A STUDY OF THE STORY GRAMMAR RULES FOUND IN THE THREE SHORT STORIES WRITTEN BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

A THESIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval Sheet (1) ................................................i
Approval Sheet (2) ............................................... ii
Acknowledgement .................................................. iii
Table of Contents ................................................. iv
List of Appendices ............................................... vi
Abstract ............................................................ vii

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study ......................... 1
1.2 Statement of the Problem ......................... 4
1.3 Objectives of the Study ........................ 4
1.4 Significance of the Study ......................... 5
1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study ............... 5
1.6 Definition of the Key Terms ....................... 7
1.7 Organization of the Study ......................... 8

CHAPTER II : REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theory of Knowledge Structure ................ 9
   2.1.1 Schemata .............................................. 10
2.2 Theory of Macrostructure ......................... 12
2.3 Story Grammar Theory ............................. 13
   2.3.1 The Nature of Story Grammar .......... 14
2.3.2 The Characteristics of Story Grammar....15
2.3.3 The Functions of Story grammar.........19
2.4 Characteristics of a Well-formed Story........20

CHAPTER III : METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY
3.1 Research Design..............................25
3.2 Source of the Data............................25
3.3 Form of the Data.............................26
3.4 Procedure of Collecting the Data............26
3.5 Procedure of the Data Analysis...............27

CHAPTER IV : FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
4.1 Findings.....................................28
4.2 Discussion of the Findings....................40
4.2.1 The Interpretation of the Story Grammar..40
4.2.2 The Analysis of the Story Grammar.......41

CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION
5.1 Summary and Conclusion......................43
5.2 Suggestions..................................45

BIBLIOGRAPHY...........................................47

APPENDICES............................................49
List of Appendices

Appendix I: Node Proposition of "Young Goodman Brown"........49
Appendix II: Node Proposition of "Rappacini Daughter"..........52
Appendix III: Node Proposition of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux".59
Appendix IV: "Young Goodman Brown" (The Summary)..........62
Appendix V: "Rappacini Daughter" (The Summary).............64
Appendix VI: "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" (The Summary).....67
Appendix VII: Bibliography of Nathaniel Hawthorne.............70
Abstract


Keywords: Story Grammar, Setting, Event Structure, Episode, Reaction, Goal Path, Attempt, Outcome.

The concepts of deep structure and surface structure introduced by Chomsky (1957) provide the fact that language has a hierarchical as well as a linear organization of the sentence as a series of constructions at successive level. However, it is found later that these concepts do not only apply to the syntactic level of human language but also to the level above syntax, that is discourse.

Many attempts in the linguistic study of discourse have been made to analyze various kinds of texts and stories. Story grammar is one of many currently held theories of cognitive representation of narrative texts. Slightly similar to the phrase structure rules proposed by Chomsky which give attention on the internal grammar or structure of a sentence, story grammar provides theoretical frameworks for analyzing a story in meaningful parts.

So far, studies concerning with story grammar have achieved a great success using simple stories and folk tales (Prop, 1928; Levistarauss, 1960, 1963; Barthes, 1966; Greimas, 1966; Todorov, 1968; van Dijk, 1972, 1977; Bredmon, 1973; Gulich and Raible, 1977; Johnson and Mandler, 1977; Mandler, 1978; Rumelhart, 1975, 1980; Sten and Glenn, 1979). Though this study is conducted on the same basic theory of story grammar, it stresses on the analysis on the internal structures of a more complex form of discourse, that is short story.

Using principled method of story grammar proposed by Johnson and Mandler, this study is trying to describe the tree structure of the three analyzed short stories and to determine whether each story has a well-formed or an ill-formed organization. Each story consists of a setting and an event structure. The event structure is divided into a number of episodes. The episode itself consists of a beginning, a development, and an ending.

Through a long analysis, this study is able to describe the stories in a meaningful and logical relationship and to show that these stories possess a well-formed story organization. Considering the length of the story, one short story may consist of more than one story organization. "Rappacini's Daughter", for example, consists of six story organizations.

Finally, this study is intended as a contribution to the more specific linguistic study of discourse, especially one that deals with story grammar and the teaching and learning of literature.