

THE QUALITY OF THEMATIC PROGRESSION IN BACKGROUND OF STUDY SECTION WRITTEN BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Akhmad Zamroni¹, Mualimin², Lutfi Al Hakim³

¹STIT Ihsanul Fiki Pabelan

akhmad_zamroni@stithsanulfikri.ac.id, mualimin@stithsanulfikri.ac.id ³ lutfi_hakim@stithsanulfikri.ac.id

Abstract

This study sought to assess the quality of the thematic progression employed by the students and determine the realisation of the pattern of thematic progression utilised in the background of the study section in undergraduate students' final projects. The purpose of this study was to elucidate the quality of the thematic progression that the students employed as well as the realisation of the thematic progression pattern. This study's design employed a qualitative, descriptive methodology, particularly in discourse research. Fifteen backgrounds from the study section served as the data source for this study. The researcher employed Bloor & Bloor's (2024) theory and employed documentation and interviews as the instrument. The study section's background quality has led to nearly all students applying thematic advancement at a decent level. Furthermore, this study showed that students primarily organised their writing using a linear topic pattern, doing so 310 times. Additionally, they used a linear theme pattern 202 times. While students used a 32-time split rhyme pattern. The final one is a theme pattern that the pupils used fifteen times. In summary, the students have effectively employed a variety of thematic progressions and created a coherent and effective background for their study section, demonstrating their understanding of and proficiency with the theme progression.

Keywords : Thematic Progression, Background of The Study Section, Cohesion and Coherence.

INTRODUCTION

Students must finish their final project, often known as their thesis, which is a piece of academic writing, in order to earn their degree. The final product must have the proper consistency and cohesiveness in order to be recognised as academic writing because it is academic writing (Amperawaty 2019). To put it another way, both the amount and calibre of writing in the finished product should be effective. The background of the study section is one component of the final project. In addition to providing basic information on research in broader disciplines, the background section reveals the motivations for researchers' work and the ideas that support it. It also succinctly expresses how the research topic has grown (McMillan & James, 2008). In order to explain why the issue was brought up in the final project, the background of the study section is, thus, the most crucial component to take into account when writing the project.

Nevertheless, I discovered that students had a clear issue when they produced the background of the study section of their final project, which was based on a preliminary examination of some

background information from the undergraduate English department students at Tidar University. The pupils continued to struggle, particularly when it came to structuring a paragraph. They make mistakes like writing disjointed and incoherent paragraphs. Coherence is crucial for making writing comprehensible and consistent with each concept in a text and for making it easier for readers to grasp the main idea of a paragraph (Briesmaster 2017). Because of this, it is crucial for writers to proofread their work to ensure that it is cohesive. However, cohesiveness is a precondition for coherence, whereas coherence is an effort to make the text as a whole understandable, according to Fitriati (2017), who claims that cohesion and coherence are inextricably linked. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to how the background of the study section is written in the final project so that it is simply understood by the reader.

The reader can better understand the material in the clause with the help of the theme and rheme. Meanwhile, because theme progression plays a crucial function in preserving the text's consistency and information flow, it is necessary to write with it in mind. Stated differently, the coherence and cohesion of a work are greatly enhanced by theme progression (Fitriati 2021). In order to create coherent writings, theme progression is also necessary to support the creation of cohesive texts and to preserve the continuity and flow of textual material.

Dealing with thematic progression, several studies figured out that linear theme pattern or zig-zag pattern first dominated employed in the texts (Al-Bazzaz & Al-Shajlawi, 2018; Dong, T., Shao, P., & Jia, J., 2016; Fatmawati, D., Sinar, T. S., Ganie, R., & Yusuf, M., 2019; Gunawan, W., & Aziza, F., 2017; Herdiawan, R. D., 2017; Kuswoyo, H., & Susardi, S., 2016; Mubarak, H. Z., 2021). While, the constant theme pattern or reiteration pattern found as second dominated employed in texts (Lestari, S. H. P., Mujiyanto, J., & Saleh, M., 2019; Nicolas, E., & Hartono, R., 2022; Noviyanti, 2015; Nursanti, E., & Tou, A. B., 2014; Pangestu, G., Dwita Harvian, E. & Suprijadi, D., 2019). The split rheme pattern found as third dominated employed in texts (Pasaribu, A. N., Pasaribu, T. K., & Panggabean, S., 2019; Purba, G., & Pasaribu, A. N., 2021; Rahman, K., & Arsyad Arrafi', M., 2017; Rahmawati, R. V., & Kurniawan, E., 2015; Safitri, I., & Bahri, S., 2017). The last dominated employed in the texts is derived theme pattern found by Sujanta, E. T. S., Pamungkas, K., Heriyanto, H., 2018; and Syharizal, T., Fitriani, L., & Anggraeni, N., 2018).

Meanwhile, this study is only concerned with assessing the quality of cohesion and coherence from the perspective of thematic progression patterns. As stated by Amperawaty (2019), thematic progression can be used as a device of coherence. Thematic progression is the process by which a theme of a clause repeats the meaning of the previous theme or rheme in order to connect the theme and rheme. It also serves as a coherence device. Furthermore, Paltridge (2006) stated that thematic progression refers to "the way in which the theme of a clause may pick up, or repeat, a meaning from a preceding theme or rheme".

The constant theme pattern, the linear theme pattern, the split rheme pattern, and the derived theme pattern are the four types of thematic progression, according to Bloor et al. (2004). The

coherence and cohesiveness of the text will be assessed using this pattern. Therefore, the writer will be evaluating the realisation of cohesion and coherence in the background of the study section of the final project written by the undergraduate English department students at Tidar University from a thematic progression perspective in order to determine whether or not the background of the study section is cohesive and coherent.

METHOD

Typically, this research was planned as a qualitative descriptive study using conversation analysis. According to Creswell (2009: 4), qualitative research aims to explore and comprehend the meaning that people or groups attribute to social or human problems. It is employed to ascertain the origins and mechanisms of social phenomena. Using Bloor & Bloor's (2004) theory, this study examined the implementation and assessment of thematic development in the study section's background. The background of the study section of Tidar University undergraduate English department students' theses, which examined the cohesiveness and coherence quality in thematic progression view, served as the research's data source.

In addition, this research involves three responsibilities that include the following: (1) The researcher obtained fifteen background data points for the study area at random from <https://repositori.untidar.ac.id/>. (2) The information would be gathered by the writer for use in research. (3) The author would evaluate the calibre of the study's backdrop written by students by analysing the data gathered from a thematic progression point of view. (4) After presenting the research findings about the calibre of the study section's background, the author would assess the background of the section from the perspective of theme development. (5) The author would wrap up the final step of this investigation.

However, the goals of the data analysis are as follows: (1) find the clause in the table by concentrating on the recognised theme and rheme. (2) Determine each clause's theme and thematic development. (3) chooses each clause associated with several thematic progression kinds in order to analyse the data. (4) To determine the realisation of thematic progression utilised in the background of the study section in the data-sheet, counts the number and percentage of thematic progression in both texts. (5) derives and confirms findings to ascertain the research's outcome. After thoroughly recognising the topic progression and learning how it was realised in the backdrop of the research part authored by Tidar University students, the study comes to an end here.

FINDING AND RESULT

The four primary conclusions drawn from the study's formulation of research questions are highlighted in the findings. They are the means by which the study section's backdrop topic progression is used to achieve the texts' cohesion. Longer discourse lengths can be used to identify Theme/Rheme patterns through the investigation of thematic progression. Given their purpose and context, the order in which thematic elements appear in a document can either add to or take away from its coherence. The findings of the examination of the four themes in the study section's background written by Tidar University students are displayed below.

The Quality of Thematic Progression Used

The researcher measure the quality of thematic progression used in *background of the study section* by using Eggin's parameter of coherence (2004).

Table 1. The Quality of Thematic Progression Used

Text	Score	Level of Coherence
Text 1	3	Fair
Text 2	3	Fair
Text 3	3	Fair
Text 4	3	Fair
Text 5	4	Good
Text 6	2	Less
Text 7	4	Good
Text 8	3	Fair
Text 9	3	Fair
Text 10	3	Fair
Text 11	4	Good
Text 12	3	Fair
Text 13	2	Less
Text 14	2	Less
Text 15	3	Fair


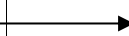
A review of the thematic progression employed in the study section's background revealed that two of the pupils were categorised as being of good quality. Ten students were in near qualification at the same time. Their levels were reasonable. Three students were classified as lower level students among the remaining students. None of the students had subpar qualifications. The analysis's findings also demonstrated how frequently the constant theme pattern, linear theme pattern, split theme pattern, and derived theme pattern were employed in paragraphs. It is implied that the background of the study part, authored by undergraduate students, is coherent and extremely effective.

The Constant Theme Pattern

The recurring theme pattern appears frequently in brief passages that describe things, and occasionally in narratives that concentrate on a single person's actions. Additionally, it is commonly encountered in factual material descriptions and textbooks that centre on a specific topic or idea (Bloor & Bloor, 2004: 88). The thematic evolution of this pattern is achieved by repeating a specific theme. The initial clause's theme is chosen to be the next clauses' theme (Bloor & Bloor, 2004: 88). Another title for this pattern is Theme Reiteration. The following is an illustration of this pattern:

Table 2. The analysis of Constant Theme Pattern

Clause	Theme	Pattern	Rheme
C1	English	→	is a language that plays an important role in the global community, especially for communication

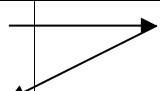
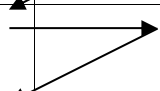
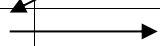
C2	because English		is an international language
C3	where this language		is used by people to communicate with people from different countries and languages.

The word “English” as the theme of C1 that repeated as the theme in C2 using the word “because English”. Then, it is continued to C3 use “where this language”. Here, the students picked up the word “English” in C1 as the topic for C2 and C3 that become constant themes form.

The Linear Theme Pattern

The second kind of thematic progression is the linear theme pattern, sometimes known as the zigzag pattern (Eggins 2004: 324). This pattern promotes the element that is introduced in the first clause's Rheme to become the second clause's Theme (Bloor & Bloor, 2004: 89). In the subsequent phrase, the writer or speaker in this pattern expands on what they introduced in the Rheme. Additionally, incorporate previously published information into the current theme to establish a common thread connecting the concepts. The following is an illustration of this pattern:

Table 3. The analysis of Lilear Theme Pattern

Clause	Theme	Pattern	Rheme
C10	In 2020, the world		was faced with covid-19 pandemic
C11	that		makes all people do their stuff from home, especially school.
C12	Students in this pandemic		are more active with their gadgets to conduct the learning process.

The rheme of C10, “faced with covid-19 pandemic” which restated as a new theme “that” in C11 to completed the information. The linear theme continued in C12 which gave specific information about pandemic which theme in C11 “Students in this pandemic” picked up from rheme “especially school” in C12. It is indicated that each ideas was connected each other to unify the message.

The Split Rheme Pattern

The split theme pattern is the third prevalent kind of thematic progression. When a clause's Rheme consists of two parts, each of which is used as the Theme of a later clause, this pattern emerges (Bloor & Bloor, 2004: 89). One way to put it is that some clauses inside a rheme could explain into a whole new message or theme. The Multiple-Rheme pattern is another name for this pattern (Eggins, 2004: 85). Here's an example of it:

Table 4. The Analysis of Split Rheme Pattern

Clause	Theme	Pattern	Rheme
C25	Thus, several academic writing types at the university level		are studied to increase writing knowledge, such as academic essays, research proposals, and a thesis.
C26	An academic essay		is learned during the fifth semester, where students provide their arguments for a problem.
C27	While writing a research proposal		is given to students before starting to write a thesis.
C28	Then, the thesis		is one of the final examinations to determine student graduation.

Rheme message in C25 “studied to increase writing knowledge” was explained toward some subsequent new theme in C26 “An academic essay”, theme in C27 “writing a research proposal”, and theme in C28 “the thesis”. In this case, the students tried to enhance the ideas to several number of themes which it was functioned to grab the unity. It is represented how the idea in the first rheme was develop into numerous spots of themes.

The Derived Theme Pattern

Derived Themes are the last category of thematic progression. Usually, it appears in longer passages. Generally speaking, the writer employs the Theme of the first sentence to inform the Themes of each subsequent clause as they address the topic they established in the first clause (Bloor & Bloor, 2004: 91). There is no explicit grammatical form relationship between the derived Themes in the derived Themes pattern. Their semantic relationship is the only link between them. Compared to the continuous Theme pattern, this pattern is distinct. The theme is repeated in a constant theme, while in derived themes, the theme is derived, denoting that there is no grammatical relationship. Here's an example of it:

Table 5. The Analysis of Derived Theme Pattern

Clause	Theme	Patterns	Rheme
C33	Some issues		caused difficulties for students in writing a recount text.
C34	First, the lack of vocabulary in English		becomes one of the issues
C39	Second, the students		could not find the most thoughts or keywords of the content.

The theme in C33 was spread into theme in C34, and C39. It is proven from the finding in text 12 that theme “Some issues” in C33 was discussed in subsequent new theme C34, and C35. The students wanted to lengthen the theme into a number of spots (theme). This function helped both students and readers to give the detailed explanation of the messages.

Table 6. The summerized of TP analysis

Text	Total of Clauses	CTP	LTP	SRP	DTP
1	61	24	12	3	0
2	55	10	15	3	2
3	55	10	19	2	2
4	53	9	17	2	1
5	39	3	18	1	1
6	67	12	30	2	1
7	55	9	25	1	2
8	57	17	23	1	0
9	49	11	21	2	0
10	66	10	26	5	0
11	66	24	26	0	0
12	55	14	14	3	1
13	59	14	16	4	2
14	47	6	22	2	1
15	80	29	26	1	2
Total	864	202	310	32	15

Table 1 demonstrated that students tended to apply a linear theme pattern based on the trend of thematic progression in the study section's background. The works had 310 instances of the linear topic. The second dominating pattern they employed after that was the Constant theme pattern. This pattern was seen 202 times. Subsequently, the students utilised the Split theme pattern 32 times, placing it in third place. The last level, however, is the Derived theme pattern, which appears in the final product just fifteen times. Furthermore, there were fourteen instances of empty progression patterns in the phrases that did not use thematic progression. The phrase "empty progression patterns" was mine as referred by Hawes (2002) to named this condition.

Conclusion

The students that completed their final project's background study component were able to use the four theme progressions suggested by Bloor & Bloor. The linear theme pattern is the one that students use the most. The consistent theme pattern is the second most popular pattern that students use the most. However, the split rheme pattern analysis turned out to be the third most prevalent kind of theme development in this study. The final pattern that the students used was a derived theme pattern, which

rose to become the fourth most popular kind of applied thematic progression. However, I found that the students' utilisation of a fair and coherent theme progression was quite good. The study's findings indicated that two pupils were rated as being of good quality. Ten kids, meanwhile, were very nearly qualified. They were at a fair level. Three other pupils were classified as being at a lower level. Not a single student met the low qualification standard. The researcher recommended that students who completed final projects focus more on their writing and attempt to use thematic progression as a technique to make their writing more cohesive in order to produce coherent language.

The results of this study highlight four main findings based on the formulated research questions. They are the use of thematic progression in the background of the study section in achieving the texts' coherence. The analysis of thematic progression allows us to identify Theme/Rheme patterns over longer stretches of discourse. How thematic elements succeed each other can contribute or detract from the coherence of a text given their purpose and context. Table 1 shows the results of the analysis of the four patterns in thematic progression among the background of the study section written by students at Tidar University.

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