

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter introduces how the idea of conducting this research was developed. It also includes the purpose of study, the potential benefits of the study and the method and scope of the study. Moreover, the definitions of important terms are concisely explained to get readers to the point of what the research is all about.

1.1 Rationale:

Many ideas have been revealed about the relations of literature to a given social situation happening in reality. According to Rene Wallek and Warren Austin (1956: 54), literature represents “life” and life is a “social reality.” Ranjuan Intharakamhang (1975) said that social situations are raw materials of author’s work. In his book *Fictions: the Novel and Social Reality*, Zeraffa (1976: 7) similarly stated that the novel serves as both literary form and social institution. Its form and content are derived from social phenomena which often tend to be tied up with particular moments in social history. In her work *Nawaniyai Kab Sangkom Thai (The Novel and Thai Society)* (2004), Assistant Professor Threesil Boonkajorn, Department of Comparatives Literature, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, chose the five-year period, 1932-1937, to demonstrate how the Thai social conditions are represented in many Thai novels. From these perspectives, studying the ideas which are conveyed in literary works is, therefore, acceptable as a way to examine real situations.

One of the novels discussed by Professor Threesil Boonkajorn is *Khang Lang Pap (Behind the Painting)* by Sriburapha. In Thai literary circles, the works of “Sriburapha”, the pen name of Kulap Saipradit, have been published continuously during his lifetime, 1905-1974 and since his death. He was honorably mentioned in

the 2005 Anniversaries of Great Personalities and Historic Events for his numerous contributions to the community in written works under social, political, religious and philosophical themes. His renowned novels include *Luk Phuchai (Real Man, 1928)*, *Songkram Chivit (The War of Life, 1932)*, *Khang Lang Pharp (Behind the Painting, 1937)*, *Chon Kwa Rao Cha Phop Kan Eek (Till We Meet Again, 1950)*, *Lae Pai Kang Na (Looking Forward) Childhood Period, 1955 and Adulthood Period, 1975* (http://www.sriburapha.net/biography_eng.php?lang=eng: 18 March 2007).

Among his novels, *Khang Lang Pap (Behind the Painting)* and *Song Kram Chee Vit (The War of Life)* have gained much popularity among readers (Khang Lang Pap, 2005: 19). However, *Behind the Painting* is the only novel that has become well-known both in Thailand and abroad. It has been translated into Chinese, Japanese, and English. It is also the only novel of his that has been made into two movie versions, one by Piak Poster in 1985 and the other by Cherd Songsri in 2001. Moreover, it has been used as additional reading for students in Thai secondary schools.

Behind the Painting is a love story which unfolds in flashbacks and is narrated by Nopporn, a Thai student studying in Japan. It tells of his youthful infatuation with Mom Ratchawong Kirati, an older woman with a royal title who is visiting Japan with her husband. Unfortunately, their close relationship never develops as they wish. According to Dr. David Smyth, a university teacher of London University, England, who translated *Behind the Painting* into English, *Behind the Painting* was set apart from Sriburapha's earlier novels and many other tragic love stories of the period because of the author's attempt to deal with characters and their emotions with realism and honesty, which are not compatible with the conventions of literature (Smyth; 1995, 2000: 6).

Various Thai critics have offered different opinions to account for the unfulfilled love relationship between Kirati and Nopporn. First of all, Banjong Banjerdsin (1974), the pen name of Udom Srisuwan, a famous novelist and critic, sees social hierarchy as the main reason for Kirati's misfortune in her love life.

Likewise, Threesil Boonkhajorn (2004), views a strict frame of social class norms as the reason for her unhappiness, which leads her to seek happiness outside her aristocratic circle. ML. Boonlua Tepayasuwan (2000), a famous novel critic, however, sees Nopporn and Kirati's unfulfilled love as a matter of age differences. Yet Chusak Pattarakulwanit (2001), Associate Professor of Thammasat University argues that speech, its meaning and interpretation, is the core of the unsuccessful love relationship of Kirati and Nopporn.

Among the literary critiques, the researcher is interested in Chusak's commentary most because it opens up the possibility of conducting a literary interpretation from a linguistic perspective. Linguistically it appears that pragmatic theories are validated to analyze literary works. In her study *Indirectness as a Communicative Strategy of Thai speakers*, Srinarawat (2001) uses indirectness speech to analyze five award-winning classic Thai novels and compared the results with questionnaire responses on language use in direct and indirect speech act among 475 male and female respondents of various occupations, educational levels, and ages. In her study "Questions in Indirect Speech Acts", Woraporn Daisakulchu (2004) also applies the concept of indirectness in speech to examine and compare the forms and functions of indirect questions in Thai used in dramas and the discourse completion tests to determine whether gender, age, and relative social status of the speakers have any influence on the selection of indirect questions. Suwittha Narksuk's study (2006) adopts the cooperative principle of Grice to investigate how Thai speakers flout conversational maxims in the four selected Thai soap opera drama scripts. Muhammad Badarneh (2007) investigates the formal and functional properties of rhetorical questions in the Quran based on 809 rhetorical questions collected as data. To conduct his study, he applies a multidisciplinary approach to get a clearer understanding of rhetorical questions in the Quran in terms of their forms, functions, and effects. Guler Paran Phillips' work (2007) focuses on the subject of processing and understanding natural language texts. The researcher aims to determine the significant components of the reader's communicative competence and the extent of the active relationships between texts, reader, writer, and contexts since the possibility in understanding meanings of texts depends on the

reader's competency. Roman Jakobson's model of an act of communication is applied in this study.

All research works mentioned above demonstrate that a pragmatic approach can be applied to the analysis of literary texts. Therefore, it is possible that the Thai novel *Behind the Painting* by Sriburapha can also be studied through a pragmatic approach. The aim of this study is to examine to what extent the tragic love relationship between the leading male protagonist, Nopporn, and the leading female protagonist, Kirati, in the novel *Behind the Painting* can be explained by Gricean conversational maxims that are flouted and the effects of perlocutionary acts as described in speech act theory.

1.2 Purpose of the study

To examine the communication patterns leading to the tragic love relationship between the leading male protagonist Nopporn and the leading female protagonist Kirati in the novel *Behind the Painting*, a Thai novel by Sriburapha, based on conversational implicature and speech act theory.

1.3 Potential Benefit of the Study

It is hoped that the results of the study will serve to indicate that literary interpretation can also be achieved through pragmatic analysis.

1.4 Method and the Scope of the Study

The data for the study is obtained from the dialogues of the Thai novel *Behind the Painting*. A pragmatic analysis based on speech act theory and Grice's conversational maxims is conducted to investigate whether flouted maxims and perlocutionary acts as described in speech act theory arise in the tragic love relationship of the main protagonists, Kirati, the leading female character and Nopporn, the leading male character.

1.5 Definitions of Important Terms

1.5.1 *Behind the Painting*- a Thai Novel written by Sriburapha in 1937

1.5.2 Sriburapha- the pen name of the Thai author, Kulap Saipradit

1.5.3 Kirati- the leading female character in *Behind the Painting*

Age: 35

Marital Status: married with Chao Khun Athikanbodhi whose position is a bourgeois bureaucrat, or Chao Khun in Thai

Occupation: housewife

Social class: royal title called Mom Rachawong in Thai

1.5.4 Nopporn- the leading male character in *Behind the Painting*

Age: 22

Marital Status- arranged engagement with Pari Buranavath

Occupation- university student

Social class- commoner

1.5.5 Pragmatic- the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms (Yule, 1996: 4)

1.5.6 Conversational Implicature or Conversational Principle- the four conversational maxims introduced by Grice containing; quality, quantity, manner, relation

The maxim of quality-

1. Do not say what you believe to be false
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

The maxim of quantity-

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required

The maxim of manner-

1. Avoid obscurity of expression
2. Avoid ambiguity
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)
4. Be orderly

The maxim of relation-

1. Be relevant (Grice, 1989: 26-27)

1.5.7 Speech Acts- a linguistic theory introduced by Austin and developed by Searle including three types of acts: locutionary act, illocutionary act, perlocutionary act

Locutionary act- the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense and reference

Illocutionary act- the making of a statement, offer, promise, etc. in uttering a sentence, by virtue of the conventional force associated with it.

Perlocutionary act- the bringing about of effects on the audience by means of uttering the sentence, such effects being special to the circumstances of the utterance (Levinson, 1983: 236)

1.5.8 Five Points of Illocutionary Act

Assertive- to commit the hearer to the truth of a proposition, e.g. statements, explanations

Directive – to try to get the hearer to behave in such a way as to make his behavior match the propositional content of the directive, e.g. order that is obeyed or disobeyed

Commissive- a commitment by the speaker to undertake the course of action represented in the propositional content, e.g. promises and vows are kept or broken

Expressive- to express the sincerity condition of the speech act, e.g. apologies, thanks, congratulations, welcomes

Declarative- to bring about change in the world by representing it as having been changed, e.g. statements like I pronounce you a man and wife” (Searle, 1998: 148-150)