

Semantics Analysis of Sentence, Utterance, and Proposition in Blyton's on the Farm

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ABSTRACT

Explore the differences and relationships between sentences, utterances, and propositions within children's literature by analyzing On the Farm by Enid Blyton from the Farm Series Collection (Egmont UK Limited, 2014). We use semantic analysis to examine how these linguistic constructions function in narrative discourse. Sentences are analyzed for their structural and descriptive roles, particularly in introducing characters, settings, and actions. Utterances are identified as spoken or written expressions in dialogue that reveal characters' emotional reactions, questions, and exclamations. Propositions are statements conveying factual or verifiable information, regardless of their truth value. Through close reading of selected passages, we demonstrate that Blyton's text employs sentences to establish narrative coherence, utterances to convey the voices and emotions of characters, and propositions to provide information or opinions. This nuanced understanding of these linguistic units enriches the interpretation of both the form and content of children's stories. Moreover, these insights offer valuable contributions to teaching and semantic studies in the field of literature.

Keywords: *Children's literature, sentences, utterances, propositions, narrative discourse, Enid Blyton, On the Farm, characterization, narrative structure, literary linguistics, teaching literature, Farm Series Collection.*

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INTRODUCTION

Analyzing linguistic structures such as sentences, utterances, and propositions in story texts is basic to studying semantics. According to Famularsih and Helmy (2020) and Oshima and Hogue (2007), a sentence is a group of words that usually consists of a subject and a predicate and is used to convey various ideas and feelings. A sentence with multiple word categories is a subject and a verb, indicating a fully formed idea or state of mind. Sentences generally occur in several forms: simple sentences, compound sentences, and complex sentences. Crookes and Rulon (1985) state that an utterance is a stream of speech with at least one of the following characteristics under one intonation contour, bounded by a pause, and constituting a single semantic unit. As Tantray (2018) explains, a proposition asserts that something is or is not the case and can be affirmed or denied. Every proposition is either true or false. This distinguishes propositions from other forms of expression, such as questions, commands, and exclamations, which cannot be accurate or false. In logic, "statement" is often used interchangeably with "proposition." These elements present different but essential roles in shaping meaning and the reader's interpretation. Sentences give structural relationship and narrative development, utterances catch immediacy and emotion in the dialogues, and propositions convey factual information in the story. Children's literature, shown by Enid Blyton's *In The Farm: The Farm Series Collection* (Egmont UK Limited, 2014), offers a valuable context to discuss these linguistic features due to its clear narrative structure and engaging character conversations.

Although there is a full-length body of research on narrative discourse and semantics, there is still a necessity for more concentrated studies that orderly analyze the relationship between sentences, utterances, and propositions in literary texts aimed at children. This article discusses this gap by semantically analyzing selected parts from Blyton's *In The Farm*. By explaining how every linguistic unit operates and contributes to the whole story, this study seeks to increase understanding of their roles in children's literature and to give knowledge for pedagogical and scholarly applications.

METHODOLOGY

This research used qualitative semantic analysis to examine the differences and interrelationships of sentences, utterances, and propositions in Enid Blyton's *On the Farm: The Farm Series Collection* (Egmont UK Limited, 2014). Using Kreidler's (1998) semantic model, we selected systematically. We studied passages illustrating each linguistic unit: sentences for narrative function and grammaticality, utterances as context-dependent expressions of interaction or emotion in dialogue, and propositions as declarative statements that can be evaluated for truth or falsity. We categorized and analyzed each sample through close reading, supporting our classifications through Kreidler's definitions. To ensure the validity of our analysis, we checked our categorizations against the theoretical criteria and dispelled ambiguity through close reading. All data are properly referenced, and analysis is limited to chosen passages from one work, allowing close exploration but possibly prejudicing generalizability. This method is a methodical way of understanding the contribution sentences, utterances, and propositions make, how they cooperate within children's fiction, and what is gained by literary pedagogy and semantic research (Blyton, 2014; Kreidler, 1998).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.

No	Data	The Type	Analysis
1.	One early spring day, three children looked out of a window in a tall London House. (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 5)	Sentence	It describes the introduction of the story, consisting of the subject (three children), the verb (looked out), and the object (of a window).
2.	He was the oldest of the family, black-haired and brown-eyed. (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 5)	Sentence	It has the subject (he) and the predicate (he was the oldest of the family). Informing the physical characteristics of the character.
3.	It was a very long journey, but most exciting. (Chapter 2, Off to Cherry Tree Farm, on page 10)	Sentence	Connecting two ideas or clauses with a contradictory conjunction.
4.	The knives and forks rattled on the table, and Penny's bread jumped off its plate. (Chapter 2, Off to Cherry Tree Farm, on page 10)	Sentence	Two clauses combined by a conjunction. Both clauses have the structures of subjects, predicates, and objects.
5.	The sun slipped into the children's bedrooms early next morning, slanting across the walls. (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 15)	Sentence	Describing two actions in a complete idea.
6.	Penny and Sheila climbed through the fence, and three tiny lambs frisked up. (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 16)	Sentence	Forming a compound sentence: two clauses joined by a conjunction "and."
7.	He was gentle and sweet, and Sheila had to keep pushing his big brother away. (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 17)	Sentence	A coordinating conjunction joins two clauses: the first describes the character's characteristics, and the second mentions the character's actions.
8.	Penny wished she could keep it there all day and night. (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 17)	Sentence	A complete grammatical sentence with a clear subject and verb.
9.	Penny was afraid of the cows at first, so she would not try. (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 18)	Sentence	Two clauses have subjects and verbs, becoming a complete idea.
10.	Daisy looked round at Penny and swished her tail gently. (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 18)	Sentence	Performing two actions at the same time. The verbs (looked and swished) were done by the subject (Daisy), becoming a compound sentence.

11.	"What?" (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 6)	Utterance	An informal spoken reaction. It is used to ask a question or show surprise.
12.	"Penny! Are you sure?" (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 6)	Utterance	A mix of exclamation or calling someone and asking a question with a conversational tone.
13.	"Oh, Penny, it is too good to be true!" (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 7)	Utterance	It expresses excitement to someone with an emotional reaction and is quoted directly.
14.	"Golly! Cream every day! Moreover, Auntie Bess makes apple pies with cheese! And strawberries straight out of the garden! What do people live in a town for?" (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 7)	Utterance	It is a series of spoken words expressing excitement and a question, not a formal structure, but a flow of spoken excitement.
15.	"You will find three little lambs by themselves in that pen over there." (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 16)	Utterance	Direct instruction or dialogue is marked as speech.
16.	Benjy was ten - a thin, quiet boy who spent all his spare time reading about animals and birds. (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on pages 5-6)	Proposition	Because a sentence tells factual information about Benjy, the information can be false or not.
17.	She listened with all her ears whilst the grown-ups were talking. (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 6)	Proposition	because statements convey a meaning that can be verified as factual or not.
18.	"Mummy said that the doctor advised a good, long holiday for all of us." (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 6)	Proposition	because this statement tells about the opinion and what the speaker said.
19.	"You go on Thursday." (Chapter 1, A Great Surprise, on page 7)	Proposition	because statements tell about factual plans that were planned by the speaker, having a meaning of time and action.
20.	Taffy was one of the farmers. (Chapter 3, The First Day at the Farm, on page 17)	Proposition	because it is a factual statement about Faffy's identity as a farmer.

ANALYSIS

1. One early spring day, three children looked out of a window in a tall London house. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: According to Kreidler (1998), this is a sentence. It contains proper structure, an adverbial of time, subjects, a verb, an object, and a preposition of place. The sentence expresses a complete idea and narrates the story.
2. He was the oldest of the family, black-haired and brown-eyed. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: According to Kreidler (1998), this sentence expresses complete thoughts and describes or gives information about physical characteristics. It is consistent with the grammatical structure.
3. It was a very long journey, but most exciting. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: As stated by Kreidler (1998), these words are a sentence to express a complete thought because there is a contrast conjunction in the sentence, contrasting the situation (it was a very long journey) and the feeling (most exciting).
4. The knives and forks rattled on the table, and Penny's bread jumped off its plate. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: The sentence contains two clauses: an independent clause and a dependent clause. The clauses have different subjects and actions in the sentence. Although the subjects and actions are different, they have the same purpose: to express a complete idea in the sentence, as mentioned by Kreidler (1998).
5. The sun slipped into the children's bedrooms early the next morning, slanting across the walls. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: Kreidler (1998) states that this is a sentence. Because the sentence structure has many functions, such as adverbs of time, subject, verbs, object, coordinating conjunctions, and prepositions of place, this sentence conveys a complete thought.
6. Penny and Sheila climbed through the fence, and three tiny lambs frisked up. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: This is a compound sentence, two independent clauses joined using the coordinating conjunction "and." The two clauses "Penny and Sheila climbed through the fence" and "three tiny lambs came frisking up" have different subjects and verbs. They combine to form a meaningful, complete idea consistent with English grammar rules. This word sequence is meaningful in English and expresses a complete idea, as sentence requirements dictate (Kreidler, 1998).
7. He was gentle and sweet, and Sheila had to keep pushing his big brother away. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: This is also a compound sentence linked by the coordinating conjunction. "He was gentle and sweet" is what the characters like; "Sheila had to keep pushing his big brother away" is what someone else did. Both clauses are independent and together form a complete thought, which meets the definition of a sentence, a meaningful expression constrained by grammar (Kreidler, 1998).
8. Penny wished she could keep it there all day and night. **(Sentence)**
Analysis: This is a simple sentence with the subject "Penny" and the verb "wished"; most easily, you can reverse the word order to > "Penny wished.....". It is a whole grammatical sentence that conveys a complete thought regarding Penny's wish, thus a complete sentence. As Kreidler (1998) notes, a sentence needs only be an appropriate string of words; clearly, this sentence means well-formed English and conveys a desire.
9. Penny was afraid of the cows at first, so she would not try. **(Sentence)**

Analysis: In this sentence, we have a compound sentence: "Penny was afraid of the cows at first" and "She would not try," which are combined with the coordinating conjunction "so." Each half of the sentence has its subject and verb, forming a complete, logical idea. That is consistent with the definition of Kreidler (1998), as the sentence is a string of meaningful and grammatical words in English.

10. Daisy looked round at Penny and swished her tail gently. (**Sentence**)

Analysis: This sentence tells two things Daisy did, connected by "and." These two actions ("looked round at Penny" and "swished her tail gently") are performed by the same subject and take place in quick succession, so the composite action is a clear, cohesive image. The sentence is well-formed and meaningful, satisfying Kreidler's (1998) requirements of what constitutes a sentence.

11. "What?" (**Utterance**)

Analysis: This is a brief and informal reaction, often used to express confusion or surprise or to prompt repetition. Although it is only one word, it still functions as a complete act of communication within a specific moment. According to Kreidler (1998), an utterance is not just about grammatical completeness but about speech produced in a particular context, at a specific time and place, with an intended meaning. This one-word response fits that description because it carries clear intent and occurs within a real-time interaction.

12. "Penny! Are you sure?" (**Utterance**)

Analysis: This utterance combines calling someone's name with immediately asking a question. It has a conversational tone and reflects the speaker's intention to confirm something with the listener. According to Kreidler (1998), utterances are tied to specific speech events with meaning and intent, and this example clearly illustrates that in a casual, interactive way.

13. "Oh, Penny, it is too good to be true!" (**Utterance**)

Analysis: This utterance expresses an emotional reaction toward someone, probably excitement or disbelief. It is spoken at a particular moment to convey how the speaker feels. As Kreidler (1998) explains, an utterance is more than just a sentence; it is a meaningful speech act occurring in a real-time event, which this example demonstrates.

14. "Golly! Cream every day! And those apple pies with cheese that Auntie Bess makes! And strawberries straight out of the garden! What do people live in a town for?" (**Utterance**)

Analysis: We interpret this as a spontaneous flow of speech filled with excitement and ending in a rhetorical question. It is not formally structured but captures the speaker's enthusiasm and wonder in that moment. Following Kreidler's (1998) definition, this is a clear example of an utterance because it happens in a specific context and reflects intentional emotional expression.

15. "You will find three little lambs by themselves in that pen over there." (**Utterance**)

Analysis: This is a direct spoken instruction or information given by someone. It has a clear communicative purpose, informing or guiding the listener. In line with Kreidler (1998), this utterance shows how speech acts are tied to particular events, times, and meanings involving real people in communication.

16. Benjy was ten—a thin, quiet boy who spent all his spare time reading about animals and birds. (**Proposition**)

Analysis: This is a proposition because the sentence states a fact about Benjy that can be evaluated as true or false. According to Kreidler (1998), a proposition is a statement that can be evaluated as true or false, and this sentence meets the criterion because it can be verified as true or false based on available information.

17. She listened with all her ears while the grown-ups were talking. (**Proposition**)

Analysis: This sentence can be categorized as a proposition because, according to Kreidler (1998), a proposition is a statement that can be evaluated as true or false. This sentence has a clear subject, "she" (subject), and "listened with all her ears while the grown-ups were talking" (predicate), which can be evaluated as true or false.

18. Mummy said the doctor advised a good, long holiday for all of us. (**Proposition**)

Analysis: This is a proposition because, as Kreidler (1998) explained, a proposition is a potential fact about the world that can be evaluated as true or false. In this case, the sentence states a fact about what Mummy said and the doctor's advice, which can be evaluated as true or false.

19. You go on Thursday. (**Proposition**)

Analysis: This sentence is a proposition because it conveys a meaningful idea about someone's schedule. According to Kreidler (1998), a proposition is something abstract but meaningful, expressed in different sentences and parts of sentences. In this case, the sentence can be evaluated as true or false depending on the actual schedule.

20. Raffy was one of the farm men. (**Proposition**)

Analysis: This sentence is a proposition because, according to Kreidler (1998), a proposition is a potential fact about the world that can be true or false. In this case, the sentence states a fact about Raffy's identity or role, which can be evaluated as true or false depending on whether Raffy was indeed one of the farm workers.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the semantic analysis of Enid Blyton's *On the Farm*, we found that sentences, utterances, and propositions play unique but interconnected roles in shaping meaning within children's literature. Through close reading and categorization, we observed that sentences provide the structural backbone of the narrative, introducing characters, settings, and events in a clear and organized manner (Kreidler, 1998; Aziz et al., 2019). Utterances, which often appear in dialogue, are crucial for capturing the immediacy and emotion of character interactions, making the story more engaging and authentic (Crookes & Rulon, 1985; Crookes, 1990). Meanwhile, propositions represent statements that can be evaluated as true or false, contributing to the logical and informational content of the story (Tantray, 2016; Tantray, 2016). By analyzing these elements in Blyton's work, we realized that understanding their differences and how they work together deepens our appreciation of the narrative structure and the expressive qualities of children's stories. This insight enhances literary interpretation and provides valuable knowledge for teaching and further research in semantics (Famularish & Helmy, 2020; Hidayah et al., 2024).

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