



PROSE

~LECTURE 2~

STORY AND PLOT

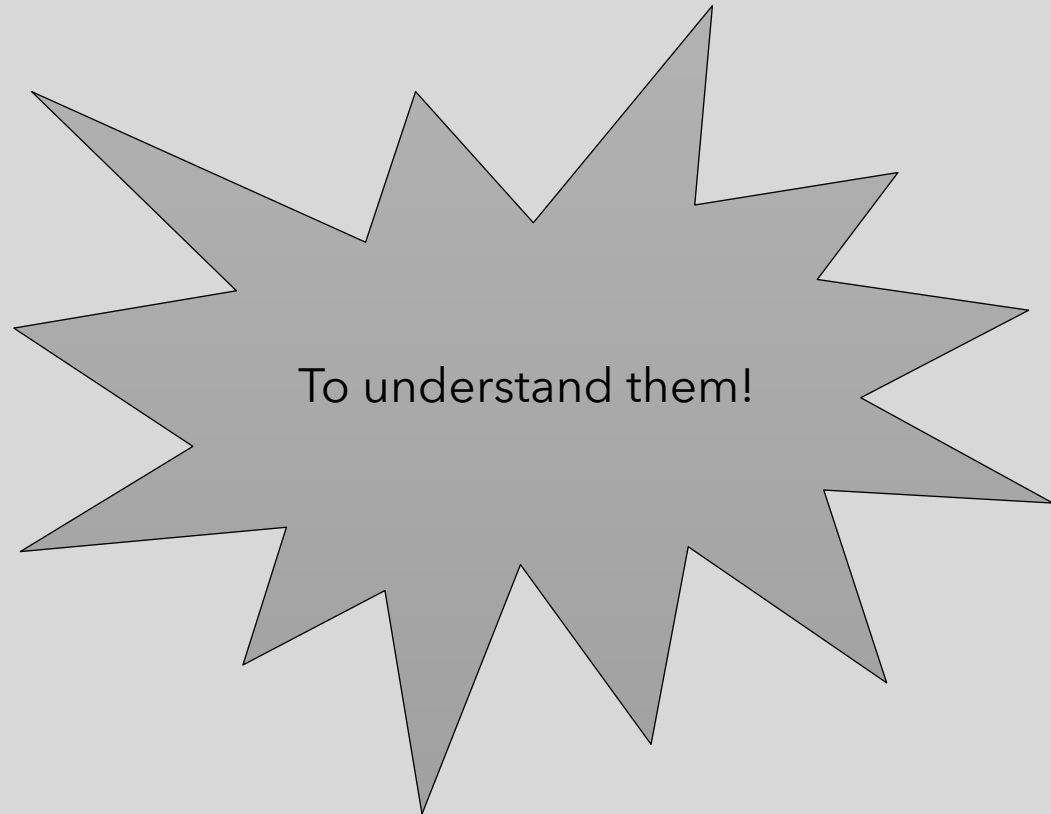
THE PLOTS, STORY AND PLOT, THE STORY, PLOT, MYTHOS, PLOT-LINE, SINGLE PLOT, MULTIPLE PLOTS, TIGHT PLOT, CLOSED STRUCTURE, POETIC JUSTICE, LOOSE/EPISODIC PLOT, AND OPEN-ENDED PLOT.

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Contents

- **The differences of plots,**
- **Story and plot,**
- **The story,**
- **Plot,**
- **Mythos,**
- **Plot-line,**
- **Single plot,**
- **Multiple plots,**
- **Tight plot,**
- **Closed structure,**
- **Poetic justice,**
- **Loose/episodic plot, and**
- **Open-ended plot.**



WHY DO WE READ A NOVEL?

WHY DO WE WATCH A MOVIE?

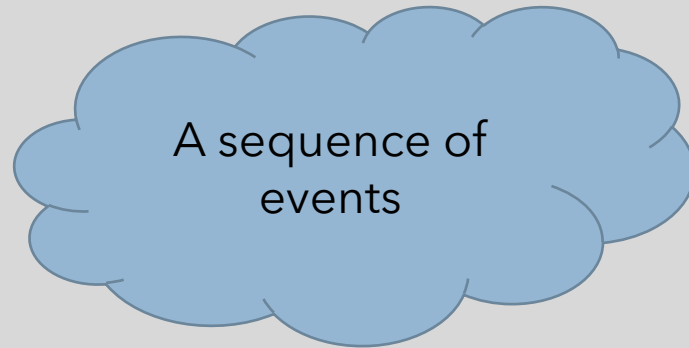


Where all readers have to start?



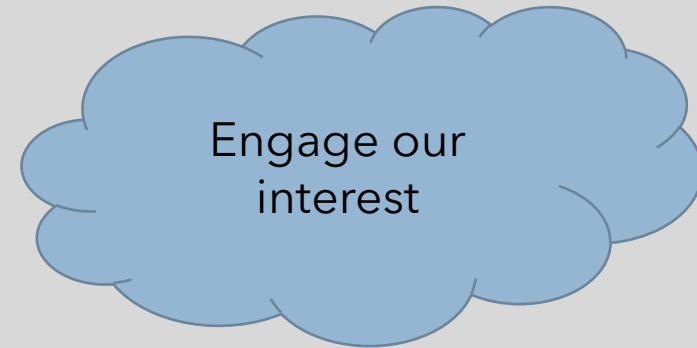
With reading

What happens when we read a novel?



One event → Another

What happens to the reader as the events of a novel unfold?



To read → To be aware → To think

Interest

Expectation

READING

Relief

Surprise

(Gill, R., 1995, p. 160-163)

Interest

READING

I don't like the character.



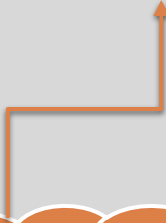
READING

Expectation

What's going to be happened?



Have I misunderstood a character?



READING

Relief

Finally, It happened!

Interest

Expectation

READERS

Authors

Relief

Surprise

Plot and Knowledge

- Plots do not provide chronological events!
- Readers need to know early in the tale and other things need to be concealed.

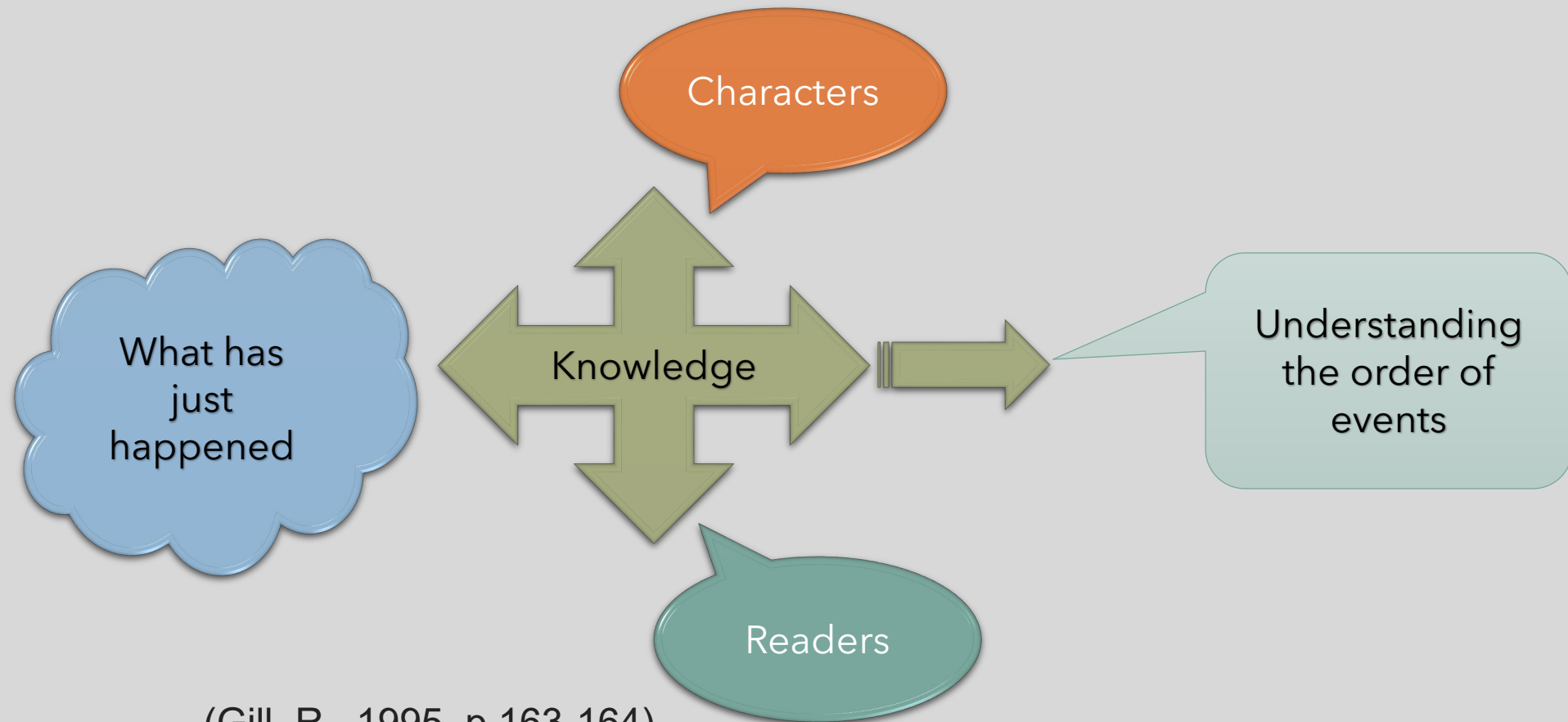
(Gill, R., 2006, p.43)

The order of events

- Unfolding events.
- When and how we know certain happenings
- Different expectations and different perspectives

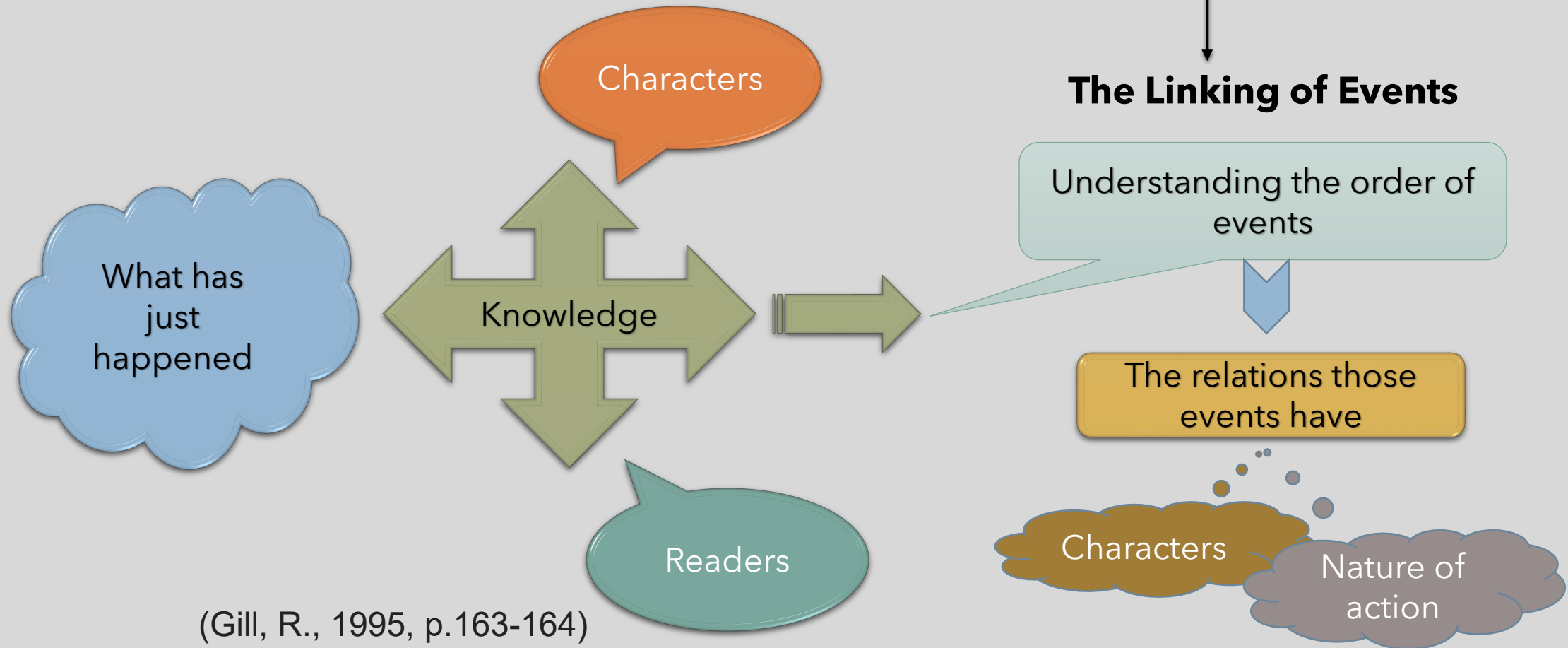
(Gill, R., 1995, p.163)

The importance of knowledge



(Gill, R., 1995, p.163-164)

The importance of knowledge

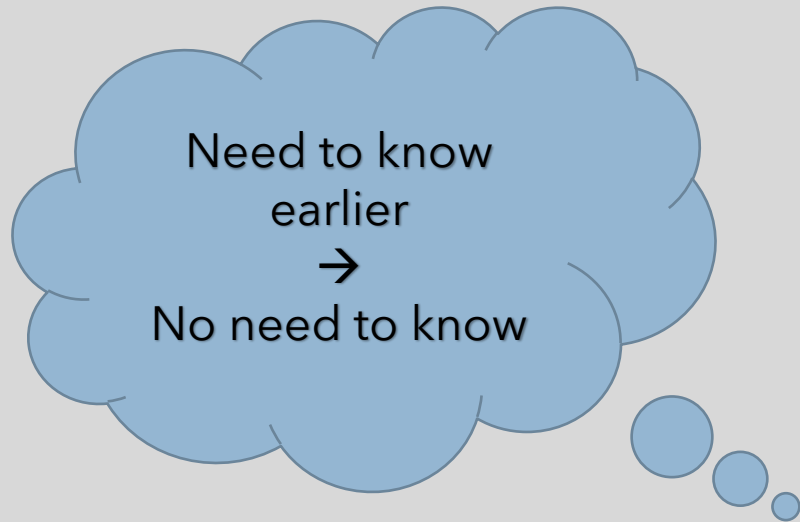


(Gill, R., 1995, p.163-164)

Stories and plots: some distinctions

- Thinking about the issue of linkage between events
- A reason is given for what happened
- A particular order **chosen** by the author X **Chronological** events

(Gill, R., 1995, 164-165)



The king died and then the queen died.
The king died and then the queen died of grief.

(E.M. Forster, 1927 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.44)



Why do authors hold certain things back?



Why are the events told in this order?

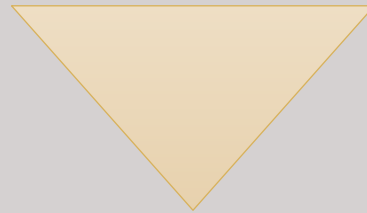





STORY AND DISCOURSE

WHAT (what is told?)


HOW (how is it told?).



The WHAT closely refers to story, while the HOW is considered as discourse.



(Chatman 1978: 19 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.42)



STORY

Event

Actions

Henry **wrote** a
letter to Catherine

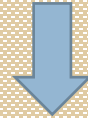
Happenings

There was a **car**
accident

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.42-43)



STORY



Existents



Characters
Henry wrote a
letter to Catherine



Setting/space
There was a car
accident **in front of**
Hosana hospital



(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.42-43)



Consider these sentences!

She is tired.

They speak English at work.

The hero dies.

Mom gave us some amount money yesterday.

The party is so boring.

She always talks politely to her parents.

There are many car accidents on the road next to this building.

She drinks coffee.

We run to the party.



STORY - EVENTS

A complete story needs several events in order to tell the readers clearly what actually happened, why something happened, how something happened, and what its impact was.



Can I say
can



Is that
enough?

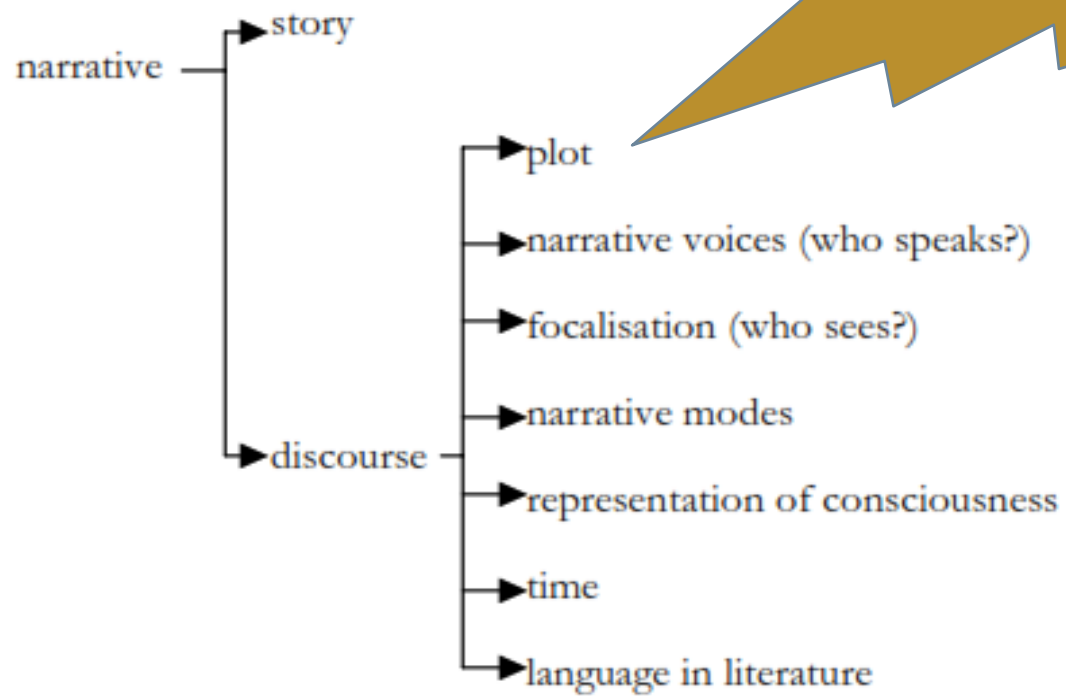
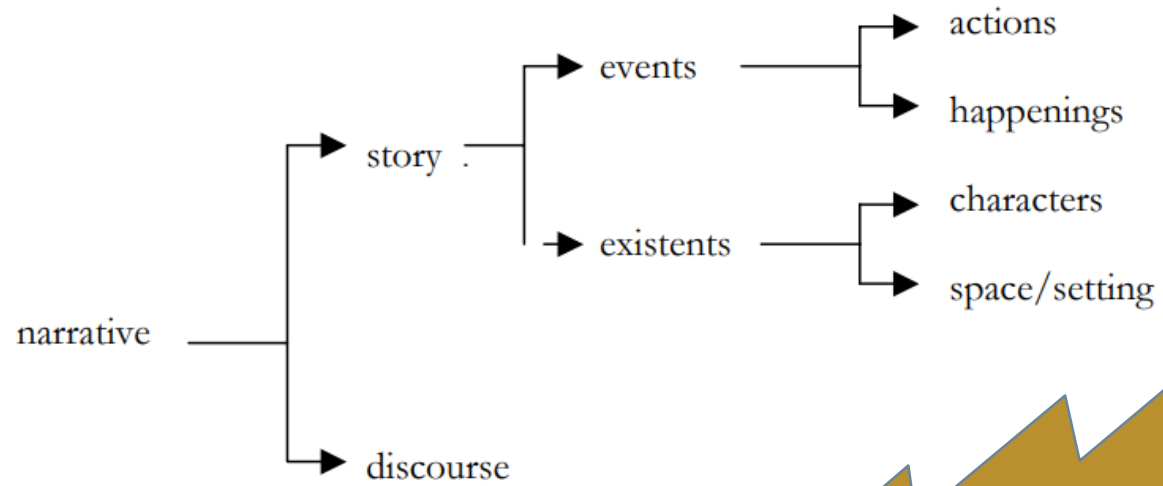




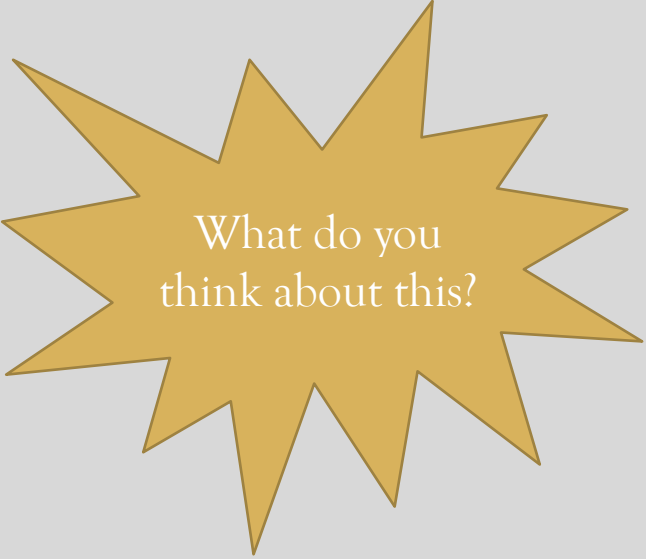
DISCOURSE

How a series of events is presented and organized by presenting plots, characters, events, and themes of a story so that the audience can understand and interpret the meaning of the whole story.





(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.42-43)



What do you
think about this?

They speak English at work.

The hero dies.

Mom gave us some amount money yesterday.

This girl always talks politely to her parents.

She drinks coffee.

We run to the party.

This job is tiring.

The party is so boring.

There are many car accidents on the road next to this building.

That house has beautiful views



**What about
this?**

The man met a girl - they got married - Husband got accident - wife lived alone - wife met another man - they lived happily ever after

It is about HOW a story is organized and presented.

A narrative can have multiple plot-lines, meaning that events can revolve around different groups of characters.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.45-46)

Most novels have **multiple plot** lines rather than a **single plot**. These plot lines can vary in importance, with one **main plot** and one or more **subplot lines**. Subplots often serve as a contrast to the main plot, exploring similar events in different social spheres.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.45-46)

There is a greater plan or design behind the occurrences in our lives. It implies that each event has specific cause and effect relationship and is not simply a random happening.

A closed structure refers to the resolution of each plot-line in a story, where all loose ends are tied up and the narrative a satisfying conclusion. This can be achieved through events such as the protagonist's death or marriage, or the ultimate defeat of a villainous entity. The closed structure ensures that all storylines are neatly wrapped up, providing closure for the audience or readers.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.45-46)

The characters receive rewards or punishments based on their virtue or vice. This distribution of earthly consequences is known as **poetic justice**. In simpler terms, it means that good characters are rewarded and bad characters are punished by the end of the story. This creates a satisfying and fair resolution for the audience.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.45-46)

A tight plot is crucial in creating suspense in a story. When a plot is well-structured and tightly woven, it keeps the readers on the edge of their seats, eager to know what happens next. On the other, if a narrative lacks suspense or tension, it can often be attributed to a loose or poorly constructed plot. A tight plot ensures that every event and detail in the story is meaningful and contributes to the overall suspense, making it a vital element in creating an engaging and thrilling reading experience

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.45-46)

Loosely plotted narratives, also known as episodic narratives, lack a strong, structured plot. These narratives often have open-ended plots, meaning they do not reach a definitive or preliminary conclusion. Instead, the story remains unresolved or open, leaving room for interpretation and continuation.

J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire for instance is much more open-ended than the previous Harry Potter volumes. While volumes one to three end with a fairly definite preliminary defeat of the evil force, in The Goblet of Fire Voldemort has clearly returned to power and a massive attack on the good powers is imminent at the end of the volume.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.45-46)

So, what have we learnt?

References

1. Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J. (2003). Basics of English Studies: An introductory course for students of literary studies in English. *Freiburg University, Freiburg im Breisgau*.
2. Gill, R. (1995). *Mastering english literature (2nd edition)*. Palgrave.
3. Gill, R. (2006). *Mastering english literature (3rd edition)*. Bloomsbury Publishing.