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The Implementation of Thematic Development in Exposition Texts by EFL Learners

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Article Info	Abstract
	The ability to implement the Thematic development is important in writing exposition text. Moreover, the exposition text is written to convince the readers. It means the writers are required to achieve the readers' expectation. This study therefore aims to explore EFL learners' exposition texts using Thematic progressions. The analysis of this element reveals the logical relations which become the main aspect in the text to achieve micro-level of coherence. Three exposition texts written by high, average and low proficiency level learners, are analyzed using systemic functional linguistics approaches on discourse analysis. The analysis reveals that the exposition text written by high proficiency level learner successfully implements the Thematic progressions and hence it achieves the micro-level of coherence. The Theme re-iteration patterns are implemented to keep the text focused. The zig-zag patterns are used to construct newly introduced information. Then, the multiple Theme patterns are implemented, especially in thesis statements of the texts, to preview the argument that will follow in the texts. Differently, the exposition text written by average proficiency level learner overuses one of the patterns, namely the Theme re-iteration patterns. This makes the text stuck in only same idea. However, the micro-level of coherence is still achieved as the logical relations of the text are still implemented successfully. Lastly, the exposition text written by low proficiency level learner unsuccessfully implements the Thematic progressions and hence the micro-level of coherence is not achieved. In sum, the implementation of Thematic progressions helps the texts to hang together and make sense. © 2019 Universitas Negeri Semarang

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INTRODUCTION

This study aims to explore EFL learners' exposition texts using systemic functional linguistics, particularly Thematic progressions. Dealing with Thematic progressions, this study analyses how the given and new information connect one another. According to Sutopo (2011) the skillful use of Thematic selection helps the texts to hang together and make sense. Furthermore, the analysis of those given and new information reveals the logical relations, which according to Thornbury (2005), is defined as how the sentences connect with the previous and preceding ones. Through this analysis, micro-level of coherence in exposition texts is revealed. In sum, this study aims to reveal the quality of the learners' texts as cohesion, Thematic progression and coherence are three elements that create the unity of meanings of texts (Rahmawati et al, 2014).

Thompson (2013) points out that Thematic progressions are about how "Themes relate to preceding Themes and Rhemes, in terms of where the content of each Theme is derived from". Using the Thematic progression properly is actually the way conducted by the writers to achieve what the readers expect. It is because the readers are easily distracted without the role of Thematic progressions. Meanwhile, with the use of it, the writers are able to help the readers to follow the ideas in text (Thompson, 2013).

Besides, Thematic progressions have at least two main roles in creating the text. Using Thematic progressions, the writers are able to create order in the discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen , 2014). The text no wonder can be coherent (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). Additionally, Eggins (2004) states that the use of Thematic progressions plays a crucial role in building the internal cohesion. In sum, the thematic organization of the clauses is the most significant factor in the development of the text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Types of Thematic progressions are proposed by Eggins (1994), namely the zig-zag pattern, the reiteration pattern, and the multiple Theme pattern.
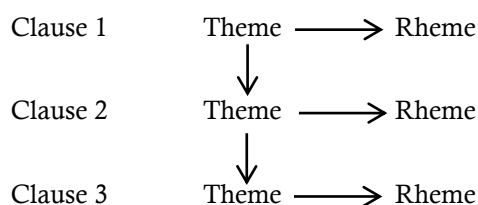

Figure 1. The Theme re-iteration of Thematic development
(Adopted from Eggins, 2004)

This pattern believes that an effective mean of creating cohesion is through repetition (Eggins, 2004). This pattern no wonder consists of an element that regularly becomes Theme with the purpose to keep a text focused through re-iterating an element. However, the text is boring to read or listen if the Theme never varies as it is an indication that the text is going nowhere (Eggins, 2004).
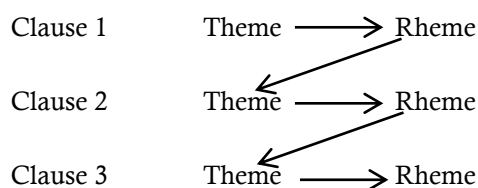

Figure 2. The zig-zag pattern of Thematic development
(Adopted from Eggins, 2004)

According to Eggins (2004) "in this pattern, an element which is introduced in the Rheme in clause 1 gets promoted to become the Theme of clause 2". In simpler explanation, this pattern consists of Rheme from sentence 1 that becomes the Theme in the sentence 2 (McCarthy, 1991). It also can be the solution for the Theme re-iteration pattern which does not have a sense of cumulative development (Eggins, 2004).
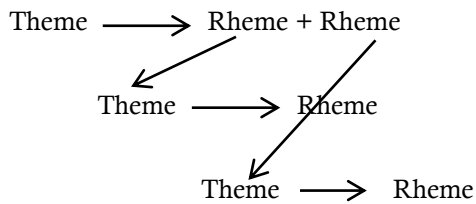
Figure 3. The multiple Theme pattern (Adopted from McCarthy, 1991)

Longer exposition texts are the examples of the texts that implement this pattern (Emilia, 2014). The thesis statement of the text consists of Theme that will be the main topic of the whole text and a number of Rhemes that will be a number of Themes in the next following clauses. Eggins (1994) adds that the text with this pattern still uses the zig-zag and Theme re-iteration pattern to elaborate the following clauses.

Studies focusing on Thematic progressions in exposition texts have been conducted by the works of Yuniawati et al (2017), Bangga (2013), Setiawati et al (2017), and Sianipar (2015). Yuniawati et al (2017) analyze hortatory exposition texts using Thematic progression. They find that the writers use Theme re-iteration more than other patterns in order to make the text clear and focused. The similar studies are conducted by Bangga (2013) and Setiawati et al (2017) who find that the writers of the exposition texts use Theme re-iteration pattern more than other patterns. Similarly, Sianipar (2015) finds that the writers in writing exposition texts use Theme reiteration pattern, zig-zag pattern, and multiple Theme pattern accurately.

The examples above are only some from many studies concerning on Thematic progressions in exposition texts. However, those previous studies are different with this present study which is primarily intended to provide complete pictures of how the learners from various level, such as high, average and low, use the Thematic progressions. Therefore, this present study is expected to fill the gap of the research.

METHOD

This study is qualitative study defined by Creswell (2012) as a methodology whose "researcher is interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures". This study additionally, following Sutopo (2013), employs systemic functional linguistics approaches on discourse analysis. The reason is because this study aims to analyze written documents, namely the EFL learners' exposition texts, uisng Thematic progressions.

The primary data of this study are three pieces of learners' exposition texts under the various topics that the lecturer has decided before. The learners have to build argument in their texts on certain topics with the purpose to convince the readers. The texts are chosen based on the discussion with the lecturer and also learners' GPA. This is conducted because this present study aims to involve three exposition texts written by high, average and low proficiency level learners.

Once the data are gathered, the researcher conducts several steps. The first is reading all the exposition texts in detail. The second is breaking down the exposition texts into clauses. The third is using the table of instrument to place those clauses in order to ease the process of analyzing the data. The fourth is using the theory of Eggins (2004) to determine the Theme and Rheme. The fifth is classifying and identifying which one is Theme re-iteration pattern, the zig-zag pattern, and the multiple Theme pattern. The sixth is calculating the occurrence of each type of Thematic progressions found in the exposition texts. The seventh is interpreting the findings to draw an inference of how undergraduate EFL learners build arguments in writing exposition texts. Lastly, the researcher later presents the result of the interpretation in paragraphs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Using the Thematic progressions theories proposed by Eggins (2004), this study finds that the undergraduate learners implement Thematic

progressions in various ways. The findings are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Summary of Thematic progressions analysis

	The Theme Re-iteration Pattern		The Zig-Zag Pattern		The Multiple Pattern		Total of Clause
	Occurrence	Percentage	Occurrence	Percentage	Occurrence	Percentage	
High Proficiency Level Text	17	55	11	35	3	10	32
Average Proficiency Level Text	28	78	4	11	4	11	37
Low Proficiency Level Text	11	46	13	54	0	0	32

From the analysis, it is found that the high proficiency level text implements the three patterns of Thematic progressions accurately and successfully. Also it does not overuse any of the patterns. It means the writer implements those three Thematic progressions based on what the exposition text needs.

The high proficiency level exposition text is constructed effectively by the writer using a combination of Thematic progressions. The Thematic progressions that the writer implements are able to relate the topic and comment of the sentences one another effectively. With this, the logical relations of the text are clearly identified (Thornbury, 2005). It means this exposition text meets the readers' expectations and therefore it achieves the micro-level of coherence (Eggins, 1994).
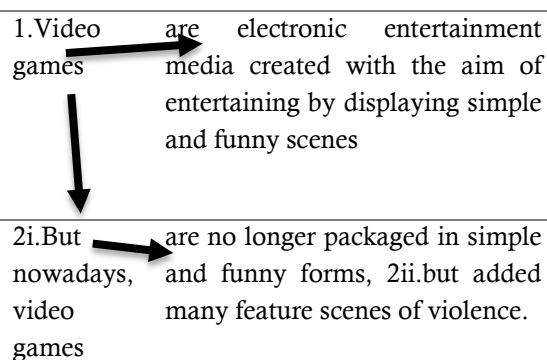

Figure 4. The example of Theme re-iteration pattern in high proficiency level exposition text

The example above is found in the first paragraph of the text. The Theme re-iteration pattern is used to connect the first with the second sentences. Not only that, this pattern is used to connect most sentences in all paragraphs of the text.

According to Eggins (1994), the indication that the texts are going nowhere is using Theme re-iteration pattern too much. In contrast, the balanced use of Theme re-iteration pattern builds a cohesive text. It is because one of the ways the writer can do to create a cohesive text and to keep the text focused is through re-iterating an element (Eggins, 1994).

The thematic organization of the clauses is the most significant factor in the development

of the text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Through a good control of Thematic progressions, from the explanation in the previous paragraph, the high proficiency level exposition text fulfills two fundamental characteristics that a text must have. First, the writer is able to create order in the discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) and therefore the exposition text is coherent (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). Lastly, they can build the internal cohesion (Eggins, 2004).

Additionally, the zig-zag patterns are used only to connect sentences 11 times. One of the examples is displayed in the figure below.
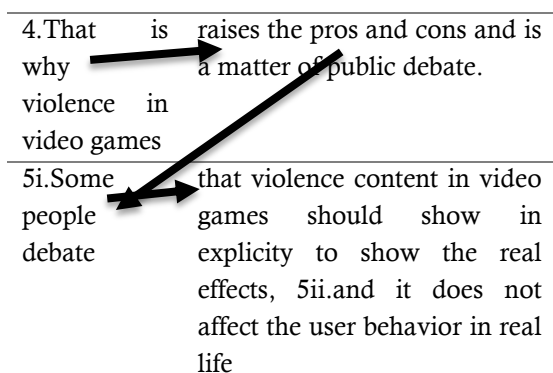
4.That is why violence in video games	raises the pros and cons and is a matter of public debate.
5i.Some people debate	that violence content in video games should show in explicity to show the real effects, 5ii.and it does not affect the user behavior in real life

Figure 5. The example of the zig-zag pattern in high proficiency level exposition text

The example above is found in the first paragraph. The example above shows that this pattern is used by the writer to connect the fourth with the fifth sentences. According to Eggins (1994), cohesion in a text is constructed by the zig-zag pattern through newly introduced information. With the balanced use of the zig-zag pattern, the writer is able to complete what the Theme re-iteration pattern is not able to do. Eggins (1994) also states that the zig-zag pattern can be the solution for the Theme re-iteration which does not have a sense of cumulative development.

Furthermore, multiple Theme pattern is used accurately in the high proficiency level exposition text. This pattern is implemented by the writer, particularly in the thesis statement as the bridge for the next following paragraphs. The thesis statement according to Anderson & Anderson (1997) is one of the main characteristics of the exposition text functioned to preview the argument that will follow in the texts. It can be achieved through implementing multiple Theme pattern accurately, like what this exposition text does. With this pattern, "the Theme of one clause introduces a number of different pieces of information, each of which is then picked up and made Theme in subsequent clauses" (Eggins, 1994). Therefore, this high proficiency level exposition text fulfills the main criteria of exposition text as according to Eggins (1994) also longer exposition texts are the examples of the texts that implement this pattern.

The discussion above shows that the high proficiency level learner has a good control of Thematic progression and therefore she is able to maintain the topic or shift the topic in various ways (Christie & Derewianka, 2008). Not only that, with the good control of Thematic progression, she is able to create ideas that have been used in the previous Theme or Rheme so that the following clause is not unexpected (Butt et al, 2003). Hence, she is able to help the readers to follow the ideas in text (Thompson, 2013).

From the analysis, it is also found that the average proficiency level text implements the three patterns of Thematic progressions successfully. However, it overuses one of the patterns. It is the Theme re-iteration pattern.

The Theme re-iteration pattern is overused by the average proficiency level learner in her exposition text. Through re-iterating an element, the writer actually can create a cohesive text and keep the text focused (Eggins, 1994). However, the overused Theme re-iteration pattern makes the text stuck in only one idea and boring to read or listen. Also, according to Eggins (1994), the indication that the texts are going nowhere is using Theme re-iteration pattern too much. Figure 6 below shows one of the examples.

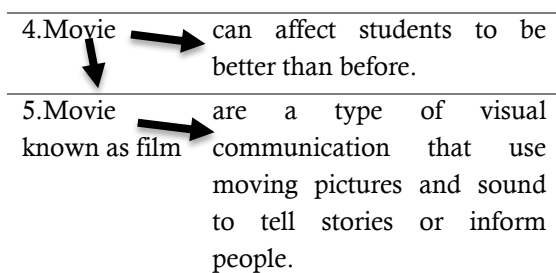| 4.Movie →	can affect students to be better than before.
5.Movie known as film →	are a type of visual communication that use moving pictures and sound to tell stories or inform people.

Figure 6. The example of Theme Re-iteration Pattern in average proficiency level exposition text

From the previous explanation, it can be inferred that the average proficiency level exposition text is boring to read. It is because most Themes in the texts are basically the same and therefore the point in each sentence departs from the same idea (Eggins, 1994). Fortunately, the writer overall still successfully implements this pattern since it is able to relate the sentences one another.

Meanwhile, the zig-zag patterns are used only in several sentences. One of the examples is displayed in figure 7 below. The figure shows that this pattern is used by the writer to connect the first with the second sentences.
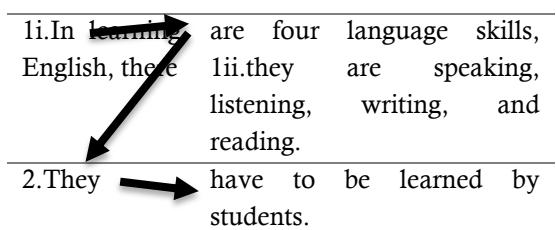
1i.In learning English, there	are four language skills, 1ii.they are speaking, listening, writing, and reading.
2.They →	have to be learned by students.

Figure 7. The example of the zig-zag pattern in average proficiency level exposition text

From the explanation in the previous paragraph, it can be inferred that the average proficiency level exposition text overuses one of the Thematic progressions. It is simply not in line with what Eggins (1994) suggests that a text must be constructed by various Thematic progressions. However, the writer of the text overall still successfully implements the thematic organization of the clauses which is the most significant factor in the development of the text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Therefore, the

text still achieves the micro-level of coherence (Eggins, 1994).

Even though the exposition text written by average proficiency level undergraduate learner overuses the Theme re-iteration patterns, it implements the multiple Theme patterns successfully. This Thematic progression emerges with the lowest percentage. However, it is not the bad sign. It happens because this pattern is implemented only in the thesis statement in the first paragraph of the exposition text. The Rhemes in this thesis statement are used as the topic sentence in the next following paragraphs.

Lastly, the analysis reveals that the low proficiency level text unsuccessfully implements the Thematic progressions. The low proficiency level learner implements the Theme re-iteration patterns unsuccessfully since there are sentences that are not connected one another. One of the accurate uses of this pattern is displayed below.
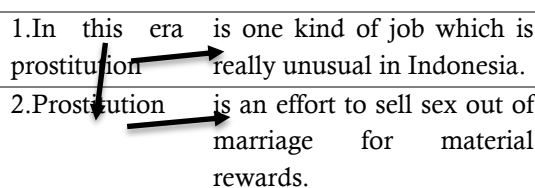
1.In this era prostitution →	is one kind of job which is really unusual in Indonesia.
2.Prostitution →	is an effort to sell sex out of marriage for material rewards.

Figure 8. The example of Theme re-iteration pattern in low proficiency level exposition text

The zig-zag patterns are also implemented by in the exposition text written by the undergraduate learner with low proficiency level. However, these patterns are implemented unsuccessfully. One of the accurate examples is displayed in the figure below.

3i.There are many pro and contra of this issue,	3ii.although this job is illegal in Indonesia, 3iii.it happens in Indonesia 3iv.and there are some region which support this job.
4i.Besides, there are some people who want to legalize this job as a legal job in Indonesia	4ii.so that it can be tourism for people who want to do sex without married as other country 4iii.and this country will obtain much profits.

Figure 9. The example of the zig-zag pattern in low proficiency level exposition text

In addition to the unsuccessful implementation of the Theme re-iteration and zig-zag patterns, the low proficiency level exposition text is also failed to implement the multiple Theme pattern. With the absence of this pattern, the text does not have one of the main characteristics of exposition texts to preview the argument that will follow in the texts (Anderson & Anderson, 1997). In sum, the text does not have logical relations and therefore does not achieve the micro-level of coherence (Eggins, 1994).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In general, this present study has three main findings. First, it finds that the high proficiency level learner has no problem in using the Thematic progressions since she is able to implement Thematic progressions successfully and hence the text achieves the micro-level of coherence. Second, although the average proficiency level learner overuses one of the Thematic progressions, she is still able to implement Thematic progressions successfully and hence the text achieves the micro-level of coherence. Third, this present study finds that the low proficiency level learner in contrast is not able to implement Thematic progressions successfully and hence the text does not achieve the micro-level of coherence. This study

obviously needs the future studies to enrich the findings. They can conduct studies focusing on Interpersonal metafunction in any text types. They also can conduct studies focusing on Ideational metafunction in any text types. Lastly, they also can conduct studies focusing on cohesive devices in any text types.

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