

FROM TEXT TO NARRATIVE: SPANNING THE GAP

JOHN M. LIPSKI

With modern linguistics making frequent incursions into the domain of literary and narrative studies, there has been an increasingly healthy interaction between linguistic analysis and more traditional methods of literary investigation. Among the offshoots of this incipient cooperation between what were traditionally felt to be mutually antagonistic disciplines are the fields of narrative semiotics and textual linguistics, taking as their domain of definition linguistic texts, discourse, or narrative. The investigator working in these areas cannot help but be pleased, if not at the explicit cooperation between members of the various disciplines, at least at the variety of approaches which are currently being employed in the study of narrative structures. The number of studies relating linguistic and semiotic theory to the study of narrative is increasing with amazing rapidity, and reviews can hardly maintain the pace of digesting such quantities of material as fast as it is produced. Among the numerous works involving the intersection of textual linguistics and narrative semiotics which have recently appeared, the present review will concentrate on several which, by nature of their content, offer a number of convergent points of interest. All but one of the essays of Hendricks (1973) have appeared elsewhere in published form, but are united for the first time under a common rubric; similarly, the individual studies comprising the volume edited by Chabrol (1973) are offered by investigators who have widely published elsewhere. On the contrary, Prince's study (1973) represents a monographic contribution to the study of narratology. In view of the fact that several general reviews of narrative semiotics have already appeared, the most recent being those of Wing (1974) and Prince (1974), this review will deal with a few specific issues which, while not confined to the volumes under discussion, are readily exemplified there.

Most reviewers of the current state of narrative semiotics, including many of the central participants themselves, have stressed the fundamental lack of a unified theory, or even set of directions, which would provide a universally acceptable metalanguage in which to evaluate results from a wide array of disciplines. One of the consequences of the convergence of investigations from anthropology and folk-

lore, theoretical linguistics, psychoanalysis, mathematics, etc. on the domain of narrative has been a series of parochial statements, each directed at a particular and very limited objective, and with little or no attempt at co-articulation with other proposals. Among the investigators of 'literary semiotics', one encounters the frequent objection that there is too great a reliance on *a priori* and subjective segmentation of textual structures, often disguised by scientific terminology and highly complex structural models. In his introductory essay, "De quelques problèmes de grammaire narrative et textuelle", Chabrol (1973: 16) notes that "les analystes de la grammaire narrative ont commencé à poser le problème du passage entre structures de niveaux différentes mais . . . ils n'ont pas réussi jusqu'à présent à donner un caractère *nécessaire* à leurs remarques". Similarly, Schmidt (1973) cautions that "l'analyse narrative d'un texte isolé sans méthode explicite n'a que peu de sens et elle est peu concluante pour la narratologie". Despite the general awareness of the wide disparity between the goals of narratology and its present accomplishments, investigators have for the most part continued to work toward the vaguely defined central goal of a 'narrative grammar' from a number of separate directions, often producing results which are incompatible with those of approaches with differing perspectives.

Approaching the study of texts from the point of view of linguistic theory also has its shortcomings, since the general tendency has been to apply sentence-level models directly to the larger and more diffuse defining units of narrative, often with a questionable degree of success. The problem seems one of maintaining the proper perspective; of not losing the thread uniting the various levels of discourse. Hendricks (1973a: 40) notes that "wherever a gap exists between the structural unit and the basic units (phonological, morphological, and syntactic) of the language, linguistics has not been extended, but on the contrary abandoned".

Of all the theoretical and methodological problems facing the scientific study of narrative, by far the most crucial and fundamental is the transition from linguistic surface structures or texts to the deeper levels characterizing 'narrative'. At the superficial level, we have the literary text, upon which may be performed analyses of style, including verbal figures, spatial arrangements, and the like. Such patterns do not generally survive translation, and in many cases not even paraphrase; thus, being the most properly 'verbal', this level is most amenable to analysis in terms of linguistic models. At the other end of the scale is the level of narrative deep structure, incorporating only the most basic notions of plot and character, in their most universal form. At this level, there is no dependence on any given language; in fact, it has often been stressed that "a text can be felt to constitute a coherent whole, . . . it can be summarized and paraphrased . . . its content can be memorized without recall of specific lexical items" and, even more specifically, that "the domain of narratology must therefore include all possible narratives without discrimination on the basis of medium of expression" (Prince 1974: 6-7). In other words, a narrative may just as easily be represented verbally as by a film, pantomime, picture,

etc. Clearly, the definition of such a level is radically different from that characterizing the superficial linguistic level, and work on narrative structure originally resulted from investigations of an anthropological nature. The fundamental question addressed to the intersection of linguistics and folkloristics, therefore, is whether the gap between these two levels is merely one of degree of abstraction, or whether there is in fact a qualitative difference which separates the narrative level from its concrete linguistic realization. Acceptance of the latter position, while traditionally a common practice, amounts to a denial of the possibility of coexistence of linguistics, narratology and literary theory, and in effect closes the door to any sort of synthetic investigation. Consequently, contemporary work on narrative semiotics and text linguistics seeks in some way to demonstrate, if not the actual mediation between these levels, at least the possibility for effecting such a progression. It is therefore useful to examine the methods by which various investigators propose to illustrate the articulation between these two extreme ends of the scale.

As a corollary of this problem comes the question of the transition from the language-specific to the universal: given the language-specific nature of the concrete text and the universal nature of the narrative deep structure, at what point between the two extremes does it become possible to make the jump to the universal level, and is this the same point at which 'meaning' becomes invariant under translation? This is a problem which is not frequently discussed, and yet it must be at least enumerated in a complete description of the semiotic process.

As a final serious problem, we may question the relation between the structures which emerge from narrative analyses and the 'meaning' of given texts, i.e. the (logical and subjective) *necessity* of such structures to a total grasp of the narrative. Here the conflict with traditional literary theorists becomes most prominent, when the latter claim that linguistic analysis, at whatever level, is merely a preliminary to the study of textual and literary meaning. Most investigators of narrative structures have so far been content to sidestep or ignore this problem, concentrating instead on elucidating the essential structural characteristics of their respective corpora. A certain foreshadowing of the eventual confrontation is evidenced, however, by such comments as the following: "The description, evaluation, and interpretation of a given text as literary depends on many purely socio-cultural norm-systems . . . what is feasible, perhaps, is a grammar of literary context or performance that formulates the socio-cultural conditions which make a given text literary" (Prince 1974: 5), or again, "une analyse du contenu ne doit être prise à tort pour un algorithme d'interprétation pour des textes individuels quelconques, mais comme une théorie de l'interprétabilité des textes littéraires, c'est-à-dire comme une théorie des rôles possibles que peuvent remplir des textes littéraires dans des jeux comportant communication et réception (réalisant un texte)" (Schmidt 1973: 160). Similarly, Hendricks (1973d: 90) notes that "although literature is language, it is also something more than language", or again (1973d: 121): "a science of literature should concern itself only with technical considerations, rather than evaluative ones . . .

the notion of structure is nonevaluative". In the works under discussion, the problem of literary meaning is approached only tangentially, except by Barthes (1973), Alexandrescu (1973), and Greimas (1973), whose studies are far enough from the mainstream of the present discussion to preclude their inclusion. In the remaining studies it is unclear precisely what rôle such analyses are to play in an overall evaluation of a text.

Prince (1973) sets out to establish a grammar of 'stories', a term which is not defined since "everybody distinguishes stories from non-stories, that is, everybody has certain intuitions — or has internalized certain rules — about what constitutes a story and what does not" (p. 9). It is thus uncertain from the beginning precisely what is to be the object of the study; unlike, for example, Bremond (1964, 1966), who explicitly defines his version of *narrative*, Prince apparently wants to establish a grammar, and at the same time a definition, by induction, by determining the constraints on 'stories' and attempting to write a grammar which will account for them. The constant appeal to the 'set of all stories' seems to be putting the cart a bit before the horse, since first, by starting with no rigorously defined domain, and second, by bringing in the notion of universality, it seems impossible to arrive at an end result which will in any way transcend the rather narrow perimeter of one author's set of intuitions.

The essence of Prince's monograph is a definition of the *minimal story*, which is inductively defined, through a process of successive refinements, roughly as follows: (a) it consists of 3 and only 3 events, of which the first 2 are conjoined by 1 feature and the second and third by 2 features, 1 of which is identical to the first; (b) the events must occur in chronological order 1–2–3; (c) the first and third events must be stative, and the second active, and the third event must be caused by the second and be the inverse of the first. Such a definition permits the derivation of 'stories' such as:

- (1) A man was happy, then he met a woman, then, as a result, he was unhappy.
- (2) A man was unhealthy, then he ate an apple, then, as a result, he was forever very healthy.

Following the formulation of a simple phrase-structure grammar to generate such strings, Prince discusses *simple stories*, which may arrange events in non-chronological order, and exhibit *zeroed events*, recoverable from context, and *complex stories*, formed by conjoining, embedding and alternation of simple stories. A series of transformations is needed to account for the latter two types, in order to derive them from the minimal strings.

Many of the comments which could be offered concerning the type of analysis offered by Prince have already been proffered by Hendricks (1973e) during a review of Todorov (1969), who notes (127–128) that "the notion that one can talk in a precise sense about the grammar of narration raises an important issue that re-

quires clarification, namely the relation between (natural) language and (narrative) discourse". Unlike Prince, Todorov explicitly characterizes his object of study, namely narration, i.e. "that aspect of discourse susceptible of evoking a universe of representation . . . Todorov's concern is with the universe evoked by this discourse, not with it as a linguistic entity" (Hendricks 1973e: 128). Thus, by making use of the notion of *connotative semiotic*, developed by Hjelmslev (1961) and Barthes (1964), Hendricks shows that Todorov's concern is with the grammar of the second-order system, i.e. the connotational level. Like Todorov, Prince is also concerned with the second-order code, and moreover, Prince feels that "there should be a concern for developing a theory of potentialities, such that existing literary works may be seen as particular realized cases" (Hendricks 1973e: 132). However, as Hendricks notes, this implies "a shift of emphasis from the description of a given state of signification to the problem of production of signification (a shift from analysis to synthesis). It is an open question . . . whether such a shift is at all feasible, given the state of present knowledge."

At this point, the paths diverge a bit, for Todorov's "grammar" is not truly generative, since he is seeking to describe a given corpus of stories; Prince, on the other hand, carries the literal application of the term "grammar" to narrative even one step further, by proceeding inductively to establish a truly generative grammar, which will account for as yet unrealized stories. However, while offering a formal apparatus or algorithm which will in principle generate an infinite number of what may be termed plot frames, and also given the author's goal of generating "all and only the set of stories", there appears to be a discrepancy in scope, for some of the notions crucial to the formation of the grammar may in fact lie outside the possibilities of formalization. Foremost on the list is chronological order, which, while intuitively recognizable by all, is difficult if not impossible to formally represent in all but a few lexically specified cases. Only by starting with an axiomatic system, such as is done, for example, by van Dijk (1973), can such notions as precedence be formally defined, but even in such an event there is still no correspondence between such a formal calculus and the external world, which governs our judgements of acceptability. As Hendricks remarks (1973e: 139) "any grammar of a language, no matter how abstract its components, must ultimately account for the observable — the phonetic form of arbitrary utterances". Equally problematical is the notion of causality, for outside of formal calculi of the sort proposed by van Dijk (1973), it is apparent that the notion of causality is intimately bound up with pragmatic considerations. For example, according to Prince's grammar, the following sequence is a 'story':

- (3) A man was very wealthy, then he ate an apple, then, as a consequence, he became very poor.

Since many experience difficulty in comprehending the causal link between

eating an apple and becoming poor, it appears that the grammar fails on substantive grounds to adequately characterize native intuitions regarding acceptable 'stories'. Only by incorporating an infinitely large base component could such considerations be directly incorporated into the grammar, which in its present form, does nothing more than generate the syntactic frames in which acceptable stories might be couched.

The notion of inversion of a state is also problematical, once one tries to invest the abstract categories with concrete semantic content. Structural semantics, particularly as practiced by Greimas (1966, 1970), has repeatedly been criticized for its lack of objective criteria in specifying semantic content; Wing (1974: 24) remarks that "we must rely too much on the analyst's semantic competency; to rewrite a lexical item as a sememe we must know what the classes are in order to know what semantic features to put in the sememes". In order to add semantic substance to the empty syntactic categories generated by Prince's grammar, we would have to have an adequate means of formulating such notions as causality, chronological order and inversion of a state, notions which seem amenable to analysis at more shallow levels of textual structure, but which have up to now resisted rigorous characterization at the level of narrative deep structure. As Hendricks (1973e: 150) remarks, "at this stage of our knowledge, a formalized synthetic (or generative) approach to narrative analysis seems overly ambitious. Among the many seemingly insoluble problems is that of going from the abstract schemas (underlying structures) to the concrete texts." Prince's grammar yields some insights into the possible nature of such underlying structures, but it leaves unresolved the articulation with more concrete levels of discourse.

In contrast to Prince, Bremond (1973) starts out with a well-defined object, in this case, the narrative, as defined in earlier work (1964, 1966), i.e. a succession of events of human interest oriented toward a goal. In his previous studies, Bremond considered two categories of elementary sequences: *amelioration* and *degradation*, opposing or favoring the human goal in question. In his most recent essay, he speaks of a matrix of three sequences, which it is claimed will account for a corpus of French folk tales: *degradation* → *amelioration*; *merit* → *compensation*; *demerit* → *punishment*. The first sequence is obligatory in the moralized folk tale, and more complex situations may be composed by combinations of the matrix with itself. Following an analysis of several typical folk-tale types, Bremond demonstrates how the reversal of the schemata can lead to the tragic tale, and even to perversions, such as the inversions of virtue and vice found in works of Sade.

Bremond's earlier work had been criticized for its purely deductive nature, and for its lack of concrete examples. Hendricks (1973f), utilizing an earlier version of Bremond's theory, offers another attempt at substantiating some of the latter's claims, by demonstrating that certain narrative structures have applicability outside the realm of folklore. Using the categories of *amelioration* and *degradation*, he analyzes a fragment of a science fiction story, representing a coherent whole in

itself, and shows that this segment may be represented by the narrative cycle defined by Bremond. In a subsequent analysis of a short story by Ambrose Bierce, it is asserted that Bremond's model is insufficient for the task at hand, on the syntagmatic level, and that further structural models have to be applied.

Bremond's narrative models have also been criticized on the grounds that they are almost totally syntactically based, that they ignore the question of semantic content (Prince 1974: 6; Chabrol 1973: 17). As Chabrol remarks, this tendency is a direct inheritance of Propp and the other Russian formalists, as opposed to those who sustain the "hypothèse que les règles de la grammaire narrative sont à la fois sémantiques et syntaxiques". Here one might also apply Hendricks' (1973e: 136) criticisms of Todorov, or (p. 113) of Propp, by noting that Bremond's grammar does not take the *dramatis personae* into direct consideration, but considers only syntagmatic aspects of general plot structure. This failure to invest the syntactically generated categories with semantic substance leads to a highly abstract and at the same time superficial analysis of tales, in which it is difficult to distinguish one from another on any other than the most macroscopic level. Moreover, Bremond's reliance on a priori categories and segmentation of textual material has not yet been shown to possess any empirical justification outside of accounting for particular corpora of narratives; in fact, one would be entirely justified in questioning the empirical basis for the initial definition of narrative.

Returning to Hendricks' analysis of the Ambrose Bierce story, after asserting the inadequacy of Bremond's model for a total comprehension of story (without stating why this model should be regarded as having definitively explicated the fragment from a science fiction novel), further syntagmatic and paradigmatic models are applied. In order to establish the syntagmatic segmentation of the narrative into sequences of propositions, Hendricks first utilizes Bremond's model, together with logical notation, to describe the story as a sequence of narrative cycles. Further spatialization of the syntagmatic chain is effected utilizing the "constitutional semiotic" model of Greimas and Rastier (1968), involving the contradictory and contrary of a given semantic configuration. Finally, utilizing the notation of Köngäs and Maranda (1962), Hendricks presents the dynamic aspect of the syntagmatic functions in terms of an inversion of categories.

Turning to the paradigmatic configurations, the author follows his definition (1973g: 178) that "paradigmatic structure consists of two elements in opposition, the opposition being specifiable by a matrix of binary features . . . the characters appearing in a narrative are polarized and this polarization is the means whereby the thematic significance of the narrative is signalled or conveyed". In attempting to locate the "locus of meaning" of the story, Hendricks utilizes Lévi-Strauss's theory of myth as mediation, and shows the transformations occurring in the narrative to result in an interdiction by the creation of a taboo situation.

While carried out with great precision, the analyses still leave open the question of the justification of the definitions of 'thematic meaning', and the means of em-

pirically establishing the steps by which this meaning is approached. The need to apply a variety of models in both the spatializing and the extraction of thematic meaning underlines the need for a set of unified goals for narrative theory and for a typology of narrative structures. No reason is given for the fact that some narratives are amenable to analysis in terms of simple models while others require the application of a variety of analytic techniques, nor of the manner in which such analytic procedures could be determined in advance.

In another essay (1973d), Hendricks probes the relations between folkloristic methods and the analysis of literary texts. His basic premise is that "the structural principles which underlie the composition of folkloristic narratives are similar – if not identical – to those that underlie literary narratives" (p. 92). To demonstrate the validity of this proposal Hendricks discusses various forms of syntagmatic and paradigmatic analyses within the field of folkloristics, drawing in particular on the works of Propp (1968) and Olrik (1909). He then applies a predominantly paradigmatic analysis to the character structure of Faulkner's story "A Rose for Emily" to demonstrate the presence of several 'laws' generally felt to characterize only more 'primitive' forms of discourse.

After normalizing the action assertions of the story, Hendricks explains the methodology to be followed in looking for significant results (p. 115): "one is guided by a concern for symmetry, or 'neatness of pattern'. Different possibilities for patterning may exist, but that one pattern is to be preferred which accounts for the most data in an economical fashion". While characterizing most structural analyses, and particularly prevalent in modern generative phonology, the notions of pattern symmetry and economy are not a priori concepts, but rather empirical proposals, which have yet to be conclusively demonstrated. In phonological theory, for example, it is becoming increasingly clear that an overriding concern for pattern symmetry and formal economy may lead to spurious generalizations; the same goes for teleological diachronic theories which posit rearrangement of systems to fill (subsequently discovered) 'holes' in the pattern. Moreover, as in all structural analyses, one runs the risk of complete tautology, since it is in effect impossible to break out of the closed circle of the human analyst discussing other products of human cognition.

In assessing the differences between folkloristic material and literary texts, Hendricks is quick to disclaim value judgements: "a science of literature should concern itself only with technical considerations, rather than evaluative ones. The focus should be on the work and the principles of its composition." (p. 121). Hendricks further suggests that the differences between oral and written literature may consist in a more expanded code for the latter, in which a greater number of conventions are brought into play.

In another essay concerning the interaction between linguistics and folkloristics (1973c), Hendricks hypothesizes (p. 66) that "folkloristic structure may actually be one type of discourse structure – the underlying structure of narrative discourse.

Thus linguistics, which traditionally has been a donor to folkloristics, potentially has much to gain from folklore". He continues with a discussion of several similarities between the theoretical positions of Chomsky and Lévi-Strauss, regarding the need to consider rule-governed creative behavior instead of random superficial manifestations. In a discussion ranging from Saussure's conception of *parole* as including creative accomplishment to more recent theories of the creative nature of individual expression in folklore, Hendricks indicates that the fundamental similarity of goals in linguistics and folkloristics is too close to be profitably disregarded.

The folklorist Pierre Maranda (1973) continues his incursions into the formal study of discourse, this time using digraph and set theory as a medium of presentation, to define the structure of the story "Cendrillon" (Aarne-Thompson 510). After an elementary presentation of some notions of set theory and ordered graphs, Maranda offers a summary of the story, and, after paradigmatically arranging the characters and events into a variety of patterns, demonstrates that the structure of the story can be described in terms of a double inversion or flip-flop, utilizing the two sets *consanguinity–alliance* and *assistance–oppression*. Absent from the presentation is any indication of how the story was normalized into a pattern conducive to such an analysis. More crucially, there is no elaboration of the means by which an analysis in terms of the metalanguages of set and graph theory could extend our knowledge of structure beyond our intuitive grasp of such a story, or of how such theoretical proposals may be made compatible with currently available models. Maranda admits in fact (p. 122) that "si elle [his hypothesis] peut aussi servir de critère taxinomique, c'est par-dessus le marché".

The preceding studies have all dealt in one fashion or another with the levels of narrative deep structure, in most cases divorced from specific systems of linguistic representation, and are characterized by the quest for universal configurations. The opposite pole of orientation is approached in attempts at dealing with the textual surface, in order to solve the key issue of the transition from the linguistic to the narrativistic, from the specific to the universal. Given the fundamental nature of this problem, and the total lack of a unified theoretical framework from which to approach it, it is not surprising to discover a multiplicity of theoretical proposals and models offered to bridge what must, if the integrity of the discipline is to be maintained, be regarded as an ultimately crossable chasm.

Perhaps the most ambitious study is that of Schmidt (1973), who proposes a model which proceeds from the genotext or most general underlying (non-linguistic) structure, including sociological and ethnological factors, to the phenotext, or superficial realization. His method, by his own admission (p. 147), is different from those of Bellert and van Dijk, whose concept of deep structure of a text is "un ensemble concaténé de complexes sémantiques". He notes (p. 146): "on peut ainsi décrire la production du texte comme un processus de décisions, dont les étapes individuelles sont réglées par l'intention dominante de communication ou de production d'un effet (l'intention du locuteur)". Given this definition, together with his

conception of textual deep structure as a series of semantic complexes, Schmidt proceeds to introduce a number of theoretical levels to account for the transition from genotext to phenotext. First is the level of the author's intention, which includes presuppositions of socio-cultural and psychological elements. Following the choice of mode or representation, the type of discourse, and the type of text, we arrive at the textual deep structure. There then occurs the following succession of levels: the level of propositional concepts; level of topicalization, or establishment of the topic and comment; modal and temporal characterization, and lexicalization. Reception of a text follows an identical reconstruction of levels by the listener, from the phenotext or micro-structures to the deep or macro-structures. Following a discussion of the various possibilities for analysis contained in such a model, Schmidt provides a simple discussion of "Plume au Restaurant" by Henri Michaux, starting from the superficial level and proceeding upward to deeper strata of textual significance. Schmidt deals only with the narrative or paradigmatic aspects of the text; consequently, there is no true elucidation of the passage from the textual surface to the genotexte; what is present is merely an example of the later stages of a complete analysis. At the completion of his discussion, Schmidt notes the plurality of interpretation to which his results are open, and the lack of any definitive conclusions. The 'polyvalence' of the text results from the need to take into consideration other works of the same author, together with their deep structures, as well as socio-cultural and biographical considerations regarding the author, and parallels with contemporary texts in a similar vein. Despite disclaimers (p. 160), it is apparent that there is a discrepancy between the scope of the problem which Schmidt wishes to discuss, and the rather limited concrete means which he has proposed to deal with it. His model is of sufficient generality to conceive of the generation of any text; indeed, one might even be tempted to suspect tautology at some points, but the major points of transition between levels are never empirically joined. Schmidt has nevertheless put his finger on several of the crucial issues surrounding a generative grammar of narrative structures, and has taken the first steps towards the construction of such a model.

Some more concrete steps in the direction of a comprehensive text-grammar have been taken by van Dijk (1973), who continues his investigations into the logico-semantic structures necessary to insure textual coherence. Van Dijk's object of interest is the *macro-structures* which unite a series of phrases into a single meaningful text. Opting after a review of several alternatives to work towards a generative grammar of textual structures, van Dijk proposes the hypothesis of establishing "une homologie entre ces structures profondes du texte et celles de la phrase". This is not to say that one and the same grammar need generate texts and phrases; indeed, van Dijk notes that, for instance in the field of narrative structures, narrative and text grammars "constituent formellement deux théories naturelles, c'est-à-dire des théories irréductibles l'une à l'autre, puisque l'ensemble des termes interprétés et des propositions théoriques (règles) de l'une n'est pas un sous-ensemble de l'autre (et réciproquement)" (p. 192).

After outlining the need for text grammars to be supplemented by narrative grammars, van Dijk proposes an axiomatization of narrative structures, using a form of deontic logic, starting with general categories similar to those found, for example, in Marcus (1970) and Brainerd (1971). By considering such relations as *precedence*, *cause* and *event*, van Dijk demonstrates that a narrative grammar has a structure isomorphic to that of a text grammar, that is, "ils engendrent (produisent) des objets ayant la même structure abstraite" (p. 203). Nonetheless such isomorphisms are only structural, since narrative grammars are subject to additional constraints, most of which are only partially known. Van Dijk sums up his proposed intersection of text grammar and narrative grammar in the following program (p. 206): "définir à l'aide d'un système formel les structures narratives possibles et projeter de telles structures sur des structures engendrées par des grammaires et des logiques textuelles, les règles de formation et de transformation étant restreintes de telle manière que les structures textuelles dérivées sous-tendent les récits possibles en langue naturelle". Thus, a comprehensive narrative grammar presupposes the existence of an adequate text grammar.

If one chooses to accept a logico-semantic basis for narrative structures, it still remains to be demonstrated how such a narrative grammar is to be made compatible with a grammar of texts; showing that the two systems are structurally isomorphic is clearly a prerequisite, but future research will be needed to outline the passage from the level of the text to that of the narrative, and the interaction of the constraints acting upon both levels.

Another attempt at bridging the gap between concrete texts and abstract structures is offered by Hendricks (1973g), who discusses the matters of *normalization* and *summarization* of a text as a preliminary to analysis. Dealing mainly with syntagmatic normalization and summarization, i.e. the dynamic aspects of plot structure, Hendricks, like van Dijk, suggests representing narrative structures in terms of logical propositions, which are language-independent. Of especial importance are the means required to turn a concrete text into a series of logical formulae, by means of the processes of normalization and summarization. To effect the former, Hendricks suggests a grouping of assertion types based essentially on the classifications of Harris (1962): normalization consists of such operations as replacing anaphoric expressions by their referents, excision of all descriptive material, and separation of the action assertions according to centrality of function. It is admitted (p. 190) that there is bound to be subjectivity in such procedures; in fact, given the procedures as listed by Hendricks it is often difficult to conceive of any completely objective decision process which would allow for unequivocal and undisputed inter-subjective segmentation of a text.

In the process of summarization, the question of subjectivity becomes even more pertinent, for the summarization operations involve, among other things, separating out those assertions which contribute to gross plot structure, thus leading to potential circularity depending on the analyst's own interpretations. While the beginning

and end points are clearly given, the intermediate processes of normalization and particularly summarization are still left in a considerable state of uncertainty. As a further issue, we may note that the methods Hendricks has given appear to rely heavily on the structure of the Indo-European languages; while in theory the logical end-product is language-independent (cf. Stuart 1968), it is not clear at this stage exactly how successful the processes of normalization as described above will be when applied to other language groups. Indeed, it often seems easier to jump the gap rather than bridge it: to offer an intuitive summary of a given text; or, given such a narrative structure, to immediately translate it into a natural language text.

The immediate transition from the single phrase to the connected text represents the final link in the transition from underlying narrative to concrete linguistic representation, and Hendricks probes this relation in the remaining two essays of his collection. After reviewing the relevant literature concerning extensions of sentence-grammars to coherent texts, Hendricks (1973a) dwells further on the possibility of proceeding from *within* to *without*, from *function* to *form*. This reversal of the usual methodological procedure provides a significant possibility for investigation, and is more than a mere theoretical game, for the expanded perspective gained by proceeding outward from the form, so important in the works of the Russian formalists, is in many ways more than the mere complement of a centripetal analysis.

Hendricks also discusses the differences between narrative analysis, based only on underlying content, and more linguistically based endeavors, concluding (1973b: 62) that "the view that narrative structure is completely independent of linguistic structure is tantamount to a complete rejection of the Whorfian hypothesis, according to which languages map the same reality in various ways".

The preceding remarks, although brief, should illustrate the diversity of methodology currently characterizing the semiotic study of discourse, as well as the unavoidable problems plaguing the analyst. Despite the variety of models, there is as yet no clear method of traversing the path from the concrete text to the abstract narrative structure, without either quantitative or qualitative gaps intervening. And yet a rejection of the continuous nature of this semiotic goes contrary to most of the fundamental assumptions of semiotics in general. Therefore, one is led to seek for the causes of the failure to arrive at even the most elementary consensus concerning a 'text' or 'narrative' grammar.

As a function of the search for the factors which mediate between concrete linguistic structures and abstract narrative configurations, the majority of investigators have sought a single, unified grammar which would generate, in a sense, *all* the levels in question, and provide explicit mappings between them. It is possible that the difficulty lies here, in attempting to compress a number of distinct domains into a single metatheoretical orientation. The notion of generation from a given base and proceeding in a certain direction may be a useful metaphor in the case of contentless syntactic patterns, but when applied to the entirety of human cognitive

behavior it suffers at various points. Clearly, a total model of the cognitive process will have to include all points in this mediation process, but at the present time we are far from theories of the actions of the brain; what we are seeking, in effect, are merely reflections of observed competence, which is in many ways discontinuous when considered phenomenologically. Therefore, semiotics might more profitably take a form of differential calculus as a metatheory for describing the interaction of the various levels of discourse, rather than the algebraic and logical models currently in vogue. By regarding the mediation between levels as an asymptotic approach to be differentiated (and conversely, to be integrated when proceeding in the opposite 'direction'), many paradoxes found in narrative theory would lose their applicability, since such transitions could be approached arbitrarily closely from both sides of the gap. Van Dijk seems aware of this possibility when he considers the possibility of isomorphic but distinct grammars for narrative and textual structures. Hendricks also notes (1973a: 47) that "actually, from the viewpoint of what constitutes a fully adequate structural analysis, many different approaches are necessary; that is, it is not a matter of choosing among the possibilities, but rather, of utilizing, ideally, several in the (complete) structural description of a text".

What is being hinted at is not an abandonment of the search for a semiotic continuum, but a realization of the disparity between such a goal and the current state of knowledge of cognitive behavior. A differentiable function is no less manageable because it is non-linear, or discontinuous, since it is in the nature of the calculus itself to mediate these at .rrations. Similarly, a multi-level approach to discourse structures may also yield results of the highest significance, even in the absence of a theory explicitly uniting all the levels. The ultimate construction of a true model of the entire process will have to await further research into the interactions between the human organism and its total environment. Prince (1974: 7) hints at the complexity of the situation when he speculates "what if one had to understand the function of a narrative in order to understand its structure? What if function, which is usually considered to be different from and subordinate to structure, was inseparable from it . . . what if meaning depended on circumstances of occurrence." To this question may be added the following: what if semiotic structures were not a function of the total human organism? Where, then, would the study of semiotics be?

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John M. Lipski (b. 1950) is Assistant Professor of Romance Languages at Michigan State University in East Lansing. He holds the Ph.D. in Romance linguistics from the University of Alberta, and has also taught at Kean College of New Jersey. Research interests include semiotic theory, sociolinguistics as applied to bilingualism, and linguistic approaches to the study of literature. Related articles include 'On the meta-structures of literary discourse' to appear in the *Journal of literary semantics*, 'Toward a topology of semantic dependence' *Semiotics* and 'Towards a topology of natural languages' *Poetics* 41 (1975): 5-17.