoys in those days—a fellow named Jack Bumpus was with me; I was over at a place called Deep Bottom, darker than pitch. And—uh—heard a quackin’ off shore. And, I said to Jack, "Keep quiet. There’s one comin’ in." And—uh—finally Jack said to me, "I think I see ‘im." I said, "Give ‘im a gun. Give ‘im a gun. Try it."

So he shot, and this duck went for the shore with his wings a-going like that for the shore. Went up on the shore. Well this dog never lost a crippled duck on shore, he’d take a track just the same as a hound would take a rabbit track. And I sent him over. I said, "Go ahead."

So he went over there. And—gone a while and come back and he didn’t have the duck. And that was unusual—I said, "You git back there and get that duck!" And he went back there; and he stayed a little while longer, longer than he did the first time, and he come back and he didn’t have that duck.

And I never come nearer shootin’ a dog. By gory, I come pretty nee: "You git back there and get that duck!" And that dog went back there, a he didn’t come back. And he didn’t come back. By gory, we went over there—I walked over there, and there he was; one of my tame ducks that I h—tethered out there had got the strap off her leg, and had gone out there, and when this fellow shot, he didn’t hit the duck. The duck came to the shore, hadn’t hit the duck; but the duck was scared and come for the shore. My dog was over there, and he had his paw right on top of that duck, holdin’ him down just as tight as could be, and—by gory, boy, I patted that dog, I’ll tell you if I ever walloped that dog I’d have felt some bad. He knew more ‘n I did; the dog knew more than I did. He knew that was that tame duck; I wasn’t gonna pick him up in his mouth and bring him, you know. He was just holdin’ him right down on the ground.

Narrative 3

(Were you ever in a situation where you were in serious danger of being killed?) My brother put a knife in my head. (How’d that happen?) Like kid, you get into a fight and I twisted his arm up behind him.

This was just a few days after my father had died, and we were sittin’ shive. And the reason the fight started ... He sort of ran out of the yard—th was out on Coney Island—and he started talk about it. And my mother just sat down to have a cup of coffee. And I told him to cut it out.

Course kids, you know—he don’t hafta listen to me. So that’s when grabbed him by the arm, and twisted it up behind him. When I let go his arm there was a knife on the table, he just picked it up and he let me have it. An’ I started bleed like a pig.

And, naturally, first thing was—run to the doctor. And the doctor just say "Just about this much more," he says, "and you’d been dead."

Narrative 4

... They didn’t believe in calling the law or anything like that. They just told things in their own hands. (Did you ever see any shooting of that sort?) O yes. I can remember real well. I w’s just a girl. ‘Fact, stayed with me quite while.

Well, there’s a fellow, his name was Martin Cassidy ‘n’ Bill Hatfield. Cassidy’s mother gave him some money an’ tell him to go get a bushel of peaches. An’ he went down to Martin’s house. An’ Martin had some moonshine there.

Back down there, they make their own liquor, you know. So—we call moonshine. Today, they call it white lightnin’; but at that time we call moonshine.
And she was the baddest girl—*the baddest girl in the neighborhood*. If you didn’t bring her candy—to school, she’d punch you in the mouth. And you had to kiss her when she [‘d] tell you. This girl was only about twelve years old, man, but she was a killer. She didn’t take no junk. She whupped all her brothers.

And I came to school one day, and I didn’t have no money; my ma wouldn’t give me no money. And I played hookies one day. First time I played hookies, man, put sump’n on me, so I said, you know, I’m not gonna play hookies no more, ‘cause I don’t want to get a whuppin’.

So I go to school, and this girl says, “Where’s the candy?” I said, “I don’t have it.” She says, powwww!! So I says to myself, “Well, there’s gonna be times my mother won’t give me money because a poor family, and I can’t take this—all—and, you know—every time she don’t give me any money. So I say, well, I just gotta fight the girl. She gonna hafta whup me. I hope she [don’t] whup me.”

And I hit the girl: powwww!!

Narrative 8

(Were you ever in a situation where you were in serious danger of being killed?) I’m gonna die? When I was drownin’, I didn’t know—like, I was turnin’ tumblesauts. But that was the only time.

I—I was in a fight downtown once. Like—I went down to a party, and—this—this guy was a soldier—and this guy was a soldier, and he comes on, “gimme a cigarette.”

I said, “I don’t have any cigarette”

“Well, lemme search you.”

I said, “You’re not gonna search me.”

“Well—I’m a soldier, and I know judo.”

I said, “Well, I don’t—I don’t care if you’re a cop and you know karate, you’re not gonna search me.”

And he hit me, man, like I hit him. And like, I—I got next to the guy. He didn’t get a chance to use nothing, and I put sump’m on him.

I had—had a couple of guys with me. So we walked around the corner,—after, you know, I knocked him down a couple of times. I said “Well, you know, we’ll soon get it.”

I walk around the corner about twenty guys come after us, down by the projects. And we’re runnin’—and, like—I couldn’t run as fast as the other guys. And they was catchin’ up to me. And I crossed the street, and I tripped, man. And, like, when I tripped, they kicked me and they was on me and I said, “Like this is it, man”; I pulled a knife.

But—a guy I know from the projects came over and gave me a hand.

And that—that was it, you know. That was it.
Then I fought him. I knocked him all in the street. So he say he give. And I kept on hitting him. Then he start crying and run home to his father. And his father told him, he ain’t find no glove.

Narrative 13

... See, Napoleon he took the ring and put it on the maiden. It was a statue of the maiden. Then he put it on her finger where the ring’s supposed to be, and then he put it on the 45° angle. And then he looked in, and then he saw the place where the project was made at. And everything wk—the doctor who made it was dead.

So he came. He took him and the boy—the boy asked could he see it, and when the boy started to see it, he had this thing on—this patch or something—on his back. The Japanese leader could trace him by that patch because, you know, by radar.

And then—he started—so he took the patch off the boy and put it on the dog. And he took a stick and threw it in the water and the dog ran after it. And the radar—it went in the water with the dog.

And then—Napoleon and the dog started running—I mean, Napoleon and the boy started running, and they started running to the place where the project was made. And they started running to the place. And then, when they got there, they found that all of it was dried up and everything.

So when they started to leave out, he had a Japanese man first tell him to surrender. And before he told him to surrender, the dog—the dog came in there. The dog had found them. And the Japanese man came and told ’em to surrender.

See, they was inside the cave and the Japanese man was outside. And he told them to surrender. And he didn’t surrender. He first—he told them that he made a trap. Then he said, “You can come in and make sure the project is all washed up,” ‘cause it was no more there. And they came.

When he sent one of his men to India...

Narrative 14

(Did Calvin do something that was really wild?) Yeah. We made Calvin hit—I say, “Calv—”

See, we—it was on a Sunday, and we didn’t have nothin’ to do after I—after we came from church. Then we ain’t had nothin’ to do.

So I say, “Calvin, let’s go get out—put our dirty clothes on so we can play in the dirt.”

And so Calvin say, “Let’s have a rock—a rock war.” And I say, “All right.” So Calvin had a rock and we, you know—here go a wall and a faraway go a wall. Calvin threw a rock. I was lookin’ and—uh—and Calvin threw a rock. It oh—it almost hit me.

So I looked down to get another rock.
Say “Sssh!” an’ it pass me.
I say, “Calvin, I’m bust your head for that.”
Calvin stuck his head out. I th’ew the rock, and the rock went up, I mean went up, came down, and say [slap], and smacked him in the head and his ear busted.

These fourteen examples cover a wide variety of types, from extremely short to very long, from highly organized structures to simple serial types. In addition to narrative themselves, enough preliminary quotation is given so that one can get some idea of the stimulus to which the narratives respond—a matter quite ant to the functional analysis of narrative.

The difficult questions arise as we examine these narratives:
Though each is presented as a single narrative, how in fact do we know whether one or more narratives are contained in a given example? Is narrative well enough defined that we can answer this question? For instance, is Narrative 5 a narrative or a fragment of a narrative? Is Narrative 13 a fragment of a narrative, or three separate narratives?

The structural framework of the narrative cannot be studied profitably by saying something about the sequence of events to which it refers. The mental question of narrative analysis appears to be this: How can we relate the sequence of clauses in the narrative to the sequence of events inferred from the narrative?

I will attempt to answer these questions in the following discussion.

THE BASIC FRAMEWORK OF NARRATIVE

Oral Sequence

We defined narrative informally as one method of recapturing past experience, matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that actually occurred. For example, in Narrative 5 we have four independent clauses that refer to successive events or situations:

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

The temporal sequence of narrative is an important defining property that emerges from its referential function. Narrative is not the only method for referring to a sequence of events; all recaptulation of experience is not narrative. For example, the events of Narrative 5 might have been presented in the following way:

(5′)

c A friend of mine came in

d just in time to stop

a this person who had a little too much to drink

b from attacking me.

This form of presenting events depends on syntactic embedding. However, not all alternatives to narrative require this type of subordination. The following series of four independent clauses presents the same material in reverse order:

(5″)

d A friend of mine stopped the attack.

c She had just come in.

b This person was attacking me.

a He had had a little too much to drink.

Despite the fact that these two formulations are perfectly logical, orderly, and acceptable ways of representing a sequence of events, they are not narratives as we are about to define the concept. The basic narrative units that we wish to isolate are defined by the fact that they recaptulate experience in the same order as the original events.

However, inspection of the other examples shows that the relationships between clauses and events are not simple. For instance, in Narrative 3:

(3)

• d and we were sitting shive.

• e And the reason the fight started …

• f He sort of ran out in the yard—

• g this was out on Coney Island—

• h and he started talk about it;

• i and my mother had just sat down to have a cup of coffee

• j and I told him to cut it out.

The sequence of clauses d through j does not match the sequence of events and situations inferred from the narrative. The situation described in g (“This was out on Coney Island”) certainly did not follow f (“He sort of ran out of the yard”); the event of i (“and my mother had just sat down to have a cup of coffee”) did not follow h (“and he started talk about it”)—rather, it preceded it; the referent of clause e is not temporally ordered with relation to any of the events (“and the reason the fight started”). The clauses that do refer to events clearly in the sequence are:
f He sort of ran out in the yard
h and he started talk about it
j and I told him to cut it out.

So far, we have discussed clauses in general as narrative units. But it can quickly be seen that only independent clauses are relevant to temporal sequence. Subordinate clauses (like the embedded clauses seen in formulation 5') may be placed there in the narrative sequence without disturbing the temporal order of the semantic interpretation, as in the next example taken from Narrative 1:

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

The clause 1 ("she was going to commit suicide") is the familiar construction in which we refer to the fact that a person in the past referred event that would occur sometime in the future. Clause m, on the other hand, to events prior to clause k. One can quote any number of examples to show that subordinate clause is removed from the temporal sequence of narrative, if it retains its own temporal reference.

These considerations illustrate the motivation for the definitions of the narrative to be developed later in this article. These elements will be characterized by "real sequence": Their order cannot be changed without changing the inferred order of events in the original semantic interpretation.

Displacement Sets

The following operations provide a formal basis for establishing temporal range among the independent clauses of a narrative. Each clause is assigned a real symbol (using lowercase letters), as in the next example from Narrative 0:

\[ (\text{w}_2) \]

and they were catchin' up to me
and I crossed the street
and I tripped, man.

Clause is then tested for the potential range of displacement by examining the semantic interpretation that results when the clause in question is moved to all possible positions in the remaining sequence. For example, we find that \( x \) can be placed before \( w \) without changing the original semantic interpretation, since we can infer that the process of catching up extended throughout the sequence:

\[ (\text{x}') \]

\[ \begin{align*} x & \text{ and I crossed the street} \\
       w & \text{ and they were catchin' up to me} \\
       y & \text{ and I tripped, man.} \\
\end{align*} \]

But \( x \) cannot be placed after \( y \) without changing the original interpretation, as in:

\[ (\text{x}^\prime \prime) \]

\[ \begin{align*} w & \text{ and they were catchin' up to me} \\
       y & \text{ and I tripped, man} \\
       x & \text{ and I crossed the street.} \\
\end{align*} \]

The result of these operations is indicated in the following system of subscripts. For the clause \( c \), the symbol \( c_0 \) indicates that \( c \) can be placed before any and all of the preceding \( a \) clauses and after any of the following \( p \) clauses without changing the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation.

The set consisting of the clauses before which \( c \) can be placed, \( c \) itself, and the clauses after which \( c \) can be placed, is the displacement set of \( c \), symbolized \( DS(c) \).

Thus, for the partial sequence of \( w, x, \) and \( y \) discussed previously, we have:

\[ (\text{x}^\prime \prime \prime) \]

\[ \begin{align*} 0 & w_2 \text{ and they were catchin' up to me} \\
      1 & x_0 \text{ and I crossed the street} \\
      0 & y_0 \text{ and I tripped, man.} \\
\end{align*} \]

\[ DS(w) = \{ w, x, y \} \]
\[ DS(x) = \{ w, x \} \]
\[ DS(y) = \{ y \} \]

Narrative Clauses and Free Clauses

Two extreme types of displacement ranges that result from this operation are:

\[ x_0 \text{ and } x_{c_0} \]

in which \( n \) is the total number of clauses in a sequence. The \( x_0 \) clause, with a displacement set of \( \{ c \} \), is locked in position in the sequence; it evidently functions as a narrative clause of the simplest kind, maintaining the strict temporal sequence that is the defining characteristic of narrative. The \( x_{c_0} \) clause, on the other hand, has a displacement set equal to the entire narrative and can range freely through the narrative sequence. This type may be termed a free clause.
Coordinate Clauses

Though the free clause has no fixed relation to the temporal sequence, and the narrative clause is strictly ordered by temporal sequence, there are other clauses that have more complex relations to narrative sequence. We might find sequences of the type $a_1^c$, $d_0$, as in this extract from Narrative 14:

- [the rock] came down
- and smacked him in the head
- and say (slap!)

Est and u might just as well been reversed:

- [the rock] came down
- and say (slap!)
- and smacked him on the head

and u have identical displacement sets, $DS(t) = \{t, u\}$, $DS(u) = \{t, u\}$, and ay be freely interchanged without any change in temporal sequence. Clauses of identical displacement sets may be termed coordinate clauses. (All free clauses ordinate in this sense, since they all have the same displacement sets, but the coordinate nature of certain narrative clauses that is our primary concern.) See, of course, have three or more coordinate clauses in a single sequence, e following extract from Narrative 1:

He came to my hotel. Nice big blue 44 too.
I talked him out of it,
and says, "Well, we'll go look for her,
and if we can't find her, well you can—go ahead, pull the trigger if you want to."
I was maneuvering.
So he took me up on it.

Restricted Clauses

The narrative clauses that we have considered are of two general forms, $a_0$ and $a_1$ . $d_0$, and appear to have one feature in common. Their displacement sets range from a left zero subscript to a right zero subscript, with no zeros in between. We also find in narratives a third type of clause that does not range freely over the entire narrative, yet has a wider range than the narrative clause. This type of clause has a displacement set that may range across several left or right zero subscripts. Such clauses, which are neither free nor temporally ordered in the strict sense, may be termed restricted clauses.

It may be now helpful to consider a narrative as a whole to illustrate the nature of free clauses, coordinate clauses, and restricted clauses and to show how the displacement sets of such clauses are determined. Narrative 6 may be analyzed as follows:

- (6)
  - $a_1^8$: yeh I was in the boy scouts at the time
  - $b_1^7$: and we was doing the 50-yard dash
  - $c_1^6$: racing
  - D.S. $a_1^8$:
    - [a–s]
  - $d_1^1$: but we was at the pier, marked off
  - $e_1^4$: and so we was doing the 50-yard dash
  - $f_1^3$: there was about eight or ten of us, you know, going down, coming back
  - D.S. $a_1^8$:
    - [h]
  - $g_0^0$: and, going down the third time, I caught cramps
  - $h_0^0$: and I started yelling "Help!"
  - $i_0^1$: but the fellows didn't believe me, you know,
  - $j_0^0$: they thought I was just trying to catch up
  - $k_0^1$: because I was going on or slowing down
  - D.S. $a_1^8$:
    - [i–j]
  - $l_0^0$: so all of them kept going
  - $m_0^0$: they leave me
  - $n_0^0$: and so I started going down
  - D.S. $a_1^8$:
    - [m–p]
  - $o_{11}^5$: Scoutmaster was up there
  - $p_0^3$: he was watching me
  - $q_0^2$: but he didn't pay me no attention either
  - $r_0^0$: and for no reason at all there was another
guy, who had just walked up that minute...
  - D.S. $a_1^8$:
    - [q]
  - $s_0^0$: he just jumped over
  - $t_0^0$: and grabbed me
  - D.S. $a_1^8$:
    - [s]
narrative 6 begins with six free clauses, all of which can range over the entire narrative; for each of these, the sum of the subscripts is 18. The third clause, racing, in apposition with doing in the second clause, and is treated as derived from we's racing. It must be analyzed separately, because it is possible that such an abstracted clause could be temporally ordered in respect to other clauses. The situation described in these six clauses prevails throughout the entire narrative: it is, the or 9 of us continue racing even when the narrator himself is in trouble. The first narrative clause is g, with a displacement set of {a, b, c, d, e, f, g}, gging from the left zero of a to its own right zero. Clauses i and j are coordinate uses of the type just discussed, and so are k and l. Clause m is a narrative clause with a displacement set ranging over the three preceding clauses. These following clauses are not in strict narrative sequence; first one, n, is a free clause (“Scoutmaster was up there”). It should be realized that the test for displacement range must include a procedure for discounting anaphoric reference. “Scoutmaster was up there” would be a strange phrase in initial position, but if we supply the referent of “there—at the pier,” have “Scoutmaster was up at the pier,” which could stand in initial position out changing the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation. The reverse situation would apply if a specific free clause in initial position, with no proper names, was displaced to a point later in the narrative: pronoun titution would be made.

The second clause, o (“He was watching me”) is a restricted clause, with DS(o) extending before n. It could have been placed at any point after h (“I started saying ‘Help!’”); that is, after the action that called the scoutmaster’s attention to arrator and logically motivated his action. It is worth following the logic of argument in detail, because it is typical of the method for establishing the aement sets of restricted clauses.

Hile it is true that the scoutmaster’s job was to watch everyone, we interpret it as the meaning of o (“He was watching me”) to mean that there was a significant change of point, from watching everyone to watching the narrator in particular. This retention hinges on the word “either” — this word coordinates the negation of didn’t say me no attention” with some previous negative statement; the first ling negative clause is i (“the fellows didn’t believe me.”). Therefore, we can

 concluded that both of these statements refer to events that responded to clause h (“and I started yelling ‘Help!’”). Therefore, the displacement sets of o and p cannot include h without a change in the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation.

On the other hand, clause o could range towards the end, at any point up to clause s. If clause o appeared after s, then the same temporal inference that we now draw—that the scoutmaster began watching after the cry for help—would be altered. It would be the grabbing of the narrator by the “other guy” that would mark the beginning of the scoutmaster’s watching.

The same argument holds for clause p, which is a restricted clause with the same range as o.

The rest of the narrative consists of simple 0, a narrative units. Clause q (“for no reason at all there was another guy”) has the temporal status of a punctual act, apearance: the viewpoint is clearly that of the narrator.

Figure 1 is a graphic display of these statements about the displacement sets of the clauses concerned. Each clause is represented by a mark opposite the alphabetic symbol, and the vertical line running through this mark represents the displacement

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<th>Clause</th>
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FIGURE 1 Displacement ranges of the clauses of Narrative 6.
set. We will return to this diagram later in discussing the normal structure of narrative as a whole.

Temporal Juncture

If narrative clauses succeed each other in uninterrupted sequence, the zero subscript alone would show the temporal segmentation of the narrative. But because any number of free or restricted units can intervene between two narrative clauses, we must define temporal relations between any two clauses in the narrative, not necessarily contiguous. We wish to define formally the condition under which any two clauses are ordered with respect to each other and cannot be interchanged without change in the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation. Such a condition is met when the displacement range of a given clause does not extend past the actual location of some following clause, and conversely, the displacement range of this following clause does not extend past the actual location of the given preceding clause. More concisely, their displacement sets do not include each other. Two such clauses are temporally ordered with respect to each other. Their displacement sets may in fact overlap, but the displacement set of c will not include d, and that of d will not include c if c and d are temporally ordered.

Two clauses that are temporally ordered with respect to each other are said to be separated by temporal juncture. This juncture has no relation to any free or restricted clauses that may fall in between the temporally ordered clauses. In narrative 6, given in full previously, we find temporal junctures between g and h, and i, j and k, l and m, n and q, r and s. Since i and j, k and l are coordinate, we can best represent these junctures by the following diagram:

\[ c^1, c^2, \ldots, c^i, \ldots, c^n \]

in which \( 0 \leq i \leq n \). Then

1. \( c^i \in DS(c^j) \) if \( c^i \ldots c^j \) and \( c^i \ldots c^j \) yield the same temporal sequence in semantic interpretation [or if \( c^i = c^j \)]

2. If \( c^i \in DS(c^j) \) and \( c^j \in DS(c^k) \)
   a. and \( DS(c^i) = N \), then \( c^i \) is a free clause.
   b. and \( DS(c^i) < N \), then \( c^i \) is a restricted clause.

We can restate these definitions formally in the following manner. A narrative \( N \) may be represented as a set of \( n \) clauses

\[ c^1, c^2, \ldots, c^i, \ldots, c^n \]

Definition of a Narrative

We can now define quite simply those sequences of clauses that we will consider as narratives. Any sequence of clauses that contains at least one temporal juncture is a narrative. Thus

(10)

\[ \theta_2 \]

I know a boy name Harry.

\[ \theta_0 \]

Another boy threw a bottle at him right in the head,

\[ \theta_0 \]

and he had to get seven stitches.

is a narrative, because a temporal juncture is found between b and c. A statement such as “I shot and killed him” would be a narrative, because it contains a temporal juncture, but not “I laughed and laughed at him.” There are many ambiguous cases that allow two distinct interpretations: “I punched him in the head, the mouth and the chest” is normally a list, which does not imply that he was punched first in the head, then in the mouth, and then in the chest. But the temporal interpretation is possible, and it is more likely in “I beat him up and stomped on him.”
The upper bound of narrative is not set by this approach, and the question of ciding between one narrative or two must be left to the section that deals with overall structure of narrative.

**Narrative Heads**

e finite verb of a narrative clause, which carries the tense marker of the clause, the *narrative head* of that clause. Heads of coordinate clauses are coordinate ads.

(2)

\[
\begin{align*}
(2) & \quad \text{And—gone a while} \\
& \quad \text{and come back} \\
& \quad \text{and he didn't have the duck.} \\
& \quad \text{And that was unusual—} \\
& \quad \text{I said, "You get back there} \\
& \quad \text{and get that duck."} \\
& \quad \text{And he went back there;}
\end{align*}
\]

The narrative heads are *gone, come, did*, *was, said, said*, and *went*. The types grammatical forms and categories that can function as grammatical heads are eminently limited. The principle forms are simple past and simple present. As a rule, nodals appear; abstractly considered, it is possible that *could* could function as narrative head, though no examples have been found in our materials to date. The progressive (past and possibly present) does appear occasionally as a narrative unit:

(1)

\[
\begin{align*}
(1) & \quad \text{and got back} \\
& \quad \text{it was a tent show} \\
& \quad \text{she was laying on a cot with an ice bag on her head.} \\
& \quad \text{She hadn't committed suicide.} \\
& \quad \text{But—however—that settled it for the day.}
\end{align*}
\]

is example, "was laying" is in temporal order; it can be displayed before the unit *v* and after the restricted unit *x*, but not before *u* or after *y* without changing temporal sequence of the semantic interpretation. There is considerable semantic interest in the questions raised by this use of the past progressive, and many other such issues are raised by the data of narrative analysis; however, this article is confined to the description of the basic units and framework of narrative, and such questions are not pursued here.

In general, the present perfect does not appear in narrative. The past perfect, as noted before, does not function as a narrative head. However, if the clause with the past perfect refers to an event developed in the narrative, rather than to some event preceding the entire narrative, as is the case in Clause *x* in Narrative 1. Although *x* would have been true in initial position, it would not have referred to the particular suicide threatened in Clause *k*. In its present position, *x* asserts that the threat of *k* was not consummated at some time prior to the moment in which *x* is stated—necessarily before the next preceding narrative unit. Therefore, *x* can be placed before the disclosure of *w*, at any point after *k*. It can also occur at any point after the disclosure *w* with no change in temporal sequence.

A series of past perfect narrative heads can be used to describe a set of events in temporal sequence, placing the entire set at some point prior to the preceding narrative unit.

(2)

\[
\begin{align*}
(2) & \quad \text{I walked over there} \\
& \quad \text{And here he was;} \\
& \quad \text{one of my tame ducks that I had tethered out there had got the strap off her leg.} \\
& \quad \text{and had gone out there,} \\
& \quad \text{and when this fellow shot he hadn't hit the duck.}
\end{align*}
\]

It is true that the three clauses *pp, qq, and rr* are here in temporal sequence. But no permutation of their order will produce a different temporal sequence in semantic interpretation:

\[
\begin{align*}
(2) & \quad \text{And here he was} \\
& \quad \text{and when this fellow shot he hadn't hit the duck} \\
& \quad \text{one of my tame ducks that I had tethered out there}
\end{align*}
\]

"extended." The meaning of "simultaneous" can be supported by arguing that these clauses are equivalent to "When we got back, she was laying...." In other cases, Diver pointed out, the use of the past progressive may force a metaphorical interpretation "the action was so swift that it was as if it was simultaneous with the preceding," as in "I was on the masthead; the ship gave a lurch; I was falling through the air; I hit the water." These and other interpretations can be subjected to an increasing number of empirical tests through the analysis of narratives such as the ones given here.

Diver (1963) showed this form in his narrative axis with the meaning of "present, before," and gives a constructed example: "All day the sun has warmed the Spanish steps...." One can find such examples in literary works that use historical present sequences freely, perhaps, but they have not occurred in the material we have examined to date.
had gone out there

She had got the strap off her leg.

s indicated by the subscripts, pp and qq are free clauses, and rr is restricted—it cannot precede the shot itself, but can follow at any later point.

slated Narrative Sequences

e definitions we have given for narrative units are deliberately applied to the ear sequence presented by the narrator. This linear sequence may be considered a surface structure of the narrative; there are often many narratives with rather different surface structures, but with equivalent semantic interpretations. In the way, there are many sentences with different surface structures that correspond to the same underlying string of formatives in the original phrase structure a grammar:

a The rock say "shhh!"
b "shhh!" is what the rock say
c What the rock say is "shhh!"
d It’s a fact that the rock say "shhh!"
e The rock’s saying "shhh!"

In previous discussions, we showed that for each series of events described in a narrative, there are other equivalent means of verbal statement besides narrative, re are also equivalent narratives with the same semantic (temporal) interpretation. It is useful to relate all of these to a single underlying form, just as sentences rough c are related to the simplest form, a. To do this, we must consider the laments semantic relation in narrative.

The semantic interpretation of a narrative, as we have defined it, depends on the situation that the events described did, in fact, occur in the same order as they told in. Thus the sequence

\[ a_0 \quad \text{he attacked me} \]
\[ b_0 \quad \text{the friend came in} \]

are the usual adjustments in anaphoric reference have been made. It my be noted that this series of perfect clauses is one answer to a difficult problem produced by a narrative of this type. The would lose its surprising effect if these clauses were placed in narrative sequence with regular verbs. By placing the three clauses well out of temporal sequence, it is more difficult for the on. Again, we find that even partial success signals the fact that the narrator of Narrative 2 is a story teller and has probably told this story many times. We do not take narratives of this type

with temporal juncture between a and b, is equivalent in its semantic interpretation to

\[ a_0 \quad \text{he attacked me} \]
\[ b_0 \quad \text{then} \]
\[ c_0 \quad \text{the friend came in} \]

That is, the temporal juncture is semantically equivalent to the temporal conjunction then.

Of course, the a-then-b relation is not the only one at work in narrative. If it were, we would have only a succession of narrative clauses. One also finds implied relations between clauses such as a-and-at the same time-b, or a-and-now that I think back on it-b. But among these temporal relations, the a-then-b is in some sense the most essential characteristic of narrative. Some narratives (see Narrative 5) may use it exclusively, and every narrative must, by definition, use it at least once.

Though some of these relations are marked explicitly, the majority of them are implied by certain lexical and grammatical features. Moreover, these implicit markers are, in a given situation, often ambiguous: They may stand for more than one relation. Consider the following sequence from Narrative 4:

\[ b_1 \quad \text{Martin Cassidy’s mother give him some money} \]
\[ c_1 \quad \text{an’ tell him to go get a bushel of peaches} \]
\[ d_1 \quad \text{an’ he went down to Martin’s house} \]

Though both c and d are connected to the preceding clause by and, and though d is clearly ordered with respect to b, b and c are not clearly ordered. The lexical meanings of give and tell imply a possible simultaneity between b and c. If we substitute for tell a verb whose lexical meaning (virtually) denies the possibility or simultaneity with give, then b and c are unambiguously ordered:

\[ b_1 \quad \text{Martin Cassidy’s mother give him some money} \]
\[ c_1 \quad \text{an’ bring up a bushel of peaches from the cellar} \]

One more important point can be drawn from this example. The two possible relations between b and c as they stand are b-then-c and b-and at the same time-c, not c-then-b. This again suggests that the x-then-y relation is the fundamental one in narrative, which is then added to or modified by marked lexical or grammatical forms.

Isolating Primary Sequences

If we give primacy in narrative to the a-then-b relation, we may wish to select the narrative sequence with the most explicit statement of this relation as the basic
underlying form and derive other equivalent narratives from it. Such a basic form we term the primary sequence. As we will see, the derivation of other forms from the primary sequence has an important interpretation in the functional organization of the narrative structure as a whole. The procedure for isolating primary sequence can be set out as four steps, and illustrated by the following operations on Narrative 5, previously analyzed in Figure 1:

1. A displacement range is assigned to each clause of the narrative.

\[ a_{18} b_{17} c_{16} d_{15} e_{14} f_{13} g_{12} h_{11} i_{10} j_{9} k_{8} l_{7} m_{6} n_{5} o_{4} p_{3} q_{2} r_{1} s_{0} \]

2. Freely clauses are moved to the beginning of the narrative.

\[ a_{18} b_{17} c_{16} d_{15} e_{14} f_{13} g_{12} h_{11} i_{10} j_{9} k_{8} l_{7} m_{6} n_{5} p_{3} q_{2} r_{1} s_{0} \]

3. Restricted clauses are moved to a point as early as possible in the narrative without changing the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation.

\[ a_{18} b_{17} c_{16} d_{15} e_{14} f_{13} g_{12} h_{11} i_{10} j_{9} k_{8} l_{7} m_{6} p_{3} q_{2} r_{1} s_{0} \]

4. Coordinate clauses are coalesced to single units.

\[ a_{18} \rightarrow b_{17} c_{16} d_{15} e_{14} f_{13} g_{12} h_{11} i_{10} j_{9} k_{8} l_{7} m_{6} n_{5} o_{4} p_{3} q_{2} r_{1} s_{0} \]

String of 10 symbols given here represents the primary sequence of Narrative, in which the a-then-b relation is developed most explicitly. The operation moving free clauses and restricted clauses as far to the left as possible is a method minimizing the total amount of delay in the statement of any given event or situation. We can, in fact, define both of these as a specific operation: the minimizing of left subscripts.

Formally, we consider a narrative \( c_{1}, c_{2}, \ldots, c_{n} \) with left displacement ranges \( t_{1}, \ldots, t_{n} \), in which \( 0 \leq i \leq n \). A left displacement function \( y(N_{i}) \) is defined for each permutation \( N_{i} \). For example, the clauses \( c_{1}, c_{2}, \ldots, c_{n} \) that preserves the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation:

\[ y(N_{i}) = \sum_{j=1}^{n} t_{j} \]

When \( y(N_{i}) \) is minimal, any sequence \( c_{1}, c_{j} \) in which \( DS(c_{j}) = DS(c_{j}) \) is rewritten and displacement ranges reassigned. The resulting string is the primary nce of the series \( N_{i}, N_{2}, \ldots, N_{m} \).

Now proceed to show why in most narratives the linear ordering of clauses is significantly the order of the primary sequence. For this purpose, we are to outline the overall structure of narratives as governed by narrative ons.

OVERALL STRUCTURE OF NARRATIVES

Orientation

Figure 1 shows a group of six free clauses occurring together at the beginning of Narrative 6. This is characteristic of most narratives to a greater or lesser degree. Of the 14 examples given in the beginning of this article, 11 have such groups of free clauses. When we examine these groups of free clauses in relation to referential function, we find that they serve to orient the listener in respect to person, place, time, and behavioral situation. We will therefore refer to this structure feature as an orientation section: formally, the group of free clauses that precede the first narrative clause. Not all narratives have orientation sections, and not all orientation sections perform these four functions. Furthermore, some free clauses with these functions occur in other positions. Finally, we find that the orientation function is often performed by phrases or lexical items contained in narrative clauses. Despite these limitations, the overall view of narrative shows that the orientation section is a structural feature of a narrative structure. When orientation sections are displaced, we frequently find that this displacement performs another function, evaluation, to be discussed later. Furthermore, we find that orientation sections are typically lacking in narratives of children and less verbal adults whose narratives fail in other ways to carry out referential functions, for example, to preserve temporal sequence. This is the case with Narrative 13, the narrative of vicarious experience from a television show, The Man From UNCLE. An interesting example is Narrative 5, where the suppression of full narrative structure is plainly motivated by the explicit reluctance of the narrator to identify persons and places. Here, as in many of the critical issues discussed below, it is essential to preserve the context of the narrative. Because such originating context is often missing and cannot be reconstructed in traditional folk tales, it is more difficult to relate analysis to the originating functions.

Complication

The main body of narrative clauses usually comprises a series of events that may be termed the complicating or complicating action. In Figure 1, complicating action section of Narrative 6 runs from clause g to m.

In many cases, a long string of events may actually consist of several cycles of simple narrative, with many complication sections. This is the case with Narrative 2, the product of a practiced storyteller who is widely known in his community (Martha's Vineyard) as an expert in this traditional art.\(^9\) The subdivisions of

\(^9\) As noted previously, Narrative 2 has many formal features that set it aside from the others and identify it as the product of a practiced storyteller. One can point to the embedding of an essentially anonymous "other" in the complicating action, frequent if traditional metaphor, the triple
Narrative 2 are plainly marked by structural features to be discussed later, but in narrative 13, this task is much more difficult and must depend upon informal narrative criteria.

The complication is regularly terminated by a result, as in the simple Narrative clause d—or perhaps c and d—is the result that ends the complicating action of nd b, as shown in Figure 2.

To isolate the result in Narrative 5, we are forced to use semantic criteria that are often difficult to apply and seldom consistent. Without further functional analysis, it will usually be hard to tell when a narrative is actually over—when the act begins and when it has been given in full.

aluation

Before proceeding to discuss the result of narratives, we would like to suggest that narrative that contains only an orientation, complicating action, and result is not complete narrative. It may carry out the referential function perfectly, and yet it is difficult to understand. Such a narrative lacks significance; it has no point. s is the case with Narratives 11 and 13. Narrative 11 is difficult to follow, though the complicating action and the result seem to be clearly stated.

1)  
\( a_0 \) See he- they threw him out, you know.  
\( b_0 \) So he wanted to get back in, 'cause, you know, it was sn-raining hard.  
\( c_0 \) So he got on this boat

![Figure 2](image1.png)

FIGURE 2 Overall structure of Narrative 5.

There are 13 independent clauses, and 12 of them are narrative clauses. A diagram of displacement ranges for this narrative offers little justification for any internal segmentation (see Figure 3).

Narrative 13 is actually a very detailed statement of a sequence of events and their results—a series of at least three narrative cycles. Yet, the overall effect of Narrative 13 is confusion and pointlessness. This is true for the whole narrative, which is actually 10 times as long as the extract.

Both Narratives 11 and 13 are examples of narratives of vicarious experience, not, as in the other cases, of personal experience. They are lacking the evaluation section that is typical of narratives of personal experience. When we compare Narrative 13 with Narrative 14, a narrative of personal experience, we can appreciate the great difference between unequalled and evaluated narration.

Narratives are usually told in answer to some stimulus from outside and to establish some point of personal interest. For example, among the narratives given here we find many examples of narratives dealing with the danger of death. When the subject is

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![Figure 3](image2.png)

FIGURE 3 Overall structure of Narrative 11.
asked if he were ever in serious danger of being killed, and he says "Yes," then he is asked: "What happened?". He finds himself in a position in which he must demonstrate to the listener that he really was in danger. The more vivid and realistic danger appears, the more effective the narrative. If the narrative is weak and interesting, he will have made a false claim. (See Narratives 1, 3, 6, and 8.)

Beyond such immediate stimulus, we find that such narratives are so designed to emphasize the strange and unusual character of the situation—there is an appeal to the element of mystery in most of the narratives. (See Narratives 2, 3, and 6.) Then, too, many narratives are designed to place the narrator in the most favorable possible light; a function which we may call self-aggrandizement. (See Narratives 7, 8, and especially 12.)

The functions of narrative have an effect on the narrative structure. A simple sequence of complication and result does not indicate to the listener the relative importance of these events or help him distinguish complication from resolution. We also find that in narratives without a point it is difficult to distinguish the explicating action from the event.

Therefore, it is necessary for the narrator to delineate the structure of the narrative emphasizing the point where the complication has reached a maximum: the break from the complication and the result. Most narratives contain an evaluation section that carries out this function.

Many evaluation sections are defined formally. Multicoordinate clauses or subclauses of free or restricted clauses are frequently located at the break between the explicating action and the resolution of these complications. This is the case in the narrative 1, for the clauses n, o, and p. As the narrator is going down, in the water, moment of crisis is suspended by three clauses that do not occur in this position any necessity of temporal sequence. They are restricted clauses that could have been placed much earlier in the narrative—in fact, before the first temporal juncture. The three clauses, the narrative moves swiftly to a conclusion.

In many narratives, the evaluation section is fused with the result: that is, a single clause that emphasizes the importance of the result and states it. This is the case with Narratives 3 and 12. In Narrative 3, the doctor's statement: "you'd a n dead" tells us simultaneously that the narrator was close to death and that he lived. The evaluation is here shown as related directly to the origination of the situation—to demonstrate that the narrator was indeed close to death.

In the case of Narrative 1, we find more than one evaluation section. Narrative 3 has a long orientation section of 10 clauses.

Well, in the business I was associated at that time, the Doc was an old man ...
He had killed one man,

—had done time.

But he had a young wife
and those days I dressed well.
And seemingly, she was trying to make me.
I never noticed it.
Fact is, I didn't like her very well, because she had—
she was a nice looking girl until you saw her feet.
She had big feet.
Jesus, God, she had big feet!
Then she left a note one day she was going to commit suicide because he was always raising hell about me.
He came to my hotel. Nice big blue 44 too.
I talked him out of it,
and says, "Well, we'll go look for her,
and if we can't find her, well, you can—go ahead, pull the trigger if you want to."
I was maneuvering.
So he took me up on it.
And we went to where they found her handkerchief—
the edge of a creek—
And we followed down a little more,
And we couldn't find anything.
And got back—
it was a tent show—
she was laying on a cot with an ice bag on her head.
She hadn't committed suicide.
But—however—that settled it for the day.
But that night the manager, Floyd Adams, said, "You better pack up
and get out, because that son of a bitch never forgives anything once he gets it in his head."
And I did.
I packed up
and got out.
That was two.

The first narrative unit is k ("Then she left a note one day ... "), followed by 1 ("He came to my hotel") and m ("I talked him out of it"). We then have two clauses.

The phrase "Nice big blue 44 too" might as well be considered a narrative clause, derived from "He had a nice big blue 44 too." However, the status of had as the head of a narrative clause is still an issue, and it would be tendentious to use a deleted form as evidence. We have therefore been treating this phrase as subordinated to "He came to my hotel," equivalent to "with a nice big blue 44 too."
coordinated with m—clauses n ("And says") and o ("I was maneuvering."). These
multicoordinate clauses suspend the action at a critical moment—when the danger
of death is greatest, and they contain an explicit statement of the attitude of the
narrator. His coolness in a moment of crisis emphasizes the danger and reflects well
on himself.

Five narrative clauses follow this suspension, resolving the crisis introduced by
a and m. A second evaluation section occurs at a subsidiary point when the situation
is further resolved—the fate of the lady in question is determined, and simultane-
ously the immediate threat to the narrator. The action is suspended at this point by
the use of a free clause that might have occurred in the orientation section, v ("it
was a tent show"), and a direct comment, x, that might have been inferred from w.
The resolution is stated with some finality in y ("that settled it"). Finally, there is
an explicit evaluation of a third party that confirms the implications of the
previous evaluation section, followed by a conclusion. The overall diagram shows
how evaluation sections outline the structure of the narrative.

It should be apparent here that the evaluation sections are responsible for those
deviations from the order of the primary sequence of the narrative that complicate
a-then-then-b relation of narrative. The functions of the evaluation section must be
ded to the primary narrative function in order to understand how the primary
sequence is transformed into the more complex structure that we see here. All of
the evaluation sections shown here are related to the originating function of the
narrative. From a structural point of view, the first section is the major break in the
implicating action.

Not all evaluation sections have the structural feature of suspending the compli-
acting action, as shown in the Figure 4. In many cases, the evaluation may be present
exclamatory or phrasal modification of a narrative clause, or it may be itself a narrative
use or coincide with the last narrative clause. For this reason, the fundamental
inclusion of evaluation must be semantic, although its implications are structural.
The evaluation of a narrative is defined by us as that part of the narrative that reveals
attitude of the narrator towards the narrative by emphasizing the relative importance
of narrative units as compared to others. This may be done by a variety of means:

**Semantically defined evaluation:**
1. direct statement: "I said to myself: this is it."
2. lexical intensifiers: "He was beat up real, real bad."
   "I whupped that dude half to death."

The three evaluation sections of Narrative 1 raise the possibility that we can analyze this narrative
consisting of three distinct subcycles: that it is a complex narrative consisting of three structural units.
This article is limited to the consideration of simple narratives, and this possibility must be postponed
after study of subcycles and complex narratives.

**Formally defined:**
3. suspension of the action:
   a. through coordinate clauses and restricted clauses: See Figure 1
   b. repetition (subtype of the above): See Narrative 2, at the moment of crisis
      when the dog is gone for the 3rd time: "And he didn't come back. And
      he didn't come back."

**Culturally defined:**
4. symbolic action: "They put an egg on his door."
   "I crossed myself."
   "You could hear the rosaries clicking."

5. judgment of a third person: here the entire narrative is reported to a person
   not present at the narrative.

Narrative 12 is a heavily evaluated narrative that shows three of these character-
istic forms of evaluation. It is typical of many fight narratives in its two-part
structure. The first subcycle deals with the events leading up to the fight, and its
conclusion is the beginning of the second subcycle, the fight itself. In this case, the
evaluation of the first section is a statement of the narrator:

\textit{Oh, I told him that—it’s impossible for him to find downtown,
cause all those people were walking by, and just his father
is the only one that finds it.}

Although the very length of this closely reasoned argument serves to suspend the
action, the structural criteria we have been using show it as a single narrative clause.
We identify this clause as an evaluation on semantic grounds: It is an explicit
tatement by the narrator of his attitude towards the situation.

The conclusion of Narrative 12 is also an evaluative statement that coincides
with the last narrative unit: The statement of a third person after the entire sequence
of events is reported to him.

\textit{Then he started crying,
and run home to his father,
And his father told him, he ain’t find no glove}

In addition, we have the evaluation of the act of clause i

\textit{So he say he give
And I kept on hitting him.}

is normal not to hit someone after he says “I give.” This incident evaluates the
narrative by indicating that the anger of the narrator was so great—due to excessive
d unreasonable provocation—that he was carried away to the extent of violating
s norm. The other boy had placed himself outside of normal sanctions by his
behavior.

All of these forms of evaluation serve the function of self-aggrandizement,
swelling the narrator in a favorable position as compared to the other boy. It is
tent that there are a great variety of evaluation types, more or less deeply
bedded in the narrative. But this variety should not obscure the fact that
evaluated narratives are exceptional as representations of personal experience,
evaluated narratives lack structural definition.

An important characteristic of narratives is the degree of embedding of the
situation in the narrative framework. There is a wide range, from the most highly
malyzed type—a symbolic action or the evaluation of a third person—to the
external—a direct statement of the narrator to the listener about his feelings
at the time. In the examples given previously, we find internalized evaluation in
narrative 1, in the dramatic statements of narrator and manager; and in Narrative
the statement of the doctor, (“just about this much more,” he says, “and you’d
a been dead.”). The last narrative, Narrative 14, has a dramatic statement of the
narrator (“I say, ‘Calvin, I’m bust your head for dat.’”).

Sometimes the evaluation occurs in a statement of the narrator to himself, less
well integrated into the narrative, as in Narrative 7: “So I says to myself, ‘Well,
there’s gonna be times ...’”.

The other end of the scale is shown by a comment at the end of the narrative
directed towards the listener, as in Narrative 13: “Just over two dollars that he was
sent for peaches with.” Still more direct is Narrative 2: “I’ll tell you if I had ever
wallopped that dog I’d have felt some bad.”

We might construct a scale of degrees of embedding of evaluation, following
examples of the following sort:

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
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|   | Internal 1. And when we got down there, her brother turned to me and
whispered, “I think she’s dead, John!”
|   |   | 2. And when we got down there, I said to myself, “My God, she’s
dead!”
|   |   | 3. And when we got down there, I thought, “She’s dead.”
|   |   | 4. And when we got down there, I thought she was dead.
|   |   | 5. Later, the doctors told us she was close to death.
|   |   | 6. I think she must have been close to death.
|   | External 7. You know, in cases like this, it’s clear that she was likely as not
dead. |

Resolution

With this definition of evaluation, we can now return to the problem of defining
the result of a narrative. The problem is now quite simple. We can establish the
break between the complicating and resolving action by locating the placement of
the evaluation. Thus, the resolution of the narrative is that portion of the narrative
sequence that follows the evaluation. If the evaluation is the last element, then the
resolution section coincides with the evaluation. In the examples given previously,
the complicating clauses are symbolized $\land$ and the resolving clauses $\lor$.

Coda

Many narratives end with a resolution section, but others have an additional element
that we may call the coda.

The actual sequence of events described in the narrative does not, as a rule,
extend up to the present. The coda is a functional device for returning the verbal
perspective to the present moment. This is accomplished by a variety of means, so
that the codas cannot be identified by such simple tag lines as “And they lived
happily ever after.”
a. One device used in a coda is deixis. This is the linguistic category that points to a referent instead of naming it explicitly: In this case, it has the effect of standing at the present moment of time and pointing to the end of the narrative, identifying it as a remote point in the past.

(1)
\text{ debating } \quad \text{I packed up}
\text{ debating } \quad \text{and got out.}
\text{ debating } \quad \text{ that was two.}

(7)
\text{ debating } \quad \text{That was one of the most important.}

(8)
\text{ debating } \quad \text{That was that.}

\text{ And that— that was it, you know.}
\text{ debating } \quad \text{That was it.}
\text{ debating } \quad \text{And that was that.}

It is interesting to note that all codas are separated from the resolution by temporal juncture. At the same time, it seems that some semantic criterion is necessary to identify codas: The fact that they are frequently not descriptions of events, or of events necessary to answer the question: “What happened?”

The overall structure of the narratives that we have examined is not uniform; there are considerable differences in the degree of complexity, in the number of structural elements present, and how various functions are carried out. However, a composite view of narrative performance leads us to posit a normal form for oral versions of personal experience; the degree to which any one narrative approximates this normal form is a significant fact about that narrative—perhaps more significant than any other in terms of fulfilling the originating function of the narrative.

The normal form is quite distinct from the primary sequence of the narrative. As noted above, the need for an evaluation section motivates the transformation of the primary sequence into the more characteristic normal form that appears in the linear sequence presented by the narrator.

One can represent the normal form of narrative using the diagram in Figure 5. Here the originating function of the narrative is applied at the base of the diamond; we proceed up and to the left with the orientation section, then up to the apex with the complication. Frequently, but not always, the evaluation suspends the action at this apex, as represented by the circle. The resolution proceeds downward and to the right, and the coda is represented by the line that returns to the situation (point in time) at which the narrative was first elicited. The simplest possible narrative would consist of the single line of the complication, without a clear resolution; frequently we find minimal narratives that have both complication and resolution (“He hit me hard and I hit him back”). As we proceed to more complex narratives, told by speakers with greater overall verbal ability, we find a higher percentage of narratives that duplicate the exact form of this diagram. Perhaps the most frequent variant is the case in which the evaluation ends the resolution: Jokes, ghost stories, and surprise endings take this form, as the story is reshaped by many retellings.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{diagram}
\caption{The normal form of narrative.}
\end{figure}
CONCLUSION

This view of narrative structure helps us to answer the two questions raised at the beginning of this discussion. First, we have related the sequence of narrative elements to the inferred sequence of events in the experience that is being recapitulated, through the definitions of narrative units, restricted clause, free clause, and narrative clause. Secondly, we have outlined the principle elements of simple narratives that perform both referential and evaluative functions. We have shown that the evaluative function requires the transformation of the primary sequence, based on the a-then-b relation, into the more complex normal form of the narrative as presented by the narrator.

With this framework, we are beginning to analyze relative effectiveness and completeness of narrative structure among various subgroups of our population, and, furthermore, to analyze the more complex types of narration developed by killed storytellers and preserved by oral tradition. It is clear that these conclusions are restricted to the speech communities that we have examined. This view of narrative structure will achieve greater significance when materials from radically different cultures are studied in the same way.

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Narratology and Narratological Analysis

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Narratology was born around the time that Labov and Waletzky’s classic article appeared in 1967 (Labov & Waletzky, 1967/this issue). It studies narrative, the representation in any medium (oral, written, and sign languages, still or moving pictures, gestures, etc.) of one or more than one event or change in a state of affairs. Specifically, it investigates what all and only possible narratives (rather than great, literary, fictional, or extant ones) have in common as well as what enables them to differ from one another qua narratives, and it aims to describe the narrative-pertinent system of rules governing narrative production and processing. Historically, narratology belongs to the tradition of French structuralism, illustrating both the structuralist tendency to regard texts (in the broad sense of signifying matter) as rule-governed in which human (re)fashion their universe and the structuralist ambition to identify the necessary and the optional components of textual types and to characterize their modes of articulation. It thus constitutes a subset of semiotics, the study of the factors at work in signifying systems and practices. If structuralism generally concentrates on the langue or code underlying a given system or practice rather than concentrating on a parole or instantiation of that system or practice, narratology specifically focuses on narrative langue rather than narrative paroles.

If structuralism can be viewed as extending the notion “unconscious”—the economic unconscious of Marx, the psychological unconscious of Freud, the linguistic unconscious of the grammarians—to every domain of symbolic behavior, narratology can be viewed as depicting a kind of narrative unconscious.

The narratological enterprise became systematic after the appearance of the English translation of Propp’s morphological study of the Russian fairy tale (Propp, 1958), and narratology took on many of the features of a discipline in 1966, with the publication of a special number of Communications (No. 8) entirely devoted to the structural analysis of narrative. In 1966, Lévi-Strauss—who had earlier provided a structural description of myth and stressed the importance of describing
general structural conditions that texts have to satisfy in order to belong to a
articulated type (Lévi-Strauss, 1958)—reviewed Propp's book and praised its
remarkable achievements while criticizing its emphasis on (surface) form rather
than (deep) structure, manifest message rather than latent content, and superficial
ritualic relations rather than deep logico-semantic ones (Lévi-Strauss, 1960). In
1964, Claude Bremond (1964) began a recasting of the Proppian schema that
would patterned on the logic of action, would show that—at each point in a narra-
tive—there are different ways in which the action might proceed, and would
eliminate in his Logique du récit (Bremond, 1973). The following year, Tzvetan
odorov, who would later coin the term narratology and develop a narrative
‘grammar accounting for (basic aspects) of Boccaccio’s Decameron (Todorov, 1969),
lished a French translation of several Russian formalist texts, including one by
Todorov (1965). In his Sémantique structurale, A. J. Greimas (1966) refined
propp’s notion of dramatis personae and developed an acenatial model involving
six tants or basic roles assumable by characters (Subject, Object, Sender, Receiver,
elper, and Opponent). Greimas argued that a narrative constitutes a signifying
hole because it can be grasped in terms of the relational structure obtaining among
tants. He also performed a paradigmatic analysis of Propp’s functions (charac-
ters' acts considered in terms of their role in the course of the narrative action) and
cluded that basic narrative developments represent modifications from negative
innings (disruption of order and alienation) to positive ends (establishment of
ner and integration) effected through the actions of a Subject. As for the 1966
ical number of Communications, it contained many references to Propp; it
atured contributions by Roland Barthes, whose famous “Introduction à l’analyse
ucturale des récits” provided a global model of narrative description (Barthes,
66), by Gérard Genette, whose “Discours du récit” would soon champion a
narrativistic focusing on verbal telling and would exert enormous in-
cue on the study of narration (Genette, 1972), and Greimas, Bremond, odorov, et cetera; and it came close to constituting a narratological research
ram as well as a manifesto. A few years later, narratology was an internation-
l that could boast of many achievements in its exploration of narrative.
It is perhaps the area of narrative discourse (of the narrating as opposed to the
rated, of the signs in a narrative representing the narrating activity, its origin, its
ination, and its context) that narratologists have explored most thoroughly.
olding on the work of the Russian formalists (Ejzenbaum, 1971a, 1971b;
kovsky, 1965a, 1965b; Tomashevsky, 1965) and on that of Anglo-Saxon,nch, and Germanic students of narration and point of view (Booth, 1961; Brooks
aren, 1943; Friedman, 1955; Lämmert, 1955; Müller, 1968; Pouillon, 1946;
zel, 1955), both Genette (1972, 1983) and Todorov (1973), but also Bal (1977,
others have described the various orders in which a narrative text can present
ries of situations and events, the anachronies (anticipations or retrospections)
that it can exhibit, and the undatable structures that it can accommodate. Furthermore,
they have characterized narrative speed (the relation between the duration of
the narrated and the length of the narrative text) as well as its canonical temps
(ellipsis, summary, scene, stretch, pause). They have, moreover, investigated
narrative frequency, the link between the number of times an event happens and
the number of times it is recounted. They have analyzed the set of modalities
regulating narrative information: the points of view in terms of which the narrated
can be rendered and the kind and extent of narratorial mediation a narrative can
olve. They have examined the types of discourse (narratized, indirect, free
indirect, direct) that a text can adopt to report the characters’ utterances or thoughts.
They have studied the major kinds of narration (first-, second-, or third-person
ingular or plural; posterior, anterior, simultaneous, or intercalated) and their modes
of combination. They have specified the signs referring to the narrator and the
narratee (or audience narrated to, as inscribed in the text), delineated their respective
functions, and scrutinized the set of relations obtaining between them as well as the
kinds of distance (spatial, temporal, emotional, etc.) separating them from the
characters and events in the story.

The narratological investigation of narrated structure has also yielded notable
results. For example, in addition to characterizing the minimal constituents of the
narrated (goal-directed actions and mere happenings, states and processes, etc.) and
the relations (spatiotemporal, logical, thematic, functional, or transformational) that
can obtain among them, narratologists have shown that narrative sequences can be
said to consist of a series of minimal constituents, the last one of which in time is
a (partial) repetition or transform of the first, and they have demonstrated that ever
more complex sequences can be said to result from the linking of simpler ones
through such operations as conjunction or embedding (Barthes, 1966; Bremond,
1973; Chatman, 1978; Prince, 1973b, 1982; Todorov, 1970, 1973). They have also
deployed the nature of characters and settings as well as the various techniques
through which they are constituted (Barthes, 1966; Chatman, 1978; Hamon, 1981,
1983), and they have analyzed how a story can be described semantically as a world
consisting of domains (sets of events pertaining to a character), each of which is
nized by modal constraints (alethic, epistemic, axiologic, or deontic) that
determine what is or could be the case in the world represented as well as what

Finally, narratologists have explicitly made certain aspects of narrative pragmatics
part of their domain of inquiry, for instance by calling for the development of
a feminist narratology that would take into account the role of gender in narrative
production and processing (Lanser, 1986; cf. Prince, 1995) or by distinguishing
narrativeness (what makes a text narrative, what all and only narratives have in
common) from narrativity (what in a text underlines its possibly narrative nature,
what emphasizes the presence and semiotic role of narrative structures in a textual
ecology) and by exploring the factors affecting the latter. Prince (1982, 1983), for
sample, contended that the narrativity of a text depends on the extent to which the narrator is taken to constitute a (pointed) autonomous whole (a sequence whose chronological beginning and end are linked by its middle and are transformationally linked) that (a) represents an anthropomorphic project; (b) involves some kind of conflict (compare: “The cat sat on the mat” and “The cat sat on the dog’s mat”); (c) made up of discrete, particular, positive (the hallmark of narrativity is assurance), or negative (the hallmark of narrativity is assurance), or temporal actions that have logically unpredictable antecedents or sequels; and (d) avoids inordinate amounts of commentary about them, their presentation, or the latter’s context. Prince (1988) also contended that, all other things being equal, the presence of disnarrated elements (representing what did not happen but could have) affected narrativity in a positive manner. Similarly, Ryan (1981) not only showed that an adequate model of plot must represent the relational ages obtaining between the constituents of the factual narrative domain (what is in the story) and the constituents of the characters’ private domains (the action narrativized in terms of their knowledge, wishes, obligations, emotions, intentions, or fantasies); she also insisted that “not all plots are created equal” (p. 148) and that narrativity is rooted in the configuration of theses changes “in the richness and variety of the domain of the virtual” (p. 156). More recently, Barthes (1966) sketched an open-ended taxonomy of different kinds of narrativity, identifying the simple narrativity of fairy tales and urban legends (in which the antica dimension of the text primarily springs from a linear plot revolving around a ple problem), the complex narrativity of Balzac, Dickens, or Dumas (in which the narrative structures appear on both the macro- and the microtextual level and in which the narrative structures obtain between the main plot lines and the subordinate ones), and the narrative narrativity of lyric, historiographic, or philosophical texts (in this case, the author or the agent of the text). The narrative message constructs a story by reshaping the text, collective entities, and abstract concepts into particular characters and events, and the instrumental narrative of sermons and debates (in which the narrative structures appearing on the microtextual level function merely as illustrations or clarifications of a non-narrative macrotextual level). Work remains to be done on narrativity and the factors affecting it (just as work is needed on the question of the constraints governing the combination of narrativity factors, for example, or in the area of narrative semantics). For example, narrativity factors pertaining to the narrated (the what that is represented) and the narrating (the way in which is represented) often need to be distinguished from factors relevant to the narrating (the way in which narrativity is represented). Moreover, the relative importance of the factors should be determined and so should their interdependencies or their incompatibilities. In any case, a formal model accounting for narrativity as well as narrativeness, consistent with the model. It might ultimately consist of the following interconnected components: (a) a structural component describing the macro- and microstructures of all and only sequences of narrated situations and events; (b) a narrating component accounting for the way these structures can be presented (speeds adopted, points of view employed, narratorial mediation involved, etc.); (c) a semantic component interpreting the (presented) structures (providing a basis for answering questions about narrative content and for arriving at an understanding of the structures); and (d) a pragmatic component specifying their (degree) of narrativity (and perhaps more generally, specifying the basic cognitive and communicative factors affecting their production and processing). The realization of such a model is, of course, not for the near future, but it is to be hoped that its elaborators will draw not only on the work of their predecessors in narratology but also on the splendid accomplishments of the tradition of narrative analysis inaugurated by Labov and Waletzky.

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Labov and Waletzky in Context

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In a scathing look at a group of literary theorists he calls "Contextualists"—among them Mary Louise Pratt, Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Thomas Leitch, and Susan Lanser—Seymour Chatman (1990) invoked Labov and Waletzky (1967) to this issue; henceforth L&W and Labov (1972) as representing a narrow sociolinguistic perspective in opposition to an inclusive structuralist narratology. For Chatman, at issue is a choice between a contextualist model based upon L&W and a structuralist model based upon the work of such narratologists as Shklovsky, Barthes, and Gennette. I suggest here that this is a false choice. In taking L&W out of context, Chatman misrepresented their stance: "Narrative Analysis" was completely consistent with structuralist analysis of literary narratives. At the same time, however, it provided a foundation for what Toolan (1996) called an "integrational linguistic approach" to the study of narrative texts. What Chatman rejected is not so much L&W's model of natural narrative but the usefulness of natural narrative in the understanding of what he saw as the relative complexity of literary texts. Here, too, I see a false distinction. Although any given story might be classified as natural or literary, oral or written, simple or complex, those classifications are not binary opposites, but merely the definable extremes of endless possibilities.

L&W provided a starting point for examining natural, oral, simple narratives. Although the authors were explicit in rejecting "the products of expert storytellers" in favor of "the original productions of a representative sample of the population," their insights have been persuasive in defining structures that underlie literary narratives as well (see, e.g., Fleischman, 1990; Pratt, 1977). In spite of the fact that their analysis is restricted to "actual narratives of large numbers of unsophisticated speakers," it is consistent with their view of complex narratives as "the result of the combination and evolution of simpler elements" that the essay be seen as a tool for examining the most sophisticated literary narratives. A model that defines funda-

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Others have readily connected this analysis (or its counterpart in Labov, 1972) with Formalist narratology. Pratt (1977) asserted: “If it weren’t for the fact that his data are not literature, Labov’s analysis could have provided valuable linguistic support for the Formalists’ ideas about the aesthetic organization of narrative” (p. 68), a claim that is particularly ironic in view of Chatman’s connection of Pratt and L&W with the Contextualists. Pratt compared the Russian Formalist distinction between fabula and sjuzhet with Labov’s distinction between narrative core and evaluation (Pratt, 1977, p. 68). Along similar lines, Fleischman (1990) associated fabula with L&W’s inferred sequence of events. It seems, then, that there is little support for Chatman’s position that L&W ignored a distinction between the deep structure of a story and the act of telling it.

Another of Chatman’s criticisms is that the sociolinguistic model is “monochronic” (p. 318, fn. 11), that it prohibits “the exchange or ‘twisting’ of (surface) clauses out of their causal–sequential order” (p. 318). It is true that L&W asserted: “The basic narrative units that we wish to isolate are defined by the fact that they recapitulate experience in the same order as the original events” (pp. 20–21), but it should also be kept in mind that such temporal ordering refers not to the entire range of possibilities but to the unmarked “basic narrative units” of unpracticed storytellers. All of Chatman’s references to Labov or to L&W are quoted out of context from Pratt (1977), including Labov’s definition of a minimal narrative as “a sequence of two clauses which are temporally ordered” (Labov, 1972, p. 360; quoted in Chatman, 1990, p. 318; quoted in Pratt, 1977, p. 44). A minimal narrative is not intended to define a literary narrative, a folk tale, or even a personal experience story. A minimal narrative is a unit by which larger structures may be analyzed. Even in the limited corpus presented in “Narrative Analysis,” there is an example of a story told by a more practiced storyteller who deviates from the expected temporal sequence and whose story is rejected as primary data for that very reason (L&W, fn. 9). It is essential to ascertain what constitutes the unmarked form of natural storytelling in order to understand the departures that make some storytellers seem practiced. Fleischman (1990) observed that artificial narratives typically do depart from the linear representation suggested by L&W, but that “the artistic effects produced by these departures depend on an assumption that sequential presentation constitutes a norm for the ordering of material in a narrative” (p. 167). That is, rather than defining what constitutes the norm for a literary narrative, “Narrative Analysis” describes the typical means for telling simple stories. L&W reserve for a later study consideration of “sub-cycles and complex narratives” (fn. 11).

If narrative served only a referential function, the syntax of simple narratives might adhere more regularly to temporally ordered independent clauses. What complicates most natural narratives is their corresponding evaluative function, defined by L&W as “that part of the narrative which reveals the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative by emphasizing the relative importance of some
narrative units as compared to others. When evaluation is weak or lacking, the narrative appears insignificant, pointless, difficult to understand. Labov's method of eliciting data encouraged tellable narratives. The "Danger of Death" question elicited narratives was something like: "Were you ever in a situation where you were in serious danger of being killed, where you told to yourself—'This is it' (Labov, 1972, p. 354; L&W, 1967/this issue). The point is that what stimulates telling is "a matter quite relevant to the functional analysis of narrative" (L&W, issue). In contrast, Chatman argued that "tellability" is a worthless criterion by which to judge literary narratives. Although he acknowledged the likelihood of tellability governing a storyteller's success in a vernacular context, he argued not extending a "model of audience power" (p. 325) to the literary situation. The problem, as Chatman saw it, is that "Contextualism evidently prefers real stories and readers" (p. 314), as opposed to a model that posits an audience built the text. This argument is directed not so much at L&W but at literary theorists who appropriate a model for narrative in conversation as the basis for the structure of narrative. Apart from the fact that many writers and theorists do posit a model for narrative in conversation as the basis for the structure of narrative, a model based on an oral model can indeed account for multiple audiences, both internal and external to the text. Labov's Observer's Paradox—"I to obtain data on the matic form of language (the vernacular), we must observe how people speak" (Labov, 1972, p. xvi)—accounts for the notion the structure of speech is likely to vary with the speaker's perception of the audience. A speaker's awareness of the observer as audience, then, is likely to be a part of the structure of that speaker's utterances. As Bell (1996) and others suggested, an oral context may involve not only one or more addresses but overheard versions of the original presentation. Chatman recognized theatricasm as a context that blurs the distinction between real and imagined audiences, but there are many others. A technological environment that involves recording and replaying of conversational exchange through a variety of media allows for a range of possible audiences, some of whom may be heard by speakers or authors and thereby represent in their oral or written texts. A similar argument may be made regarding the range of possible speakers or narrators. Even in an actual conversational context, the speakers may to a greater or lesser degree be representing their own voice or opinions. People may act as spokespersons for others, they may speak in an ironic tone, they may quote directly or indirectly the voices of others, and so on. Rather than positing two categories of real or imagined speakers, authors, or narrators, narrative theory must allow for the widest range of possibilities.

Another problem that Chatman had with tellability as a criterion is that subjective judgment is required in order to evaluate if, thereby eradicating the "hard-won distinction between literary theory and literary criticism" (p. 324). Whereas the speaker in a conversational context has only the floor at stake, a writer's dependence for approval upon an interpretive community risks failure of a greater magnitude. Chatman posed the rhetorical question: "What if a manuscript by some mute, inglorious Joyce is turned down by every publishing-house as 'selector' forever? Would that mean that the text had never been 'tellable,' never a literary narrative?" (p. 325). The underlying issue deserves a thoughtful response. Unfortunately, Chatman's use of "Joyce" within the question as a metonymy for "a great author whose work is unarguably tellable" makes the question he has phrased a circular one. If the question were phrased simply as: "What if a manuscript is turned down by every publisher ..., " one could respond that the work might be tellable to some other audience but not to the one imagined by the publishers to whom the work was submitted; it might be appreciated more by another culture or at another time. If one ignores issues of tellability and audience, one loses the opportunity to explain—not critically but theoretically—why some kinds of stories are valued by some cultures and not by others. As Tannen (1984) and others pointed out, not only the point of a story but also the strategies used to evaluate it and interpret it are culturally bound. Chatman himself, arguing for a theory that is independent of context, slipped in the notion of culture when he asked: "[W]hy should we worry about the speech-act situation at all, instead of simply concentrating on the intrinsic properties of the 'detachable' text-type that our culture calls 'narrative'?" (p. 324). In response, it is the speech-act situation that leads to the definition of narrative held by "our culture." There is considerable loss, then, in maintaining a model of narrative structure that fails to account for the effects of culture.

I have argued here that placing L&W in the camp of the Contextualists in opposition to Structuralists is a consequence of taking them out of context. Further, ov (1972) modified somewhat the treatment of evaluation as a separate section of a narrative, so instead as something that permeates all parts of the narrative structure. For example, Tannen (1984), who concluded that "all narrative, spoken or written, is modeled on oral storytelling genre" (p. 39). For a discussion of the oral quality of narrative, see Bernstein (1972) on the subject of internal and external audiences. For another context of the intricacies of speaker and audience, see Tannen (1988).
I have suggested the value of a sociolinguistic conversational model in analyzing
narrative. I am not proposing, however, that such a model replace the valuable
contributions made by Chatman and others, but that structuralist narratology must
incorporate pragmatics in order to account for textual structures resulting from
cultural contexts surrounding actual and fictional speakers and writers, audiences
and readers. Supporting an expanded model of narratology is the multidisciplinary
interest taken by the contributors to this special issue of the Journal of Narrative
and Life History. Sternberg (1990) recognized the need for blending the boundaries
of discipline when he wrote that linguists, sociologists, and others have been
‘working in complete isolation from literary material and methodology’” (p. 921,
n. 15). Sternberg misread Labov (1972), however, when he complained that Labov
excluded fictional narrative “by definition” (Sternberg, 1990, p. 921, fn. 15; see
Iso p. 912, fn. 7). Labov (1972) and especially L&W saw the analysis of natural
arrative as essential to the understanding of complex fictional narratives. Movem-
ent toward an interdisciplinary approach is also evident in Tuan (1996), whose
nétrological linguistic approach” is applied to both literary and nonliterary texts.
ewise, Herman (1995) referred to a “Narratology After Structuralism,” an
coming project whose approach is both structural and pragmatic (p. 225, fn. 1).
where (Bernstein 1994a, 1994b) I argued for an approach that accounts for both
structural forms and the pragmatic functions of narrative. A workable narratol-
ity cannot afford to maintain such binary oppositions as Structuralism and Con-
tualism. I agree with Tuan’s argument that: “we are much too confident in
king that we know just what is text and just what is context” (Tuan, 1996, p.
The new narratology will need to reexamine such binary oppositions as
written, actual–fictional, contextual–structural in order to recognize that most
hose distinctions are not categories by which narrative devices can be labeled
ranges of possibilities by which some strategies might be usefully described.

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