An exploratory study of textual resources in some selected Thai short stories[*]
การศึกษาทรัพยากรตัวบทในเรื่องสั้นภาษาไทย

Supakit Buakaw[**]

supakitbuakaw@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper aims to study the textual resources drawn from two Thai short stories, by using the Systemic Functional Grammar approach focusing on the system of THEME. The paper begins with characteristics of a short story and its elements and then the theoretical framework is introduced. After that, Theme choices, Theme selection and Theme range in two Thai short stories are discussed and profiled. The linguistic findings derived from this study identified unmarked topical Theme as the most common Theme selection. Additionally, Theme selection in these Thai short stories correlates with some of its elements: character, setting and points of view. In order to set the scene, marked circumstantial Themes are selected, whereas unmarked topical (ideational) Themes are selected to indicate point of view and the main character of the short story.

Key Words: Systemic Functional Grammar, textual resources, Thai short story

---

[**] Ph.D candidate, Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia, Mahidol University

บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาทรัพยากรตัวบท (textual resources) ที่ปรากฏใน
เรื่องสั้น 2 เรื่องโดยใช้ทฤษฎีไวยากรณ์ระบบ-หน้าที่ บทความเริ่มต้นด้วยองค์ประกอบของ
เรื่องสั้นและแนวคิดทฤษฎีที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ จากนั้นเป็นการนำเสนอตัวเลือกใจความหลัก
(Theme choices) และการเลือกใจความหลัก (Theme selection) รวมทั้งขอบเขตของใจความ
หลัก (Theme range) ที่ปรากฏในเรื่องสั้นไทย ผลการศึกษาพบว่าใจความหลักประเภทหัวข้อ
ที่เป็นปกติ (unmarked topical Theme) ถูกเลือกมากที่สุดในการเลือกใจความหลัก (Theme
selection) นอกจากนี้ การเลือกใจความหลัก (Theme selection) ยังสัมพันธ์กับองค์ประกอบ
ของเรื่องสั้น อันได้แก่ ตัวละคร ฉาก และมุมมองการเล่าเรื่อง ในการสร้างฉากในเรื่องนั้น
ใจความหลักประเภทสถานการณ์ที่แปลกเด่น (marked circumstantial Themes) จะถูกเลือก
ในขณะที่ใจความหลักประเภทหัวข้อที่เป็นปกติ (unmarked topical Themes) จะถูกเลือกเพื่อ
ชี้ให้เห็นมุมมองการเล่าเรื่อง และตัวละครหลักของเรื่องสั้น

คำสำคัญ: ทฤษฎีไวยากรณ์ระบบ-หน้าที่, ทรัพยากรตัวบท, เรื่องสั้นไทย

1. Introduction

Most of literary works that have been analyzed in previous researches were written by well known authors; in contrast, the literary work of new writers has rarely been conducted. In addition, most of the previous studies of Thai short stories (e.g. Bunjanya 2002; Chaivisitkul 2006; Chorean 2004; Kanchanaruenrost 1999; Khotcharit 2006; Khongto 2003; Tedmuak 2004; Tingsomboon 1993) concentrated on the semantic level, one of the stratification dimensions of Systemic Functional Grammar, the theory that views a language as a semiotic system having various strata. Figure 1 is a diagrammatic representation the way each level is related by realization. Thus, this study investigates the lexicogrammatical level, the level which allows the meaning potential of a language to expand indefinitely, of Thai short stories written by new authors. The overall result not only contributes to our understanding the grammatical patterns in Thai short stories using a new approach but also provides a knowledge base for students who wish to study this field of creative writing. As Eggins (2004: 70) indicated, a systemic analysis of genre such as literary texts can help students to make explicit why some texts are successful and appropriate while others are not.

CONTENT LEVELS

Semantics

(systems of meanings)

realized in

Lexicogrammar

(systems of wording systems of signing)

realized in
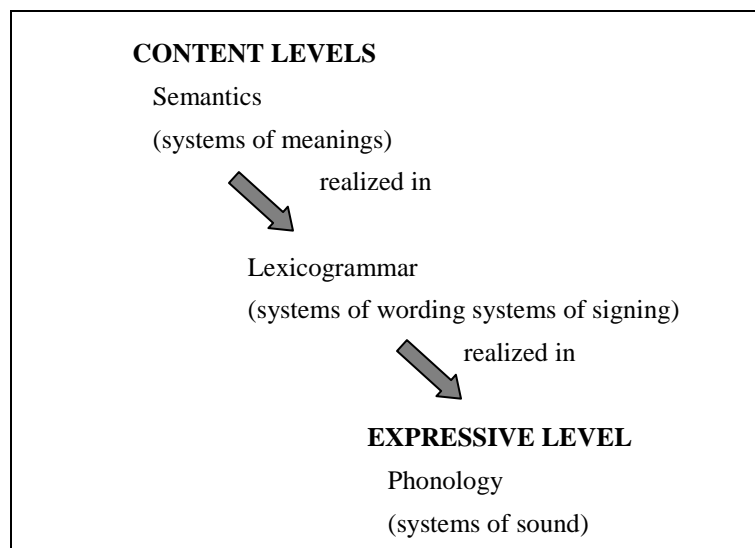
EXPRESSIVE LEVEL

Phonology

(systems of sound)

Figure 1 Level or strata of language (adapted from Butt et al, 2000: 7)

The purpose of this study is to examine lexicogrammar and to explore the textual features and textual resources of certain Thai short stories, in particular the system of THEME. By focusing on grammatical realization of the elements in Thai short stories, the paper begins with a review of the elements and characteristics of short stories. Then, relevant features of the theoretical framework, systemic functional grammar focusing on THEME system, will be introduced. After that, the overall results of the study will be presented. Finally, the relevance of the Theme system within some elements of Thai short stories will be discussed.

2. A short story and its elements

Charters (1987: 3) contends that the short story is commonly defined as a brief fictional prose narrative, often involving one connected episode. The short story is also a concentrated form, dependent for its success on feeling and suggestion. When readers are responsive to both the story and its writer and understand the way an author uses language to create a fictional world, the unity of the story has an even impact.

According to Charters (1987: 1364-1376), a short story is composed of six elements. The elements of *plot* are basic to short story form. Plot is the sequence of events in a story and their relation to one another. *Character* refers to the person or people character which can be animals such as dogs, cats or bugs that make something happen or produced an effect but not always just people. Another element of short story is the *setting*, the place and time of the story. To set the scene, the author attempts to create in the reader's imagination, the illusion of a solid word in which the story takes place. *Point of view* refers to the way that the story is told. Usually, first person narrator participates in the story but third-person narrator does not participate in the story. *Style* and *theme* are also important elements in short story. Theme is a generalization about the meaning of story. Style is the language that the author uses in narration. It is made up of various elements, including *tone*, the way the writer uses words to convey unstated attitudes toward the subject.

All of these elements are equally important for writing short stories, and all of them are major tools for writers of short stories. It is necessary to realize that in a short story everything is happening at once. In order to understand the grammatical

realization of some of these elements in Thai short stories, this study will present how those elements of the story correlate with relative frequency of Theme selection and Theme choices in The THEME system.

3. A brief introduction to the theoretical framework

Systemic Functional Grammar, in particular THEME system, is a framework that was used in this study. Within the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) approach, there are three modes of meanings, or metafunctions, in the clause: the first is the *experiential*; the second is the *interpersonal*; and the third is the *textual* metafunction. All the three metafunctions are used as the basis for exploring how meanings are created and understood. In order to analyze the texts at the clause rank, each metafunction has its own system of choices. By unpacking the choices we can explore in detail how the resources of language have been used to construct the meanings. The THEME system is a system of the clause rank, or level, and belongs to the textual metafunction, or textual meaning. In addition Theme is the resource for setting up the local context in each clause. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 58) define Theme functions in the structure of the language as follows:

> *The Theme functions in the structure of the **clause as a message**.*
> *Theme is also the point of departure for the message. It is the element*
> *the speaker selects for 'grounding' what he is going to say.*

In many languages, including in Thai, the thematic organization is realized according to position: Theme is realized by the initial position in the clause, and the Rheme follows, (i.e. a clause is Theme plus Rheme) structuring of the clause into Theme^Rheme. Matthiessen (1995: 532) describes the characteristics of Theme and Rheme in terms of their position within the clause as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 The characteristics of Theme and Rheme within the clause

Theme	Rheme
Point of departure of clause as message; local context of clause as piece of text.	Non-Theme - where the presentation moves after the point of departure; what is presented in the local context set up by Theme.
initial position of the clause	position following initial position

As noted above, Theme provides the resources for attaching the clause to the local context. To analyze and discuss textual meanings in Thai short stories, the characteristics of the Theme-Rheme structure analysis are applied.

4. Data selection

The data for this study has been drawn from two Thai short stories. The short stories were written by two new authors and published in *Sakulthai*, a weekly magazine, in the year 2007: January to June. *Sakulthai* magazine publishes weekly short stories of new writers that are approved by its committees.

Twenty four short stories were subcategorized into 2 quarters: January-March and April-June by the researcher. From each quarter, two stories were chosen to represent the overall data. After that, the two short stories were segmented into clause complexes and clause simplexes. There are 233 clause complexes and 876 clause simplexes as shown in the Table 2.

Table 2 Number of clause complexes and clause simplexes in two short stories

Duration for texts selection	Short stories	Clause complexes	Clause simplexes
Jan.- Mar.	(1) khon^{1}chan^{4}sɔː ŋ^5 'Second class people'	129	410
Apr.-June	(2) kham^{1}tɔː p^{3}nɯa^{5}kham^{1}tɔː p^3 'Answer above answer'	104	466
Total		**233**	**876**

5. Textual Resources in Thai Short Stories

This section presents the overall results drawn from analyzing textual resources using the THEME system. Firstly, Theme choices are presented. After that, the Theme selection in terms of marked and unmarked topical Theme is discussed. Last, the Theme range is presented and some instances are exemplified.

5.1 Theme choices in Thai short stories

According to Eggins (2004: 320) the patterns of Theme choice are seen as realizing textual meaning. Theme choices realize meanings about the organization of the communicative event. That is, how the text hangs together, and how the text relates to its context. In these Thai short stories, there are three types of Themes found: textual Themes, interpersonal Themes and ideational (topical) Themes.

5.1.1 Textual Theme

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 79) contend that the textual Theme can be realized by a continuative, a conjunction (structural Theme) and a conjunctive adjunct. In these Thai short stories, the textual Theme is realized by five possible choices (1) structural conjunctions, (2) relative elements, (3) clause binders, (4) conjunctive adjuncts and (5) continuatives.

(1) Structural conjunctions

In the clause structure, structural conjunctions in the Theme were used for linking two clauses in either coordinating relations or to be dependent ones. Structural conjunctions, for this research, were either a single conjunctive relation (1.1) as shown in the example (1) – (3) or a combination of two or more conjunctive relations (1.2).

(1.1) A single conjunctive relation

(1) Elaboration relation

nan³khɯː¹	(ø = mi⁴riam³)	tɔːŋ³ paj¹ tham¹ baj¹sam⁵khan¹pra²cam¹tua¹khon¹taŋ²daw³	
that is	(ø = Miriam)	must go do Immigrant identification card	
textual	topical		
Theme		Rheme	
…that is (Miriam) had to apply for an immigrant identification card.			

(2) Extending relation

læ⁴ **and**	phiː³saw⁵ sister	kɔː³ conj.	maj³ daj³ rak⁴saː⁵pha¹ja¹ban¹ tæː²jaŋ²daj¹ NEG. ASP:Pfv. medical treatment not at all
textual	topical	textual	
Theme			Rheme
…and her sister did not go to have medical treatment.			

(3) Enhancing relation

mua³ **when**	(ø = khaw⁵) (ø = he)	pit² pra²tuː¹ læːw⁴ Close door ASP.: Pfv.
textual	topical	
Theme		Rheme
…when (he) closed the door		

(1.2) A combination of two or more conjunctive relations

    (i) Non-disjunction structure

Two or more conjunctions often occurred in the textual Theme of these Thai short stories, and these conjunctions are located in a non-disjunction structure. These conjunctions, in addition, may have the same or different semantic relations as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Non-disjunction structure of two or more conjunctions

THEME				RHEME
Non-disconfiguration of two conjunctions			topical	**RHEME**
Textual 1st conj.	**Textual 2nd conj.**	**Textual 3rd conj.**		
Enhancing: læ:w[4] 'and then'	Enhancing: tha:[3] 'if'			
Enhancing: ha:k[2] 'if'	Extending tæ:[2] 'but'			
Enhancing: phiaŋ[1] 'only'	Extending tæ:[2] 'but'			
Extending: tæ:[2] 'but'	Enhancing: mɯa[3] 'when'			
Extending: tæ:[2] 'but'	Enhancing: læ:w[4] 'and then'			
Extending: tæ:[2] 'but'	Enhancing: kɔ:[3] 'so, then'			
Extending: tæ:[2] 'but'	Enhancing: læ:w[4] 'and then'	Enhancing: mɯa[3] 'when'		

(ii) Disjunction structure of two or more conjunctions

In the data, a disjunction structure of conjunctions was also found as shown in Table 4. In this structure, one or more conjunctions occurring in the textual Theme position precedes the topical Theme. The topical Theme is followed by one of conjunction *cɯŋ¹* or *kɔ:³*. These disjunction structures are typical of Thai narrative discourse as discussed in Patpong (2002b).

Table 4 Disjunction structure of conjunctions

Text	Theme			Rheme
	Disjunction configuration **[1ˢᵗ and/or conj. + topical Theme + 3ʳᵈ conj.]**			
	textual	**topical**	**textual**	
1: [96.2]	Extending tæː^2 'but'	mi^{4}riam^1 Miriam	kɔː^3 conj.	
2: [61.6]	Enhancing læːw^4 'and then'	(ø = kæː^1) (ø = he)	cɯŋ^1 conj.	
2: [68.6]	Extending + Enhancing tæː^{2}læːw^4 'but' + 'and then'	phaːp^{3}het^{2}kaːn^1 'scene'	kɔː^3 conj.	

(2) Relative elements

Three relative elements are found in the textual Theme of these Thai short stories. In this study, the relative elements: *thiː^3, sɯŋ^3* and *ʔan^1* are typically used in the texts and all may be glossed as having more than one meaning (137 instances) in different clauses. These relative elements serve as both topical and textual Themes in the clauses. The most widely used in the text is the relative element *thiː^3* as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5 Number of relative elements in Thai short stories

Relative elements	Meaning				Total
	that	**where**	**who**	**which**	
thiː^3	45	22	35	20	122
sɯŋ^3	6	--	4	--	10
ʔan^1	5	--	--	--	5
				Total	137

(3) Clause binders

For this study, *waː^3* was the only clause binder that is found in the textual Theme of these Thai short stories. The clause binders are used for linking the following clause with the preceding clause in a clause complex. As seen from these

data, verbal and mental processes are usually followed by the clause binder – $wa\text{:}^3$ as example (4) and (5).

(4) binder $wa\text{:}^3$ preceded by a verbal process

	(ø = mæ³)	ca² **bɔːk²**
	(ø = mother)	FUT. **tell**
waː³	mot⁴	laːk³ chaːŋ⁴
that	ant	drag elephant
textual	topical	
Theme		Rheme
Mother would tell you (that) the ant was able to drag the elephant.		

(5) binder $wa\text{:}^3$ preceded by a mental process

	khaw⁵	**khit⁴**
	he	**think**
waː³	tua¹ʔeːŋ¹	rəm³ khuap³khum¹cit²caj¹ ton¹ʔeːŋ¹ maj³ daj³
that	himself	start control mind himself NEG. ASP.: Pfv.
		maːk³khɯn³ rɯaj³rɯaj³ taːm¹lam¹dap²
		more and more respectively
textual	topical	
Theme		Rheme
He thought that his mental control was getting worse.		

(4) Conjunctive adjuncts

Conjunctive adjunct textual Themes provide cohesive links back to the previous discourse. In this study, only one conjunctive adjunct is found as shown in example (6).

(6)

tæː²læw⁴	**naj¹thaj³thiː³sut²**	khaw⁵	kɔː³	tat²sin⁵caj¹ taːm¹...	
but then	**finally**	he	conj.	decide based on...	
conj.	conj. adjunct				
textual		topical	textual		
Theme				Rheme	
but then finally his decision was based on….					

(5) Continuatives

The continuative textual Theme also indicates the relationship to previous discourse. In these Thai short stories, there is only one continuative Theme as shown in example (7).

(7) Continuative

ni³rɯ⁵	thiː³	bɔːk²
oh,	that	tell
waː³	ma⁴nut⁴ thuk⁴ khon¹	daj³rap⁴ kaːn¹saːŋ³san⁵ maː¹ jaːŋ²thaw³tiam¹kan¹
that	human every CLASS.	receive creation come equally
textual	topical	
Theme		Rheme
Oh! Is this where humans are said to be made equal?		

5.1.2 Interpersonal Themes

In Systemic Functional grammar, in addition to textual Themes, there are also interpersonal Themes. According to Matthiessen (1995, p. 538), the interpersonal Theme category includes finites, adjuncts, vocatives, and Wh-elements. In these Thai short stories, comment adjuncts were found.

Comment adjuncts provide resources for the speaker's assessments, comments or attitude towards the message of the clause as shown in example (8).

(8)

di:[1] læw[4] na:[3]	man[1]	som[5]khuan[1] ta:j[1] læw[4] la[2]
good ASP.: Pfv. Fp.	it	appropriate died ASP.: Pfv. Fp.
interpersonal	topical	
Theme		Rheme
Great! He deserves it.		

5.1.3 Topical Themes

Topical Theme also known as ideational Themes are located in the first elements in the clause. Represented meanings are expressed by topical (ideational) Themes. They function as the Transitivity structure in the clause structure. In these data, topical Themes may be participants, circumstances or processes. Topical Themes may be marked or unmarked, as discussed in section 5.2.

(1) Participants

Participant Themes can be subjects or complements in the clause structure. For the subjects, participant Themes is realized by a nominal group without rankshift or a nominal group with rankshift as shown in the following example (9) – (10).

(9) nominal group without rankshift

cha:j[1] num[2]	rəm[3] khit[4]thop[4]thuan[1]
young man	start ponder
unmarked topical	
Theme	Rheme
The young man started pondering.	

(10) nominal group with rankshift

cha:j[1]kæ:[2] [[thi:[3] khaw[5] lɯap[2]mɔ:ŋ[1]]]	krap[2] chuan[1] khaw[5] khuj[1]
old man that he glance	instead persuade he talk
	ja:ŋ[2]maj[3]na:[3]chɯa[3]
	unbelievably
unmarked topical: rankshift	
Theme	Rheme
Unbelievably, the old man, whom he glanced at, talked to him.	

(2) Circumstances

Circumstantial topical Themes give information about place, time, manner and cause. In Thai short stories, circumstantial Themes can be realized by a nominal group or a prepositional phrase as shown in the example (11) and (12).

(11) nominal group

ruɯ⁴duː¹ fon⁵	naːm⁴ naj¹ khlɔːŋ¹ca² miː¹ siː⁵ dæːŋ¹
season rain	water in canal FUT have color red
marked topical: circumstance	
Theme	Rheme
In rainy season, the water in the canal would turn red.	

(12) prepositional phrase

naj¹ tha²non⁵ sen³ nan⁴	khaw⁵ hen⁵ chaj¹ kæː² khon¹ nɯɯŋ²…
in road CLASS. that	he see man old CLASS. one …
marked topical: circumstance	
Theme	Rheme
He saw an old man on the road….	

(3) Process

There are 14 instances of the process topical Themes in the clause structures. The most dominant process type is existential process as shown in example (13)

(13)

miː¹	dek² waj¹ʔɔːn²kæː²taːŋ²kan¹
exist/ have	child in different ages
topical: process	
Theme	Rheme
There were children of different ages.	

5.2 Theme selection: marked and unmarked topical Theme in Thai short stories

The selection of Theme in the clause can be a marked or unmarked topical Theme. In the clause structure, Theme always includes a topical Theme, whereas,

the textual and interpersonal Theme are optional. Figure 2 shows Theme selection of these Thai short stories.
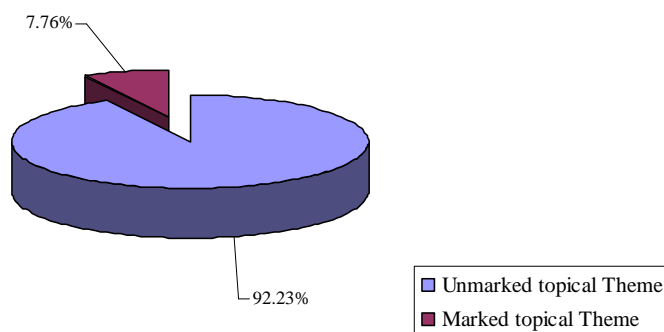

7.76%

92.23%

■ Unmarked topical Theme
■ Marked topical Theme

Figure 2 Theme selection of Thai short storie*s*

5.2.1 Unmarked topical Theme

Unmarked Themes are the elements that function as the subject of the clause structure. In Thai short stories unmarked topical Theme can be either unmarked *non-ellipsed* topical Theme or unmarked *ellipsed* topical Theme.

(1) Unmarked *non-ellipsed* topical Theme

The subject of the clause is explicitly presented in the unmarked *non-ellipsed* topical Theme as in example (14).

(14)

khaw⁵	maj³ jaːk² sap²son⁵ ʔiːk²tɔː²paj¹ laːw⁴
he	NEG. want confuse any more ASP.: Pfv.
unmarked non-ellipsed topical Theme	Rheme
He did not want to stay confused.	

(2) Unmarked *ellipsed* topical Theme

According to Patpong (2002a) Thai is a zero language. That is to say, where two or more clauses are linked with or without a conjunction, the subject of the first or second can be understood or ellipsed from preceding or succeeding discourse. For

this reason, the ellipsed subject of the first or second clause is interpreted as the unmarked *ellipsed* topical Theme. The example (15) and (16) are illustrated this case.

(15)

mɯa^3	(ø = **khaw^5**)		pit^2 pra^{2}tuː^1 læːw^4
when	(ø = **he**)		close door ASP.: Pfv.
	khaw^5	kɔː^3	han^{5}mɔːŋ^1 sen^{3}thaːŋ^1 suː^2
	he	conj.	look at road to
			thaːŋ^{1}saːm^{5}phræŋ^3 nan^4
			crossroads that
textual	topical	textual	
Theme			Rheme
as he turned off the door, he turned to look at those crossroads.			

(16)

khaw^5	phuːt^{3}jæːŋ^4 naj^{1}than^{1}thiː^1
he	argue suddenly
(ø = **khaw^5**)	phlaːŋ^1 han^{5}paj^{1}mɔːŋ^1 jaŋ^1 phɯan^3 …
(ø = **he**)	while look at to friend…
unmarked topical	
Theme	Rheme
Suddenly he argued (against the idea) while gazing at his friends…	

5.2.2 Marked topical Theme

The marked topical Themes, which are less frequently selected, do not serve as the subjects of the clause. But they play the structural role of transitivity clause structure as circumstantial elements: place, time, manner and cause. Of 876 clause simplexes from both stories, 68 instances of clauses begin with marked topical Theme. In this study, marked circumstantial Themes of spatial location and temporal location are found 67 times, whereas only one marked Object Theme (complement) is found. (see Figure 3.)
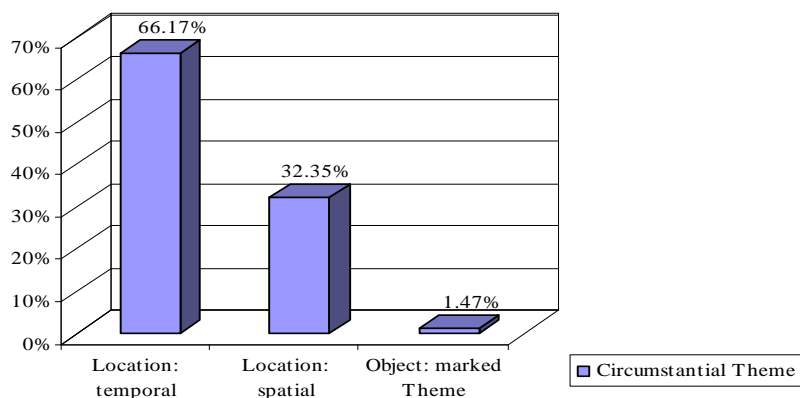
Figure 3 Marked topical Theme of Thai short stories

5.3 Theme range in Thai short stories

For textual resources in these Thai short stories, Theme might be either a multiple Theme or single Theme. Single Themes are made up from only one topical Theme, whereas multiple Themes are composed of two or more thematic elements. The Theme range in these Thai short stories can be textual, interpersonal, or topical (ideational), and they may be optionally followed by conjunctions such as *cɯŋ¹* or *kɔː³*, as shown in example (17) and (18).

(17) single Theme

mi⁴riam¹	chɔːp³ siː⁵faː⁴ kap² siː⁵lɯaŋ⁵
Miriam	like blue and yellow
unmarked topical	
Theme	Rheme
Miriam liked blue and yellow.	

(18) multiple Theme

	khon¹raw¹ ni:⁴ human this	kɔː³ conj.	plæːk² strange
tɔːn¹thiː³ when	ʔaj³man³ Mr. Man		man¹ jaŋ¹ maj³ taːj¹… he yet NEG. died …
textual	topical	textual	
Theme			Rheme
It is quite strange. When Mr. Man was alive…			

The results of this study, as mentioned in the previous section, show that the textual resources in these Thai short stories consist of Theme selection and Theme range as summarized in Figure 4.
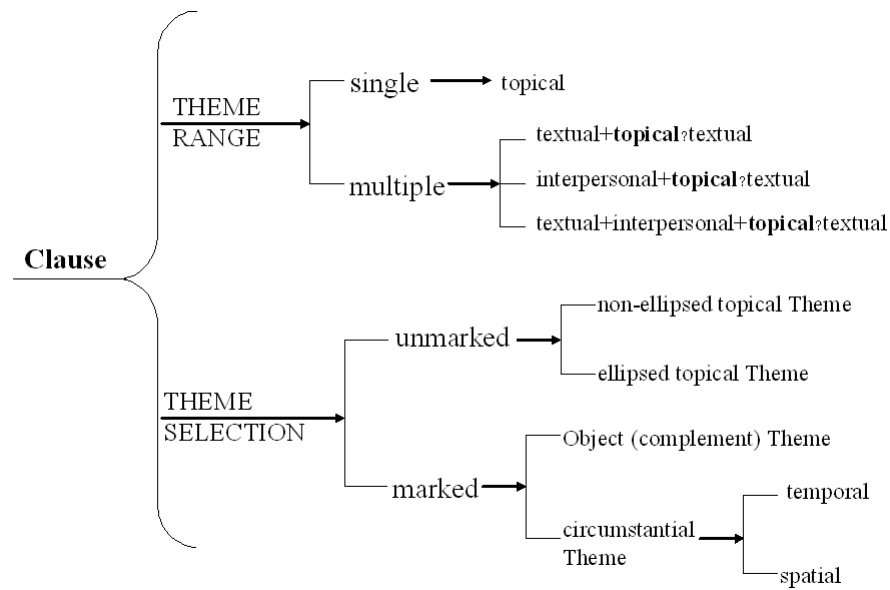

Figure 4 Textual resources in Thai short stories

This system network figure summarizes textual resources found in these Thai short stories. These textual resources occur simultaneously. Theme selection can be either unmarked Theme or marked Theme. As for Theme range, it can be either a single or multiple Themes. The development of Thai short stories and the composition of the story elements are reflected in the profile of Theme choices and Theme selection.

6. Discussion

As mentioned in section 2, all short stories have a number of common elements which are used as writers' tools. The most apparent ones, for discussion here, are setting, point of view, and character.

Setting refers to the scenery or environment in which the characters in the story live and move. Weather, sunny or cloudy, time of day, rivers, hills and trees, animals, sounds and smells, all of these might go into the setting of the story (Charters, 1987). In this present study, Theme selection often explicitly correlates with the setting. From both stories, the marked and unmarked topical Themes are selected to set the scene in the study. In these Thai short stories, marked circumstantial Theme is used in the construction of the setting. For the setting of the story, different circumstantial Themes are selected: temporal and spatial locations. For example, $fa\eta^2tro\eta^1kha{:}m^3kan^1kap^2\ ba{:}n^3kh\mathfrak{o}{:}\eta^5mi^4riam^1$ 'in the opposite of Miriam's house', $that^2ca{:}k^2khl\mathfrak{o}{:}\eta^1khaw^3paj^1$ 'next to the canal' and $ta{:}j^3fa{:}^4phu{:}n^5diaw^1kan^1$ 'under the same sky', all of these are spatial location marked Themes that indicate where the story takes place. Marked circumstantial temporal Theme, on the other hand, is selected to indicate the sequence of the events in the story, for instance $naj^1chua\eta^3ru^4du{:}^1r\mathfrak{o}{:}n^4$ 'in summer', $khra\eta^4tha{:}j^4sut^2$ 'the last time' and $la\eta^5ca{:}k^2ku{:}n^1k\mathfrak{o}t^2he{:}t^2$ 'after the night (that) the incident occurred'. To set the scene, unmarked topical Themes are also selected. That is to say, the subject of clause that is not a character is used for setting the place of the story. These are realized by a nominal group with spatial semantic domain in nature. So, $pra^2thet^3thaj^1raw^1$ 'our Thailand', $b\mathfrak{o}{:}^1ri^4sat^2$ 'company', and $hua^5khwan^2\ ja{:}m^1jen^1$ 'head of the dam in the evening' are examples of unmarked topical Themes that are selected for scene setting.

Point of view is the way story is told. The different kinds of point of view are easy to remember and identify. In order to tell the story, the author has to decide whether to employ a first-person narrator by using the pronoun 'I' or a third-person narrator by using pronoun 'he', 'she' or 'they' (Charters, 1987). From both stories, point of view is related to topical (ideational) Theme – Theme choices. Although the authors of the two short stories portray themselves as third-person narrators, there are different realizations of participants in those texts. That is, in Text 1, the

participant is realized by the name of the main character both ellipsed and non-ellipsed, for instance mi^4riam^1 'Miriam' or '(ø = Miriam)'. Meanwhile, in Text2, point of view is explicitly a third-person narrator, the participant is realized by third-person pronoun $khaw^5$ 'he' and mostly found in unmarked topical Theme position. However, first person pronoun $kha:^3$ 'I' and second person pronoun $mui\eta^1$ 'you' might be found when a conversation between participants is taking place.

Short stories are usually concerned with major problems that the characters must face and might involve interaction with other characters or with an idea or general circumstances that force the action (Charters, 1987). From Text1, there is only one character: mi^4riam^1 'Miriam' in the story. That is why mi^4riam^1 'Miriam' usually occurs in topical unmarked Theme and is picked up as a Theme again and again. Conversely, in Text2, four characters are found in the unmarked topical Theme position. It seems that the main characters of stories are mostly found in topical Theme position and later in the text development it is picked up as a Theme again and again. In addition it can be either unmarked ellipsed or non-ellipsed topical Theme.

As discussed above, there are some significant correlations between Theme choices and Theme selection within Thai short stories. Therefore we can summarize that textual resources of clause structure are useful resources for constructing a story. Moreover the system of THEME is also the powerful tool for analyzing and interpreting the literary texts.

7. Conclusion

This paper is an exploratory study of textual resources in two Thai short stories. Based on Systemic Functional Grammar, the THEME system and textual resources in Thai short stories are explored and presented. The system of Theme in terms of Theme choices, Theme selection and Theme range are also discussed. This paper has discussed the relevance of the Theme system within short story elements. From the linguistic findings derived from this study, unmarked topical Theme is the most common of Theme selection. In addition, Theme selection in Thai short stories correlates within some of its elements. In order to set the scene, marked circumstantial Theme was selected, whereas unmarked topical (ideational) Theme

was selected to indicate the point of view of the story. This study tries to provide an analysis Thai literary text by using systemic functional approach. However, it is focused on only one metafunction, therefore, an analysis of this text type using other metafunctions is required in further studies.

References

Bunjanya, W. (2002). *An analysis on technique of presentation in Wim Leaowarin's literary works*. M.A thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.

Butt, D., Fahey, R., Spink, S. & Yallop, C. (2000). *Using functional grammar: An explorer's guide*. Sydney: Macquarie University, NCELTR.

Chaivisitkul, T. (2006). *Reflection of Bangkok from short story finalist of Southeast Asian write award from 2536-2545 B.C.* Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.

Charters, A. (1987). *The story and its writer: An introduction to short fiction.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Chorean, W. (2004). *The realism in Prachokhom Lunachai's short stories.* Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.

Eggins, S. (2004). *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics.* London: Continuum.

Halliday, M.A.K. & Matthiessen, M.I.M. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar.* London: Edward Arnold.

Kanchanaruenrost, P. (1999). *An analysis of Damrong Areekul's short stories.* Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.

Khongto, P. (2003). *Concept and the reflection of the society in Prachokhom Lunachai's short stories: An analysis studies.* Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.

Khotcharit, C. (2006). *Paradigm of poverty: the reflection in contemporary Thai short stories from B.E. 2501-2545.* Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.

Matthiessen, Chroiotian, M.I.M. (1995). *Lexicogrammatical cartography: English systems.* Tokyo: International Language Sciences Publishers.

Patpong, P. (2002a). Thematic organization of Thai narrative discourse. *Paper presented at ASFLA conference: Exploring semantics.* Macquarie University.

Patpong, P. (2002b). On Theme as a textual resource in Thai. *Paper presented at 14th Euro-International Systemic Functional Linguistics Workshop: "Issues in Language Description: Rethinking Systemic Functional Theory?".* The University of Lisbon.

Tedmuak, N. (2004). *Reflection of northern people's way of life in Mala Kamchan's short stories.* Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.

Tingsomboon, S. (1993). *An analysis of Pramoon Unhathoop's short stories.* Master's thesis, Srinakharinwirot University.