

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to analyze the basic generic structure of narrative pattern in the compositions written by a group of Thai EFL university students. The difference in the use of narrative factors between the high-rated and low-rated compositions was also examined. The subjects were 43 fourth-year English major students in academic year 2000 at Naresuan University who took an Essay and Report Writing Course. Two intact groups were used to collect the data, the students were assigned to write the compositions during final examination. Each of the compositions was collected by the instructor. Then the compositions were given to two evaluators and were later scored and arranged from the highest to the lowest scores. The compositions were analyzed by the researcher to see the characteristics of narrative pattern as compared to Labov and waletzky's narrative pattern (1967). Five high-rated and five low-rated compositions were analyzed to see if there was any difference in the use of narrative factors. This chapter summarizes and discusses the findings. It was expected that the results of this study would contribute to a better understanding about narrative writing. It also includes implication for teaching and recommendation for further study.

Summary of the Findings

To answer to the questions raised in the statement of the problem, the major findings of this study could be summarized in the following:

According to the finding one, 43 compositions were analyzed to see the overall characteristics of narrative pattern. Based on Labov and Waletzky's narrative pattern (1967), the compositions were categorized into 4 factors; Orientation, Complication, Resolution and Evaluation. In term of clauses occurred in the students' compositions, it was found that among these four factors, Complication contained the highest number of clauses, followed by Orientation, Evaluation, and Resolution, respectively. In terms of a number of factors used, the compositions that represented 4 factors (Orientation, Complication, Evaluation, and Resolution) appeared the most, the compositions that represented 2 factors (Orientation and Evaluation) appeared as the second most, the composition represented 3 factors (Orientation, Complication, and Evaluation) appeared the least.

The major characteristics of narrative pattern found in the students' compositions are as follow;

1. Orientation

Based on Labov and Waletzky's narrative pattern (1967), the elements of Orientation consist of time, places, and persons or characters and their activities. According to the data analysis, it was found that Orientation was included in all of the students' compositions. The following example was Orientation found in the students' compositions.

"When I was ten years old and my sister was nine years old. We liked to play badminton in the public garden. A lot of my friends played with us. Until one day a group of boys which had about six people..."

The Orientation above included;

time of the story; "When I was ten years old...",

place; "...we liked to play badminton in the public garden...",

persons or characters and their activities; "my sister... a lot of my friends played with us, a group of boy which had about six people..."

According to the students' compositions, the students mostly placed Orientation at the beginning of their compositions. Some of the writers used all of the three elements of Orientation (time, place, and person or characters and their activities) in order to describe some background information and bring a reader to the Complication.

2. Complication

According to Simpson (1992), "Complication is the core narrative category providing details of what happened elements of a story." (p. 60) Some of the students represented this factor for telling a series of events with chronological order. The verb tense mostly used in Complication was simple past tense that coincided with Labov (1967) and Simson's (1962) observation that the simple past tense is the usual form in narrative pattern. In addition, a high frequency of transitional words were found in this factors as Ruth (1973) stated that transitional words are an essential element of narration. The transitional words used for chronological organization are as follow: first, second, third, after that, next, then, later, as soon as, until, when, once, at the same time, during, meanwhile, while, suddenly, three weeks later, finally, last (of all), most importantly, to finish.

The following text is an example of Complication represented in a student's composition.

"... I herd some voice from somewhere behind my house. I remember that it's my kitten's voice, Nang-Noi. Her voice sounded like she was in trouble. I tried to find her everywhere, and finally I found her on the top of the tree. She looked happy when she saw me, but she could not come down. Her body was trembling. I thought I have to do something. I decided to climb the tree for helping my kitten. The tree is quite high especially for the girl who was only 7 years old. I tried to climb carefully, up, up and up. Eventually, I reached Nang-Noi. I held Nang-Noi with my left hand, and tried to climb down slowly. When I was climbing down, I looked down, It was very high. My leg trembled. Suddenly my legs missed the tree. Nang-Noi and I fell down..."

3. Resolution

The students of this study used Resolution for recapitulating the final events of their stories. This factor was represented to indicate how the stories resolved. The writers often tell how the stories ended by using some signal words.

The following example shows Resolution written by one of those students.

"...As soon as I came back home in the evening, I told the good news to my parents. They were very glad to hear that. They embraced me and told that they have been pound of me..."

The students represented Resolution to provide a reader with how the final events resolved. Along with Resolution, they signaled that the events resolved by using some signal words such as, as soon as, finally, at last, etc.

4. Evaluation

The students in this study used this factor for a variety of purposes-to signal that a composition has ended, to conclude a story, to bring a reader back to the point at which he or she entered the story, to give his perspective on its significant. The following example is Evaluation found in a student's composition.

"... I can remember my memorable childhood experience and I always think of it when I argue with my parents. I always think that everyone has a reason for his/her action and all parents love their children."

The evaluation above shows the student's attitude towards the story and also contains a moral statement in the last sentence.

According to the finding two, there were the differences in the use of narrative factors between five high-rated and five low-rated compositions. It was found that in high-rated group, the writers could represent all four factors of narrative pattern (Orientation, Complication, Resolution, and Evaluation). The writers in low-rated group could not represent all four factors of the pattern.

Discussion of the Finding

The Basic Generic Structure of Narrative Pattern in the Students' Compositions

According to the finding one, there were 39.53% of the students in this group could not employ Complication in their compositions. Instead, the writers in this group tended to enumerated the events of the day or express their feeling to some situations. Based on Labov and Waletzky's narrative pattern (1967), the characteristics of these compositions could not be analyzed as an effective narrative writing since they didn't represent an essential part, Complication, which contained a crisis of a story. The characteristics of this group seemed closely related to the pattern of Description as it aimed to convey the sensation and to tell what a writer see, hear, smell, feel, or taste without the use of a crisis in a story. The purpose of Narration and Description is quite different, but Narration needs to rely on descriptive details to make the story vivid. (Lannon, 1983; Lincoln, 1986). However, the characteristics of these compositions also coincided with the study of Dagher (1976), stating that in addition to the climactic narration that reveal personal experience with a crisis of it, there is another kind of narration, "Straight-line narration", which reveal a series of related incidents without rising to a crisis. Therefore, in a sense the compositions written by the students in this study may be considered narrative essays.

As mentioned in the previous section, there were 58.14% of the students in this group could employed all four factors of narrative pattern. Although not all of the students in this group could write their compositions with all factors, the great majority of these subject could use the pattern conforming to the narrative framework proposed by Labov and Waletzky's (1967). This finding supports previous studies in Mandler (1984), Rumelhart (1977), which referred to the narrative pattern of Labov and Waletzky's as stating that "narrative follow certain prototypical patterns or grammars and these pattern may be universal across culture".

As the nature of writing compositions from this group of Thai students have shown, these findings provide both guidance in writing effective narration and reflect the problems that might stem from students' own ability in writing and strategies instructors used to teach ESL writing.

The Differences in the Use of the Narrative Factors between High-Rated Compositions and Low-Rated Compositions

According to the finding two, the compositions in high-rated group contained all four factors of the narrative pattern. To compare with other studies on rhetorical organization, the finding two coincides with the study of James Martin and Joan Rothery (1986) which suggested that the stories classified by teachers as the best or most successful pieces usually conform closely to a structure of Labov and Waletzky's narrative pattern.

Before attempting to analyze the students' compositions, the researcher expected that the compositions representing all four factors of narrative pattern could always get high-scores. However, it was found that there were some compositions that represented all factors, but they got low scores. This might be because the evaluators evaluated the students' compositions not only in terms of rhetorical organization but also other factors. A student's composition with all factors of narrative pattern could not always be a good composition or make the evaluators satisfied because to consider a good composition depends on a number of factors. These might include a correctness of grammatical form and effectiveness of organizing paragraph.

Beyond the rhetorical organization, ESL students should be aware of a number of factors in writing an effective composition. According to Silva (1993), he provided the important elements for ESL writing. These elements consisted of the basic structure of sentences (topic sentence, support sentences, concluding sentence and transitions), and the various options of its development (illustration, exemplification, comparison, contrast, partition, classification, causal analysis, and so on). The other elements

included essay development and structural entities (introduction, body, and conclusion) and organizational patterns or modes (narration, description, exposition, and argumentation). As mentioned above, a good composition contains a number of factors. However, the rhetorical organization is one of the most important factors for the good composition.

Recommendations for English Teachers

According to the results of the study, It seemed that some students in this group lack abilities in composing a narrative. They need more knowledge related to narrative writing and to become more familiarized with this genre.

In teaching narrative writing, firstly, instructors should give an example of narrative writing such as a short story, news, and other sources of non-fiction. Then, the students should have an opportunity to analyze this example and determine the major characteristics of it. According to Gallagher (2000), suggests that when writing instructors teach students a particular genre, the instructor should make the students be familiar with this genre by reading, analyzing and discussing examples of it. He also states "...an essential aim of the genre approach is to determine what kind of texts are valued (and why?), and also to make these genres accessible to students in both reading and writing. By doing this, students are able to understand the purpose of each genre and its place within a set of genres and this allows students to deal with language shifts of various kinds..." (p. 67). Secondly, the instructors should emphasize their students that in addition to the factors concerning the narrative pattern (Orientation, Complication, Resolution and Evaluation) other essential elements of narrative writing also included the use of transitional words and chronological order. The instructors should make the students keep in mind that to compose effective narrative writing depends on a number of factors. To employ all factors of narrative pattern with the use of

appropriately transitional words and to organize in chronological order could not make a sense of completeness if the students could not color their story and bring the reader to the story world. So, the major goal of narrative writing as it creates a vivid imagination should be mentioned by the instructors.

Similar to other types of rhetorical organization, the students need to be guided by an understanding of genre and discourse theories. An English teacher should provide them with the framework of written discourse and pointed out those factors that influence writing for a particular purpose. Moreover, writing instructors working with ESL students need to emphasize that to select discourse type depends on a number of factors such as aim, cultural and traditional expectations as required by specific purposes. In addition, the instructors should provide the students with not only framework but also assignments, which can help students to distinguish various types of discourse and genre in order to apply them for their writing appropriately.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study aimed to analyze narrative pattern of the students' compositions written by 43 fourth year students at Naresuan University. As can be seen in Chapter III, the subjects of this study were confined to only two intact groups. The limitation of this study was the small number of subjects due to the reason that if the study was conducted in all groups of students having different instructors, it might cause a variation on the study. Therefore, since the research was conducted in a small group of EFL students, the findings should be limited to this group and may not be generalized to wider population. It is recommended that further study should be conducted large subjects so that the findings will be generalizable to other groups of EFL students. Moreover, this study represented the characteristics of the narrative pattern in the students' compositions. It required the students to write a narrative composition. Further

study should be conducted in order to see other types of rhetorical organization such as argumentative, descriptive, expository, etc.

In conclusion, the study aimed to discover the students' narrative pattern based on the framework of Labov and Waletzky's (1967). It also provided the major characteristics of this type of rhetorical organization of this group of Thai students and some information of the differences in the use of narrative factors between high-rated and low-rated composition. The researcher believes that an analysis of narrative compositions could represent some useful information in composing effective narrative writing and also provide an English instructor teaching EFL writing with some guidelines for teaching and evaluating students' writing.

