Narrative Discourse Features

Of

Central Ifugao Language

(MUNKALYON)

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1.O Introduction.

The narrative discourse is written from oral text in the central Ifugao language. Central Ifugao is geographically located towards the northern part of Ifugao. The language spoken in this part can be subdivided into three smaller ethnic languages with slight variations in the pronunciation and/or alphabets. The language is spoken in three municipalities with about 50,000 populations.

The story was orally narrated and taped. The narrator is about 92 years old. The only audience was the text collector who is also a relative of the narrator. The story happened some 65 years ago and at the barrio/county of Piwong in the municipality of Hingyon, then part of the municipality of Kiangan under the old Mountain Province.

The theme of the story is "haddakan" which purpose is the establishment of the guilty party. Haddakan is employed in cases relating to boundary disputes, theft, and slander. The story is about a malicious slander that stems from a suggestion of theft by the accused (the narrator). The object of the controversy is a ten peso bill that was somehow dropped by the accused in the vicinity where the two complainants were at the time it happened. Since theft is one of the most damaging accusations a person or family can ever be charged with, second only to adultery, the suggestion of theft was taken very seriously. The complainants thought their persons and honour were slandered. Conflict of this kind does not go to "haddakan" right away. Most probably there were interest groups from common and neutral relatives who might have tried to negotiate for an amicable settlement, aside from Dammukay, the uncle of the accused, but somehow failed. There was the hardening of positions (S#15 and S#18). The hiring of professional shaman made the conflict more serious. (Conflicts can be settled without seriously severing relations even with the employment of "haddakan". In this case the "Haddakan" is done without the "baki" rituals, which would then render the hiring of professional shaman or

"munbaki" irrelevant). In the end the accused was vindicated and by inference proved the two got the ten peso bill. However, up to this time what actually happened to that ten peso bill has never been established.

2.0 The Plot Structure.

The notional structure of this narrative discourse closely follows Longacre's plot. It has all the seven suggested components of a notional plot structure. The subject narrative story can be broken down into the following:

2.1 Setting: Sentences 1 to 8.

The setting has the following features:

► S#1 provides the temporal setting, "One day.."

► S# 4 to S#6 provides the temporal setting.

► Two of the major participants were introduced (including the third party).

► Stated the circumstances relating to the object of the controversy

► Employs tail-head linkage (S#3 and S#4).

► Use of stative verbs (S#1,4,5 and 6).

2.2 **Inciting Moment**: Sentences 9 through 18

The inciting moment has the following features:

► Sentence #9 marks the specific spatial location where the protagonist changed direction by 180 degrees to talk to the two individuals who became his accusers.

► The protagonist statements in the monologue (S#10-S#12), which sounded like pleading and at the same time accusation, were taken very seriously. The relatives of the two antagonists worsen the situation when they, collectively, interpreted the words of the protagonist as a slander on their persons and honor, and right away challenged the protagonist to a "haddakan". The challenge was readily accepted.

► Employed dialogue.

► Employed tail-head linkage; the repetition of "ihadak".

2.3 **Developing Tension:** Sentences 19 to 95.

► Tension increases when all parties decided to employ professional shamans, the "munbaki". The rituals performed by the shaman includes call from the divine world or deities to pronounce curses and bring doom to their opponents to influence the result of an undertaking.

► The surface structure, though in oral form, employed contrasts to achieve the notional plot. a). One party is materially prepared while at least one of the opposings parties, a major participant, lacks resources. b). The materially prepared party got good results with their "baki" while the two opposing parties got bad results. c). The shaman of the protagonist continues to support his clients all the way to the finish, while the major antagonist was deserted by his hired shaman, and left them on their own. These discrepancies added to the build up of tension.

► Tension was achieved when on the side of the protagonist, his chosen shaman was late in coming, then unexpectedly postponed the performance of the rituals, and did not appear at the appointed time. This was encoded in a rather long chunk, sentences 23 through 29.

► Employed tail-head linkage (Sentences # 28-29; 34-35; 44-45-47; 62-64; 66-67; 70-71)

► The use of dialogue (S#32-34; 42-49; 88-90) or direct and indirect quotations.

► The high unexpectancy level was employed leading to the climax (S#81 to 82).

► The pacing of events was slower compared to the climax.

2.4 **Climax:** sentences 96 through 105.

► The number of events that happened in a shorter time were more, compared to the events in the previous lines. The verbs to non-verbs

ratio though, does not give us a hint whether or not maximum deletion was ever employed.

► The employment of lexical choice achieved the notional objective of a climax. Some of the words used are: "tinumkuk" or 'shouted'; "nahilhilit" 'broke into many piecies' and "nakahaddakan" the superlative of "nahadakan" which can be glossed to mean 'hit and proven guilty' .

► The use of exclamatory expression "neyya!" 'there it is' suggest conclusive evidence.

► The climax ends with the taking home of the the pot money (S#105).

2.5 **Denouement**: sentences 106 to 115.

► Tension was reduced with the performance of the "hidit" ritual. It is a mending-of-relations rite through an unsolicited proxy.

► The refusal of the major participant prepared the audience for undesirable things in the future.

► It reverts back to the menial activities.

► Ends with a summary statement (S#113 to 115).

2.6 **Final Suspense**: sentences 116 to 124.

The final suspense can be broken down as follows:

► Setting (S#116).

► Inciting moment (S#117).

► Developing tension (S#118 through S#122).

► Anti-climax (S#123).

The conclusion of this sub-plot was merged with the conclusion of the main story.

2.7 **Conclusion**: sentences 124 and 125.

States how the conflict was finally resolved. Intermarriages had been a potent means of resolving conflicts; even the most fatal conflicts like murder and revenge killing can be resolved by means of intermarriages.

3.0 **Participants Reference**.

There are at least four major participants namely: Ogama, the protagonist and narrator; his cousin Balinon; his hired shaman, Anniban; and Yogyog, one of the complainants/litigants. The man referred to as "ibban Nabanalan" or 'brother of Nabanalan' is relegated to a minor participant, although he is one of the three parties to the conflict. "ibban Nabanalan" was personally mentioned only in two instances (S#6 and S#90).

Major as well as minor participants are introduced by **kinship relation** to a referent person (see chart 3.1). Those who cannot be referenced to anyone among the participants are introduced by their **place of residence** as the case of Anniban (S#19). Anniban was later addressed by the brothers of the protagonist and narrator as "**apu**" (S#46) which can mean either **'grandparent'** or the equivalent of **'sir'**. The latter must have been meant in this case since Anniban was just a hired professional sahaman. Sentence 111 implied purely business relationship. Relatives would likely decline to be paid for their services or at least, returns a portion of the service fee as an acknowledgment and affirmation of such a kinship relation.

The case of the "baba'in **imbabalen** bon **Ekek** an didan iPindongan" may have been meant to be introduced by her kin relation to Ekek and his place of residence. Had she been known by her first name, probably "**baba'in**" was dropped in favor of her first name, and the contracted modifier phrase "**bon**" was totally dropped. "**bon**" is the contracted form of "**bo deya an**" and pronounced "bo deyan". Ekek was not a participant. The modifier phrase "an didan iPindongan" is ambiguous as to whom it was referring to. It could be referring to Ekek or the "babai" or both. It probably refers to both Ekek and the "babai" plus others.

Subsequently, both minor and major participants, without exception, are reintroduced by their first names. Where participants switches back and forth in a number of clauses or sentences, the corresponding third person personal pronouns are usually used. This results in a series of identical pronouns referring to different individuals or groups of individuals. Chart 2.1 supports this observation. Where identical pronouns are used, the only clue given to the audience is by way of context and the schema shared by both the narrator and the audience.

Another observation about the feature of the discourse is the use of a referent person to refer to a larger group of individuals (S#3, S#6, S#13, S#19, S#22, S#82, S#84). This is marked with the plural third person personal pronoun "da". At these instances, the referent person is use to label a particular group of individuals and give them a temporary identity for the duration of the discourse.

4.0 **Episode Boundary Markers.**

The use of **contrastive clause.** The narrator uses contrastive clauses. Sentence 19 states two similar and simultaneous courses of action taken. "O ya e' galiyon hi Anniban … ya e ginalin da Binumnga…Dayog…" ('So I went to choose Anniban … and Binumnga chosed Dayog…') is an example of this contrastive clause. Sentences 19 through 25 is one episode, and sentences 26 through 59 is another episode. However they talk about three activities happening simultaneously. The activity of the third group, a minor party, was simply summed up in one short sentence and as a comment (S#22).

Similarly, sentence 59 which ends an episode, and sentence 60 are linked by contrastive clause marker. Sentence 60 starts a new episode but it is lunched from the last sentence of the preceding episode. "**deyot**" is the contracted form of "**dey ot**" which literally means 'there and' which actually means 'there at that point …(he returns..). While "**Ya den**" is a contracted form of "**ya dey an**" which encode contrast which would be glossed to mean **'in contrast to**…(his going back… we continued on…). The act of Anniban turning to go back, and the continued movement of the rest of the party provided contrast. Sentence 83 starts a new episode that ends with sentence 96. This episode is signaled with the phrase "alina on" which may either encode the idea of suddenness and/or surprise depending on the context. In this case "**Alina on**" encoded surprise rather than suddenness. The surprise came about when the unexpected happened; they came from a different location. The contrast is from the expected to the unexpected.

Sentence 107 is another similar example of a sentence introducer "**kalyon ta**" encoding surprise. This time, what was normally expected did not happen. "Kalyon" may mean **'say'** or **'thought'** as what the mind expected. In this particular case the latter is meant. The antagonists refused to mend whatever severed relationship and reconcile,

saved only by an unsolicited proxy. This scenario predicated a continuation of the conflict and points to a constituents of plot in the story, the final suspense.

5.0 Use of Verbs.

The verbs are observed to have been inflected for aspect to mark completive or non-completive aspects. Reduplication of stem encode continuative or duration.

Prominence has no distinctive mark in the verb forms. Instead prominence is communicated by the tone of the speaker and by way of fronting. Fronting in this case is bringing what is to be in focus as near as possible to the verb or verb phrase.

The verbs to non-verbs ratios for the following plot structure are as follows:

- ► Setting (S#1 to S#8)   1:8.7
- ► Inciting Moment (S#9 to S#18)   1:8.2
- ► Developing Tension (S#19 to S#95)   1:9.6
- ► Climax (S#96 to S#105)   1:7.0
- ► Denouement (S#106 to S#115)   1:6.0
- ► Final Suspense (S#116 to S#123)   1:7.3
- ► Conclusion (S#124 to S#125)   1:10

The foregoing ratio did not include pronouns attached to the verbs or words contracted into one or attached to other words. Cases like these are counted as one word.

Note that the ratio is significantly lower in the sections from S#96 to S#123, which include the plot constituents of Climax, Denouement, and final Suspense. For further discussion of the significance of these ratios, see Walrod 1979: 25-28.

6.0 Conclusion.
6.1 Introduction and re-introduction of participants.

It can be safely concluded that narrative discourse relating actual events in the central Ifugao language prefers to introduce participants, without bias toward minor or major participant, by kinship relation to a referent person. A referent person must have

been known or familiar to the audience. Decisions as to who is qualified to be a referent person is left to the sole judgment of the narrator. Obviously, the nearest male kin are the likely candidates to be a referent person; prestige and prominence are added qualifications.

The form or formula used to introduce participants may take the following form: (Particle/ Noun Marker) +/- (Given Name) + (Kinship Relation) + (Referent Person) +/- (Place of Residence of Referent Person). This formula is also used in the labeling of groups of individuals collectively referred to and viewed as single unit participants.

Narrative discourse in the central Ifugao region may reintroduce participant by their first name, except where the narrator, is related to any of the participants where he/she is oblige to append the kinship relation to the first name. Usually though, third person personal pronouns are used. This is particularly true in cases where there are more than one participant or group of participant on stage at a particular time span; and they are referred to by switching back and forth. This occurs in the dialogue section of the narrative.

6.2 Verbs Use.

The kind of verbs used in the mainline does not show any substantial evidence to make a conclusion about how they may help to realize any of the notional plot the narrator wanted to achieve. What may be concluded at this point in time is that verbs are inflected for aspect. There is a need to make further studies before case marking in this language can be established. Case markings usually mark the roles of the syntactic constituents to verbs or verbs phrases, in other words that which is put to prominent position.

What can be concluded about prominence marking, aside from intonation, is fronting that which is to be put to prominence position to as near as possible to the verb or verb phrase.

6.3 Case Marking and Activity Prominence.

This researcher did not have other information and enough material to make even a thesis about Activity Prominence as contrasted to case or role markings. However, bare

intuition tells me that activity may have been meant to put into prominence or focus in some portions of a narrative discourse; in which case it makes all the other syntactic constituents secondary. The following events or activity is forwarded for study:

S# 3a "kumaʔanaʔ" 'I get out'

S# 6a "ʔibangngadʔu" 'I return back'

S# 23 " kumaan … an taynana" 'get out…he leave'

S# 30 "Muntutunnud ami" 'we walk following one another' . Note that "ami" is obligatory, otherwise it could have been dropped.

S# 35 "madagga ami" 'we continue on' . Again "ami" is obligatory.

S# 46 "Pidwonda" 'they repeated'

S# 55 "mibangngad" 'return back' contrasted to "madagga"

S# 78 "Ihahapitda" 'they talk (it) over'

The following list is preliminary. It may be found out that some may have been indeed actually mark by normal prominence marking/s. It has yet to be established how central Ifugao discourse marks prominence. It may be worth noting that some of these clauses are one word sentences.

Personal remark. As a whole this discourse analysis exercise has helped me understand some of the features of language in general and the central Ifugao or the "munkalyon" language in particular.