

## MAPPING SCHEMATIC STRUCTURES IN NARRATIVES: A GENRE-BASED APPROACH

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### Abstract

The present study aims to investigate a genre-based story phases analysis as to explore schematic structures in terms of stages and phases embedded in the selected narratives, by adopting the Sydney School approach that is inspired by Systemic Functional Linguistics. The analysis has been achieved through story family genre framework (Martin & Rose, 2008), which includes story phases genre analysis as its subcategory. Three narratives have been taken from Gulistan e Saadi with the purpose to explore the hierarchical organization of the stories and unfold stages and phases of the selected texts. By applying story family strategy, the analysis has been achieved through three generic structures, namely orientation, complication and resolution, and through phases such as solution, reaction, comment, events and so on. The stages are stable components, while phase are variable. The findings state that the specific story generic frames unfold events through different hierarchies of stages and phases. Neither stages nor phases are constant in the narratives, rather they show inconsistency and variability in the stories.

### Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to achieve a narrative-based genre analysis of the selected stories from Gulistan e Saadi in order to explore schematic structures (generic structures) in the texts. The focus of the study is on exploration of hierarchical organization as to what extent stages and phases are constant and variable in the selected narratives, seen through the lens of genre-based narrative analysis. The aim is to achieve Systemic Functional genre-based analysis in order to

find out the types of stages and phases exist in the narratives and what is the status of these structures in the narratives. Since genre theory relates to the culture-specific ways in which message is structured, which includes interactions, identification of interacting situation in which certain categories of texts are employed, and formal properties of texts are related. (Charaudeau & Maingueneau, 2002, as cited in Rost, 2013) so, this organization can be explored in episodes.

Functionalist perspective of genre analyses texts by resorting to resources provided by Systemic Functional Linguistics. Following the Sydney School approach (Martin & Rose, 2008), which outlines the story genre model, stories are considered an important offshoot of Functionalist genre-based theory, where narrative are considered in terms of temporal and casual ordering, having different stages and phases which are unfolded through step by step approach.

Narrative inquiry has gained wider acceptance having multifaceted modes of objects of inquiring conversations in a broad range of disciplinary fields and research contexts. Stories are perceived to be a unique form of discourse that are built on consistent, identifiable structures. Their typical content and ordering can be described in terms of internal structures called schemata that are organizational units of the stories (Bartlett 1932, as cited in Herman et al. 2010). In Functional context of narratives, it may be understood as the different stage and phases that construct the narrative and which are realized through the interpretation of Functional labels such as Orientation- Resolution structures and setting, event, solution etc. labels.

To analyse narratives, the Sydney School genre based- approach (Martin & Rose, 2008) suggests a specific story phases genre-based strategy, where schematic structures will be explored by applying Functional labels such as orientation, complication, resolution, evaluation, comment, solution, effect, events, reaction etc. Following the story genre framework, a detailed analysis of the selected narratives suggested that there is variability in all the narratives both in terms of stages and phases but phases analysis shows that there is greater level of inconsistency and variability as suggested by the findings of the analysis.

### **Gulistan e Saadi**

Gulistan e Saadi is a representative work of Sheikh Sadi Sherazi. It is not only a masterpiece of Persian literature but also included in one of the gems of world literature. According to Ghobadi and Ghasemzadeh (2014) Golestan e Saadi is an unparalleled masterpiece as it conveys moral, social and humanistic messages. The book reflects Saadi's creative spirit where it gives the message of sagacity and his narratives provide answers to every simple and complicated issue. Asadollahi (2019) maintains that the marked features of Golestan e Saadi are simplicity of expression, conciseness and brevity, fluency and honesty. Golestan is a manifestation of Saadi's achievements in simple language, having a clear accent and honesty of purpose for the people. The stories in Gulistan e Saadi have a definite purpose, a moral lesson to teach. The narratives are short but have complications which are resolved in the end, alongside conveying a specific message.

### **Narratives as Story Genre**

Narratives have pervasive influence in human life. Stories are permeating part of human collaboration where people realize the interactions through story narration (Mieroop, 2021). Stories incorporate elements such as orientation of temporal and causal events, character identifications, disruptions and goals (Rost, 2013). Narratives are the windows used by humans

to elaborate experience. Narratives are the texts which tell events in a sequential order, in terms of casual connections and temporal aspects. Stories are not only described in terms of temporal ordering of different happenings, but also as the kinds of texts including some kind of complications in the normal development of proceedings (Utakis, 2005). Narratives are intricate stories which have powerful social role that goes beyond mere entertainment with multiple generic purposes. They have sequential ordering and orient the readers to the people, time and place (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Narratives are the stories which resolve complicating events, the happenings in which something goes wrong which needs to be set right. Narrative genre involves disruption of events which is evaluated and disruption is resolved by the protagonist which returns story to the status of equilibrium (Martin & Rose, 2008).

Temporality and causality are the most fundamental aspects of narratives which are present at a number of different textual levels. Temporality is related to the relationship between events in the story, the arrangement of the world of discourse. Causality establishes connections among happenings inside the story. It connects the story in terms of space and time. (Herman et al. 2010). Considering the Functional narrative genre- based perspective, temporality and causality become the important components for events realization as the text unfolds following step by step procedures and realization of events takes place linearly under different staged and phrasal categories as where different episodes of the text are presented as timeline.

### **Schematic Structures**

Schematic structures are in fact macrostructures of a text which analyzed the text at macro level through the aid of micro structural properties. A macrostructure includes multiple macro propositions in a way that the whole macrostructure is constituted hierarchically, including microstructures. (Van Dijk, 1986 as cited, in Esfehni, 2013). Macrostructures not only cover the holistic structures and different properties, but also consider a layer of detached structures joined together by virtue of a variety of cohesive devices. (Esfehni, 2013)

Keeping in view the current research, schematic structures may be described as the staged, step-by step exploration of the genre. The term relates to different narrative stages and phases in the text. According to Flowerdew (2012) Schematic structures are the structural formula with reference to internal discourse patterns. Butler (2003) opines that schematic structure consists of a set of functional elements having a particular order of occurrence. Labov and Waletzky (1967) presented the original model of schematic structures to analyze narratives. It follows labels as Abstract (a signal to prepare the reader for the upcoming events of the text), Orientation (sets the story in time and space), Complication (culmination of crisis), Evaluation (establishes the point of view of the narrative), Resolution (the protagonist resolves the crisis), Coda (refers back to the theme of the Abstract).

### **Story Phases**

From Functional perspective, narratives have been treated in terms of engagement functions, from stages as well as phases perspective. According to Martin and Rose (2008) the stories' privileged idea is to show how they share a similar set of resources in order to move the story forward to engage the readers. Stages are the stable components of the organization of a story and they unfold in an expected sequence. Phases comprise of one or more message and they have variable sequence. This model is an extension of Labov and Waletzky (1967) model of

narrative with certain modifications as it rejects to include the stage of Abstract and Code and adds phases to explore events in stories.

**Table 1 Common Story Phases**

Phases types	Engagement functions
Setting	presenting context (identities, activities, locations)
Description	evoking context (sensual imagery)
Events	succeeding events
Effect	material outcome
Reaction	behavioral / attitudinal outcome
Problem	counter expectant creating tension
Solution	counter expectant releasing tension
Comment	intruding narrator's comments
Reflection	intruding participants' thoughts

### Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic functional theory takes a functional stance towards language and views language as a meaning making resource. It is based on the premise that language use is functional, related to the idea as how people use language. It functions to make meanings by applying different resources on the texts and these meanings are strongly influenced by the social as well as cultural context in which they are used (Eggins, 2004). The theory considers language as a complex system of interconnected choices where speakers make choices unconsciously when they communicate. Systemic Functional Linguistics has an abiding relationship with the Australian genre-based perspective as it provides a toolkit of resources which are helpful in realizing generic stages and phases. The theory is based on the premise that language cannot be analyzed on the whole. Text has to be broken down into chunks and segmented for the purpose of analysis. This task can be achieved through individual words, section of speech or longer stretches of language and in this context clause occupies central importance.

Functional grammar analyses language in social context and it is under the influence of social context that a specific lexicogrammatical choice is construed. According to Thomson (2013) Systemic Functional Linguistics aims to explore a large network of choices in terms of meanings that the people desire to express and in terms of functions that they want to perform. Since the Australian genre theory understands and interprets genre in terms of context of culture so, Functional labels are useful to make meanings from the context, both from linguistic as well as situational aspects.

### The Sydney School

Genre is the organizing principle which gave birth to what is now recognized as the Sydney School approach, which adopts functional linguistic perspective to analyze text. Martin & Rose (2008) provide the working definition of genre as a “staged, goal-oriented purposeful activity in which speakers engage in as members of our culture” (p.6). This implies that genre takes us one step forward, it moves toward a specific destination and reflects on the cultural practices of individuals. The Sydney School approach to genre is built on systemic-functional linguistics. The school has developed a well-articulated research program which has pedagogical applications in the field of genre literacy. The approach defines genres by their function or purpose, with specific relation to a sociocultural context. The school maintains that different genres are different ways of using language to achieve different culturally established tasks. The Sydney scholars have developed generic schemes for the analyses of the schematic structure of genres where staging is expected to be the main linguistic reflex of differences in purpose. The stages help in linguistic realization of generic stages by resorting to lexicogrammatical resources (Zienkowski et al. 2011).

The school maintains that genres can be distinguished by recurrent global patterns (similarities and differences among different genres) and recurrent local patterns (stages) as well. There is a vast range of genres outlined by the Sydney School approach such as types of stories, reports, explanations, arguments and text responses etc. (Gee & Handford, 2013). Genre theory draws on Systemic Functional theory which provides resources to organize and analyze the texts. Stages and phases are the functional labels that have been used to analyse narratives.

### **Literature Review**

Genre analysis is a precise strategy which tries to make meanings from discourses through step by step approach. Genres are organized in particular ways and the term schematic structures is applied to realize different stages and phases in those genres. The schematic structures of narrative text refer to functional components which sequence the text in phases and stages. It is the idea of mapping of the hierarchical schema of texts. From Functional perspective of narrative analysis, the first major inroad took place through the text analysis of discovery of different phases when Hasan (1977) published her paper on text structure, which focused on appointment making. Her obligatory stages for this genre were Identification ^ Application ^ Offer ^ Confirmation. Labov and Waletzky's (1967) paper on the narratives of personal experience focused on schematic structure, including obligatory and optional staging. They argued that the primary role of a narrative is to summarize experience. This suggests that narratives are recognized chiefly by their formal structure and not by their functions.

Martin (1999) analyzed the macro and micro recount analysis of Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *A long Walk to Freedom*. Through the macro based approach Martin discovered the different stages in the life of Mandela, from childhood to old age. Martin and Rose (2008) state different point of view. They argue that the important thing in a narrative is how the central characters resolve the occurring complication. They cite some narratives that follow a certain sequence. The narrative of Karen details how her aboriginality created a problem while growing up with a white family and how she made efforts to resolve these problems by tracing her real parents. Labov (2010) considered narrative from structural angles, the temporal organization, the evaluative aspect. His findings suggest that temporal juncture exists between the two clauses and any change in the order of clauses leads to change in the interpretation of events. Suhartini (2016) analyzed schematic structures of the selected text books with the aim to explore

schematic structures, the social purpose of narratives and linguistic features by applying transitivity system. The conclusions drawn from the study suggested that four out of the selected six texts fulfilled the schematic structure criteria in terms of Orientation, Complication and Resolution. Five out of six narratives fulfilled the social purposes and all narratives had linguistic features in them. Zein et al. (2019) investigated the schematic structure in narrative text of university students, seen through the lens of different transitivity procedures to realize different linguistic properties in stories. The conclusions drawn suggested that there was an incomplete part of the generic structure and linguistic properties which are found in the analysis of story text analysis of university students.

The above mentioned researches tried to explore generic structures from their own specific aspect. The present study is important since it tries to investigate schematic structures of the narratives with reference to stages and phases, as this attempt makes this research a worthwhile endeavor.

### **Research Questions**

The study attempts to answer the following specific questions:

1. How does narrative genre-based strategy unfold schematic structures?
2. To what extent the selected texts show conformity with the story phases and express variations in terms of stages and phases, following Sydney School (Martin and Rose, 2008).

### **Research Methodology**

Following the Sydney School story family genre framework (Martin & Rose, 2008), the qualitative based research tries to achieve story genre analysis of the three stories taken from Gulisatan e Saadi. The selected data has been analyzed by placing it in the narrative generic structure framework to investigate schematic structures in order to explore their consistency and variability. In terms of stages, orientation, complication, resolution and evaluation structures have been explored, while setting, problem, effect, reflection, comment, reaction, solution, events are different phases that have been explored. The findings of the study will be fruitful to understand as what are the different stages and phases in the stories, explored through genre based - analysis of narratives, and to what extent the selected narratives show consistency and variability in terms of stages and phases.

### **Data Analysis**

The Sydney School narrative genre based approach (Martin & Rose, 2008) is helpful to unfold different generic structures of the text. Thus, the data is interpreted generically with stages and phases in the stories, exploring macro functions in the text.

#### **Text 1 Orientation**

setting      Once a king and a Persian slave were sailing in the same boat. The slave had never been at sea, and never experienced any calamity.

#### **Complication**

problem1    After sometime the boat was hit by a storm and started tossing.

- reaction 1 It was very inconvenient for the passengers.
- problem2 All remained quiet except the slave who in fear of being drowned began to cry and tremble,
- reaction 2 and created inconvenience for the others.
- solution 1 The others tried to pacify him by kindness and affection
- problem 3 but he didn't hear anybody.
- reaction 3 When the uneasiness lasted longer the king also became displeased.
- setting 2 In that boat there happened to be a sergeant,
- solution 2 who said, "With your permission, may I quieten him."
- comment 1 "It will be a great favor," the king said.

### **Resolution**

- solution 3 The sergeant ordered the slave to be thrown into the water,
- effect 1 so that he could have experienced the true danger of life.
- events 1 Two persons threw him in the sea and when he was about to be downed they pulled him back to the boat, and he clung the stem with both of his hands.
- reaction 4 Then he sat down and remained quiet.
- comment 2 This appeared strange to the king, who could not comprehend the wisdom in the action taken by the sergeant, and he asked for it.
- effect 2 The sergeant replied: "Before he had experienced the danger of being drowned, he knew not about the safety of the boat.

- Evaluation** A man does not realize the worth of safety from the misfortune until he has tasted it.

In this first narrative the pattern of stages is conventional as the story starts with Orientation once a king... with setting as sub move where we get the description of slave and his inexperience of sea life. As it has been argued that stories often start with Once upon a time etc. the same feature of narrative takes place in the current narrative. This sets the stage for the readers to draw their attention and engages their interest, where the reader gets absorbed as he delves deep into the story. The reader of the story not only gets ready for what is going to happen but also a sort of sense of curiosity and suspense is created for the upcoming events. Temporal conjunction After introduces the crisis where the Complication stage sets in motion which includes different phases like problem, reaction etc. These functional labels help to segment the



story into phases which make the text of the narrative more comprehensible for readers in terms of recognizing different episodes in the text.

After reaching the culminating point, the complication in the story is resolved when the slave is ordered to be thrown into the sea. At the Resolution stage, solution, effect and event are the structures which have often been repeated. The story terminates with the Evaluation providing a sort of moral lesson for the readers. This is where the attitude, opinions, arguments, conflicts that are negotiated in the story that are evaluated and analyzed. The whole buildup of the story has been evaluated in the last line that experience is the best teacher as man learns more through bitter experience than receiving pieces of advice from others. The story is consistent in terms of stages but there are variations in terms of phases that has been exemplified through the presence of functional labels.

### **Text 2 Orientation**

setting It is related that while a deer was being roasted for Nushirvan, a king of Persia, famous for his justice.

### **Complication**

problem no salt could be fund.  
 events A boy was sent to a village to bring some salt.  
 solution The boy brought it and presented it to the king  
 comment 1 who asked whether he had paid for it.  
 comment 2 "No," said the boy.

### **Resolution**

comment 3 "Pay for the salt;" said the king,  
 effect 1 "lest it should become a custom and the village  
 be ruined."  
 reaction Having been asked what harm could arise from such a trifling demand  
 comment 4 "The foundation of oppression was small in the world," said the king.  
 "Whoever enlarged it, so that it reached its present magnitude, is at fault."  
 effect 2 If the king eats one apple from the garden of a subject, his slaves will pull down  
 the whole tree. For five eggs, which the king allows to be taken by force, the  
 people belonging to his army will put a thousand fowls on the spit."

### **Evaluation**

A tyrant does not remain in the world, but the curse on him abides forever!



Like the first narrative, there is the presence of Orientation structure in this narrative which presents the setting with the specific purpose to orient the reader towards some problem which will be resolved later on. In the Complication stage, there is only one problem which has been resolved soon, however, there exist variations in terms of phases as, unlike the first narrative, where there was the presence of more than one problem at the Complication stage, here only one problem exists. Similarly, there are variations regarding the presence of other phases like solution and events phases. Resolution stage also reflects multiple variations where some labels have been repeated, a few occur only once while few are absent. The final stage again, like the first narrative, conveys a deep message which is expressed as the narrator passes the judgements that evil acts are always reproachable and bring a bad name for the wrong doer forever.

In the narrative, the stages patterning is sequential. Orientation leads to Complication with disruption which is resolved finally and then comes the Evaluation. However, the phases patterns are thickly variable in this second story and some phases have been repeated more frequently such as comment (repeated four times) suggesting that participants' involvement is more pronounced in this story.

### **Text 3 Complication**

- problem            A king fell seriously ill and all hopes of his recovery vanished. The more the disease was cured the more it became painful.
- solution 1        At last the physicians agreed that this disease could not be cured except by means of bile of a person endowed with certain qualities.
- events 1          Orders were issued to search for an individual of this kind.

### **Resolution**

- A son of a farmer was discovered to possess the qualities mentioned by the doctors.
- events 2        The king summoned the father and mother of the boy, whose consent he got by giving them a huge amount of wealth.
- solution 2       The Qazi issued a decree to shed the blood of a person for the health of the king.
- events 3        The boy was brought to the altar and the executioner was directed to slaughter the boy.

### **Complication 2**

- reaction 1        When all was ready the boy looked toward the sky and smiled.

comment 1 "Why do you laugh in such a position?", the king asked.  
 reaction 1 "A son looks to the affection of his parents," said the boy. "If they fail, they are expected to bring the case before the Qazi to seek justice.

**Complication 3** But in the present case, the parents have agreed to get my blood shed for the trash of this world.

events 4 The Qazi has issued a decree to kill me.

reflection The king thinks he will recover his health only through slaying me and I see no other refuge besides Allah Almighty. To whom shall I complain against your brutality, if I am to seek justice from your hand.

**Resolution** The king felt disturbed and on hearing these words he could not control his tears and said,

comment 2 "It is better for me to die than to shed the blood of an innocent boy."

reaction 2 He kissed the head and eyes of the boy and presented him with a lot of wealth.

solution 3 It is said that the king also recovered within a week.

The third narrative starts with complicated event, "A king fell seriously ill..." which creates a dramatic situation and suddenly involves the reader. The presence of this structure in the narrative is unique since most stories follow conventional structure as they start with Orientation structure which leads to disruption finally the disruption is resolved. Though stages' hierarchical patterning remains almost the same in the previous two stories but in the present narrative it is different. Thus the present narrative violates this order which is unique but at the same time the narrative is more inviting as the disruption is engaging for the readers. Complication follows Resolution, however, both Stages involve variable phases which enhances the meaning potential of the narrative. Another noticeable feature of the narrative is that the first Schematic structure (Complication) is repeated twice in the same narrative. This reflects that more than one events are embedded in the story, there is story within a story which is more engaging for the readers but also demands more acumen on the part of the readers to discover different structures and underlying patterns in the story which have been realized through stages and phases and finally comes Resolution stage, where the complexity of the events has been resolved. However, another important feature of the narrative is that Evaluation structure is missing in the narrative. This implies that the narrator has left to the reader to evaluate the outcome of the story.

Of the three narrative, the third is more complex with wide level of variability in terms of stages and phases. The stages vary and at the same time phases are variable. These feature make the story more interesting from meaning potential point of view and with reference to the staging of events. In short, the story has deep build up in terms of happenings in the structures.

**Table 2** Stages Analysis Findings

Narratives text no.	Schematic structures	Status
Text 1	Orientation	present
	Complication	present
	Resolution	present
	Evaluation	present
Text 2	Orientation	present
	Complication	present
	Resolution	present
	Evaluation	present
Text 3	Orientation	Absent
	Complication	thrice repeated
	Resolution	twice repeated
	Evaluation	Absent

**Table 3** Phases Analysis Findings

Narrative text	Schematic structures	Status
Text 1	setting	twice repeated
	problem	thrice repeated
	reaction	four tines repeated
	solution	thrice repeated
	comment	twice repeated
	effect	twice repeated
	events	single occurrence
Text 2	setting	single occurrence

	problem	single occurrence
	reaction	single occurrence
	solution	single occurrence
	comment	four times repeated
	effect	twice repeated
	events	single occurrence
Text 3	setting	Absent
	problem	single occurrence
	reaction	twice repeated
	solution	thrice repeated
	comment	twice repeated
	reflection	single occurrence
	events	four times repeated

To sum up, the analysis of schematic structures of the selected narratives from Gulistan e Saadi has been achieved following genre- based narrative approach, seen through the lens of story family genre framework (Martin & Rose, 2008). The findings suggest consistency has neither been found in stages nor in phases. Both are variable. However, phases are more variable than stages. Of the three selected narratives, stages analysis suggests that there is consistency in schematic structures in the first two narratives as hierarchical units of Orientation, Complication, Resolution and Evaluation are present sequentially. The third narrative suggests variation in terms of stages as the stages of Orientation and Resolution are absent and Complication as well as Resolution are thrice repeated. Phases analysis findings reflect that there is thicker variation of phases in all the three narratives. In the first narrative, reaction is four times repeated, setting, problem and solution are thrice repeated, comment and effect are twice repeated and events phase occurs only once. In the setting narrative, there is single occurrence of setting, problem, reaction and solution phases, effect phase is twice repeated, events phase occurs only once. In the third narrative, setting is absent, Problem phase occurs once, reaction phase is repeated twice, solution occurs thrice, reflection phase has single occurrence, events phase is repeated four times. Thus, it can be concluded that genre- based narrative analysis of the selected stories shows that all hierarchical units in terms of stages as well as phases show variations at all levels in the stories.

### Future implications

The current study occupies great significance as Functional genre- based analysis explores the engagement functions of the narratives and foregrounds the episodes of the texts, unfolding the embedded patterns. The study invites researchers to conduct genre- based analysis of some other stories and analyse them by placing in the context of larger genre frames like story

genre framework analysis (Martin & Rose,2008). This will contribute to enrich the genre –based field of narrative analysis.

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