

THEMATIC PROGRESSION IN RECOUNT TEXT
WRITTEN BY THE EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study was about the theme, rheme and thematic progression of students' recount text of the eight grade at SMP RK Budi Mulia Pematangsiantar. The aim of this study were (1) to investigate thematic progression pattern used (2) to find out the reason why the students used thematic progression in the way they did. This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method. The data in this study were clauses of students' recount text. The instrument of collecting data was elicitation technique and interview. The data were analyzed by using interactive model technique of Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014). The result of this study were the following, (1) There were two patterns of thematic progression used in students' recount text, they were Theme Reteration/Constant Theme Pattern (TR/CTP), and Zig-zag/Linear Theme Pattern (Zig-zag/LTP). (2) The reason in use of thematic progression by students, they were: (a) the student's lack of knowledge about use of the thematic progression, (b) they also less interested in writing, (c) the students got resources from reading material and (d) the students got resources from english teacher's explanation.

***Keywords:** Theme, Rheme, Thematic Progression, Recount Text*

INTRODUCTION

Background of The Study

In learning English, there are four skills that students have to be mastered, they are Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing. Among the basic skills, writing is considered to be the most complicated skill because in writing the writer should be able to combine and express his/her opinions in good written forms. They need to pay attention to several aspects to write a good composition. One aspect that plays an important role in writing is the coherence (Wang, 2007). As Halliday (1994: 309) stated,

coherence is “ the internal[resource] for structuring the clause as a message”. To help the students organize information within clause to make their writing coherent, the use of Theme and Thematic Progression is determining (Halliday & Hassan,1976;Belmonte & McCabe,1998).

. Coherence is a product of many different factors, which combine to make every paragraph, every sentence, and every phrase contribute to the meaning of the whole piece. Coherence in writing is much more difficult to sustain than coherent speech simply because writers have no nonverbal clues to inform them if their message is clear or not. Therefore, writers must take their patterns of coherence much more explicit and much more carefully planned and it can be achieved through the operation of theme and rheme.

Starting a sentence with a Theme is useful in helping students to communicate their ideas successfully. The theme is the element of clause structures which serves as the point of departure of the message. The Theme then becomes the prominent element for standing as the grammatical system that organizes the clause in such a way that it helps to construct the environment because it provides the environment for the remainder of the message.

Focusing the students’ writing on the Theme system, including thematic progression, will be very useful in helping students to communicate their ideas successfully (Wang,2007). Theme system assists the students “ to specify the place in the reader network of meaning where the meaning is to be incorporated as relevant” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: 19). Furthermore, Theme is the “point of departure for the message” (Halliday, 1994: 37; Eggins, 2004: 296) which determines the concern of a clause; what a clause is about. The Theme then becomes the prominent element for standing as the “grammatical system that organizes the clause in such a way that it helps

to construct the environment” (Emilia, 2014: 225) and for providing the environment for the remainder of the message, which is known as the Rheme, in the Theme-Rheme organization (Halliday, 1994).

Thematic Progression is an exchange of information between successive theme and rheme pairings in a text (Eggins,2004:318). Thematic Progression contributes to the cohesive development of a text. Thematic Progression in order to give students more grammatical resources to improve the coherence of their writing, help them become aware of how information and ideas should flow in a text so that it could be easily understood by the reader. In addition, students would apprehend which thematic progression patterns are valued in English Writing and have the opportunities to apply this knowledge to improve their writing (Jing 2015).

Eggins (2004) states that there are three kinds of thematic progression pattern: first, theme reiteration or constant theme pattern, a theme is picked up and repeated at the beginning of each clause as. Second, a zig-zag or linear theme pattern, the subject matter in the rheme of the previous clause is taken up in the theme of a following clause. Third, a multiple theme or split rheme pattern, a rheme may include a number of different pieces of information, each of which may be taken up as the theme in a number of subsequent clauses.

Based on the on PPL that had been done by the writer, it was founded that the student were still difficult to organize the messages in their paragraphs and students could not develop the next clause from the previous clause. As the result the students could not write the paragraph coherently. This was because the language teacher in giving correction the student’s writing was still focus on errors which occur such as lack of subject-verb agreement, incorrect used of verb tenses, and so on. The teacher never

corrected the coherence in student's writing so that the students did not know whether their writing coherent or not, as it was shown on this following short paragraph:

Table 1.1 the Problems of Coherence in Student Recount Text

Holiday in Parapat

Last year, I was on Holiday in Parapat. I though Parapat was very interesting. I visited Toba Lake. When I was in Toba Lake, we went to swim and we took a photo there. At the time I was hungry and thirsty and I ate some food and drank something. After we went to Batu Gantung and then we went back to my home. I though it was really fun. I hope my next holiday will be more interesting.

(Bastian Simanjuntak : 2016)

From the paragraph above, the students put the connections between sentences but it lacks of coherence since the idea was not completely stated and the writer does not stand from his view point. It could be seen that the students were still difficult to write coherently. One of the ways could help to improve coherence in student's writing was analyzing by thematic progression. Thematic progression gave a reader orientation as to where the information has come from and where it is going, and hence creates coherent in a written text.

Thematic progression could be seen from the pattern of theme and rheme used in student's writing. The balance and movement of a clause between Theme and Rheme was an essential component in composing a coherence text. If a writer failed to control the flow of information from Theme and Rheme, his or her text was difficult for a reader to follow, because there was no clear signpost directing the reader, who therefore cannot

easily follow the progression of an idea or argument.

Based on the problem above, the writer analyzed thematic progression pattern particularly in recount text.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Halliday (2004) states that systemic functional grammar (SFG) is an approach to understanding grammar that focuses on how language works to achieve a variety of different functional and communicative purposes. The emphasis is thus on how the purpose for which language is used and the context in which appears affects the choices speakers and writers make.

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) divide the way we use language into different metafunctions. Each metafunction has its own systems of choices, each choice resulting in a structure. Halliday (1994: 179) describes metafunctions as three types of meaning within grammatical structure of a clause. A clause is a unit in which three of different kinds are combined, namely Ideational function (clause as a representation), Interpersonal function (clause as an exchange) and Textual function (clause as a message).

Textual function is an organizing message that has relevant to context (linguistic and social). A clause as a unit of message is constituted by Theme. Halliday (2014: 89) states that the Theme is the element that serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that which locates and orients the clause within its context. The speaker chooses the Theme as his or her point of departure to guide the addressee in developing an interpretation of the message; by making part of the message prominent as Theme, the speaker enables the addressee to process the message. The remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed, is called the Rheme.

The division of the clause into theme and rheme makes it particularly helpful to

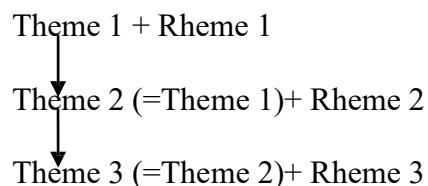
show the development of theme and rheme throughout the text. The theme and rheme of each clause can be compared with the same of previous clauses to find out how they are related. These inter-clausal theme-rheme connections, also known as *thematic progression* (TP) . Thematic progression is a the way to identify how the texts enlarge the ideas they present (Emilia, 2014). Besides, thematic progressions made the cohesion and coherence of a text (Eggin, 2004, p.324).

Eggin (2004) states that there are three basic types of thematic progressions pattern: the reiteration/constant theme pattern, the zigzag/linear theme pattern and the multiple theme/split rheme pattern.

1) **The reiteration/constant theme pattern**

Eggin (2004:323) labels the first type of thematic progression as Theme reiteration while some linguists label it as the constant Theme (Bloor & Bloor:1995,Danes:1974).

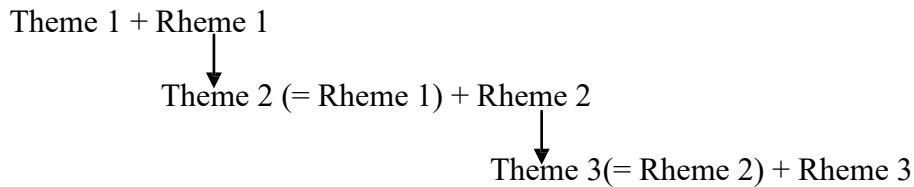
In a Theme reiteration or constant Theme pattern, a Theme is picked up and repeated at the beginning of each clause as. The pattern of this type can be seen as following:



2) **Zig – zag/ linear theme pattern**

Eggin (2004:324) labels the second type of thematic progression as the zig-zag pattern while Bloor,T.& Bloor, M. (1995) and Danes (1974) label it as the linear Theme pattern.

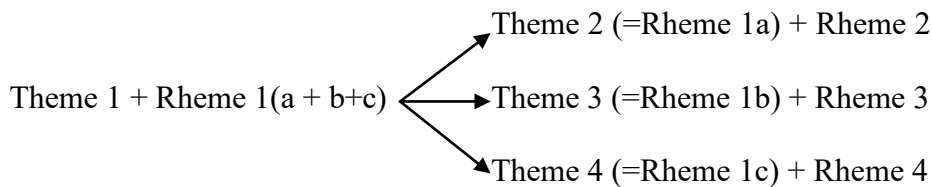
In a zig-zag or linear Theme pattern, the subject matter in the Rheme of the previous clause is taken up in the Theme of a following clause. The pattern of this type can be seen as the following:



3) Multiple theme/ split rheme pattern

Eggins (2004 : 324) labels the third type of thematic progression as Multiple Theme Pattern while Bloor, T. & Bloor, M. (1995) label it as Split Theme Pattern.

In a Multiple Theme or Split Theme Pattern, a Rheme may include a number of different pieces of information, each of which may be taken up as the Theme in a number of subsequent clauses. The pattern of this type can be seen as the following:



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology

This research was conducted by applying descriptive qualitative design. Descriptive derived from two words they were *descriptive* and *qualitative*. Descriptive study was something which describe. Descriptive study was a way where the information collected without changing the environment and often called as observational studies. In supporting the statement, Best. J. W and Kahn. J. V (2002) defined that a descriptive study describe and interpret what is concern with conditions or relationships that exist,

opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing and occur in current conditions.

Subjects of the Study

The data of this study were clauses of students' recount text under the theme of "My Holiday". The text composed in 3 paragraphs that consist of generic structure (Orientation, Record of Events, and Reorientation).

The source of the data in this study was the eighth grade students at SMP RK Budi Mulia Pematangsiantar. There were 3 parallel classes which had 40 students each class. The writer took one class randomly. So there were 40 students of the eighth grade as the source of the data.

Techniques and Instruments of Collecting the Data

Bungin(2003:42), explain that technique of data collection is „how is the way and how the data may be collected in order to providing valid and reliable information. Data collection techniques allowed the researcher to systematically collect information about our objects of study (people, objects, phenomena) and about the settings in which they occur. The techniques of data collection in this research were including:

1. Elicitation Technique

Elicitation techniques vary enormously in scope, aim and purpose. They include studies which obtain their data by means of a stimulus, such as a picture, diagram, or standardized test, as well as those based on questionnaire, survey, and interview data Nunan (1992:136). To obtain the data of how students used thematic progression patterns by this technique, the student were be asked to write the text on the same topic and genre provided by the researcher.

2. In depth interview

To obtain the data of why do the students used thematic progression, the researcher used in-depth interview to all students that less used and much used thematic progression patterns in the text.

Technique of Analyzing data

In this study, the data were analyzed by using interactive model technique of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). They state that the interactive model consists of four concurrent steps; data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by using interactive model technique of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) that consist of there steps, namely: data condensation, data display and drawing conclusion.

The Findings

Having all the data been analyzed based on the two research problems, the findings are described as the following:

1. There are 201 clauses from 12 texts written by the students.
2. There were two patterns of thematic progression used by the students in recount text. There were Theme reiteration/constant theme pattern (TR/CTP), and zig- zag/linear theme pattern (zig-zag/LTP).
3. The underlying reason of students' way in using thematic progression was due to the five reason, there are: Students' lack of knowledge about use of the thematic

progression, students' lack of interest in writing paragraph, the student get resources from reading material, and the student get resources from teacher. The level of achievement low, middle, and high in using thematic progression are not quite different. This may be as indicator that the teaching process due to the length of learning time.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the result of analysis, the conclusions were stated as follow:

1. There were two patterns of thematic progression used by the students in recount text. There were Theme reiteration/constant theme pattern (TR/CTP), and zig-zag/linear theme pattern (Zig-zag/LTP).
2. There were four reasons why the students used thematic progression in the way they did: student's lack of knowledge about use of the thematic progression, they also less interested in writing text, the students used thematic progression in the way they did were the students get resources from text reading and english teacher's explanation.

Suggestions

From the analysis about theme, rheme and thematic progression pattern found in students' recount text, some suggestions were recommended as follows:

1. The teacher can use it to support the teaching and learning materials related to the thematic progression.
2. The students can enrich their knowledge about theme, rheme and thematic progression pattern in order to make good writing or coherent paragraph.

3. The other researcher can use the result of this study as a reference to do further research on thematic progression.

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