

## SOME FEATURES OF NARRATIVE DISCOURSE IN KADAZAN

HOPE M. HURLBUT

### 0. INTRODUCTION

Some outstanding features of narrative discourse in the Labuk dialect of Kadazan<sup>1</sup> are described in this paper.

Several features of discourse were examined with a view to comparing native next with translated texts. It is hoped that such a comparison will point out areas of special difficulty which would hinder or distort a text resulting in an unnatural translation, and that guidelines can be formed to aid in future translation into the Kadazan language.

During the study of native first person narrative, the author felt subjectively that a translation of the Gospel of Mark seemed to have features that are found exclusively in folktales, so a comparison with features of folktales has been included.

### 1.0. FEATURES OF ACTUAL-EVENT NARRATIVES

The following is based primarily on an autobiographical narrative entitled 'My Marriage'. Reference is made to other narratives where necessary to illustrate certain features of discourse.

#### 1.1. OUTLINE OF SEMANTIC CONTENT

The text is a first person report about a marriage ceremony. The story was related in November 1972 by a woman from the village of Kamansi, not far from the mouth of the Labuk River.

Paragraph 1: The narrator introduces herself and where she is from.

Her husband is introduced and where he is from.

The husband and friends go upriver to the wife's village.

He is to go up to the wife's house the next day.

Paragraph 2: They sleep one night.

Many gather.

The custom of carrying the bride and groom throughout the wedding is explained.

Paragraph 3: The next day the ceremony takes place.

The bridal party goes downstream to the husband's house.

Rain comes - all get wet except the bride and groom.

Difficulties of travel in the rain are described - the rain stops on arrival.

Paragraph 4: Many Chinese guests are invited.

Paragraph 5: Description of feasting, drinking and dancing.

Narrator expresses shame at what happened and gives more details.

Paragraph 6: Conclusion.

## 1.2. SURFACE STRUCTURE

Some of the outstanding features of the surface structure of narrative discourse as found in the text 'My Marriage' and corroborated by data from other texts are described and illustrated in the following paragraphs.

### 1.2.1. Groups

"Within a discourse, the content is not presented in an undifferentiated stream, like an inventory or shopping list. Whatever is to be said is grouped, so that related material is together, and the relationship of the groups to each other may be seen." (Callow 1974)

In this study clauses will not be dealt with, but sentences and paragraphs and episodes will be described briefly.

#### 1.2.1.1. Sentences

Sentences in Kadazan are composed of one or more independent clauses, which are linked together.

A new sentence is recognised each time there is a change of participant or there is a change of time or location unless the sentences are conjoined.

The length of sentences varies from one word to as many as 30. The average length is about eight words.

So far 14 sentence types have been set up on the basis of the semantic relationship between the parts of the sentence. On this basis

it was found that the various conjunctions occurred in more than one sentence type, and that each conjunction had a rather wide range of meaning.

Only five of these sentence types occur in our present narrative.

#### Simple Sentence

Tontok diri kumawin oku do ioku nopo nga sodi oku Kamansi. (*Time that marry I that I there I Kamansi.*) 'At the time that I got married, as for me I was at Kamansi.'

#### Non-sequential-juxtaposed

Varo sonsodoppo dii, nokoodoppo dii. (*There-was one-night, slept.*) 'There was one night, they slept.'

#### Merged

Minaja oku diri savoku mongoi sodi valai doisido. (*Followed I that husband-my go there house his.*) 'I accompanied my husband to go to his house.'

#### Co-ordinate

Jadi osusapo dino tumulak vagu poliad di talud, om au nogi antangan do osovutno iri kansang marun-darun. (*So-then difficult that push-off again push-away boat, and not also see for misty that heavy raining.*) 'So then it was difficult to push off the boat again, and one could not see also for that heavy rain made it misty.'

#### Addition

Na mongoi nopo modsu atau pun sitataai atau pun sisobu, na lumopot do nulou om mokibalung do tulun. (*Then going bathe or want-to-defecate or want-to-urinate, then wrap-up with cloth and ask-to-carry-on-shoulders person.*) 'Then as for going to bathe or wanting to defecate, or wanting to urinate, then one wraps up in a cloth and asks someone to carry one.'

#### 1.2.1.2. Paragraphs

Paragraphs are set up on the basis of change of time setting and/or location setting. In the discourse 'My Marriage' all paragraphs are marked initially by a sentence with a temporal margin, and some are closed by a temporal margin also.

#### Paragraph 1

Tontok diri kumawin oku ... (*Time that marry I ...*) 'At the time that I got married ...'

## Paragraph 2

Varo sonsodoppo dii ... (*There-was one-night ...*) '*There was one night ...*'

## Paragraph 3

Jadi korikotpo dii susuvab ... (*So-then arrived next-day ...*) '*So then the next day having arrived ...*'

## Paragraph 4

Korikot ikonoi sodi ... (*Arrived we there ...*) '*We having arrived there ...*'

## Paragraph 5

Om kawin nopo gia di silo dagai di pogulu ... (*And marry there ours before ...*) '*And on getting married at our place before ...*'

## Paragraph 6

Om irino dii tontok kumawin ... (*and that-is time marry ...*) '*And that was it at the time of getting married ...*'

## 1.2.1.3. Episodes

The present story 'My Marriage' does not have episodes as opposed to paragraphs, that is each separate episode is contained in one paragraph. There are however episodes in a third person narrative about 'Headman Tinggawi and the Bubua'.

## Episode 1

The story begins with two paragraphs giving the setting and background about the wife before her marriage, and how she became a Muslim.

## Episode 2

There are three paragraphs describing her married life, children, her final illness and death.

## Episode 3

The main episode covers 12 paragraphs telling how her spirit indwelt a bubua (an animal) which came to bother her husband because he caused her to break her Muslim vows. It ends in the death of the bubua.

## Episode 4

The last two paragraphs contain an overlay which tells the whole story again in an abbreviated form, giving the surprising information that the bubua did not die after all.