



Comparison of Thematic Structure and Progression between English and Indonesian Exposition Texts Written by Undergraduate Students of UPI (Rhetorical Study)

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Article Info

Article History:

Accepted 20 July 2017

Approved 15 October 2017

Published 15 March 2018

Keywords:

Thematic Structure,
Thematic Progression,
Exposition Text

Abstract

The research aimed to analyze the realization of thematic structure and progression in English and Indonesian exposition texts and explain the contribution of thematic structure and progression to the cohesion and coherence in English and Indonesian exposition texts. The research also aimed to explain the differences and similarities between English and Indonesian in terms of coherence and schematic structure of the exposition text. Descriptive-qualitative design was used in this research considering of the objectives of the research. The sample of the research was taken from collecting English and Indonesian exposition texts written by undergraduate students of UPI. This study used the theory of Theme system developed by Halliday (1994), Eggins (1994; 2004), the theory of thematic progression proposed by Eggins (1994; 2004) as the framework to analyze the data) and the theory of coherence analysis proposed by Thornbury (2005). To figure out the differences and similarities between English and Indonesian exposition texts, it can be seen from the level of coherence (level of clause, sentence, and paragraph) and schematic structure of text. In level of clause, it can be seen from thematic structure and progression analysis. The result showed that the students write effectively orient the reader to what their texts are about either in English or Indonesian texts. Students used reiteration as much as zigzag pattern in their English in order to maintain the focus and reinforced the arguments in their texts but in Indonesian texts, students more reinforced the argument than maintain the focus to the arguments in their Indonesian texts. In level of sentence, the finding showed that English texts tended to use deductive style rather than inductive and mix style. While in Indonesian text, the use of inductive and mix types of paragraphs in Indonesian texts were more than in English texts. In level of paragraph, multiple paragraphs were dominant in students' English texts but some Indonesian texts were managed unwell. Concerning in term of schematic structure, most of English texts consisted of the three generic structures of exposition texts but there were some Indonesian texts that was not given the reiteration or conclusion at the last paragraph.

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p-ISSN 2087-0108

e-ISSN 2502-4566

INTRODUCTION

Written language is one of the ways for conveying ideas. People can not only get information but also share or convey ideas through writing. There are many media that can be used, such as newspaper, magazine, advertisement, books, including research paper. Research paper is the last students' project as requirement for achieving their degree. Even though their final paper or project is not full of their own ideas, they get difficulty to convey systematically the ideas into writing form. There are some aspects that must be considered. One of the important aspects is coherence. Halliday (1994, p. 309) defines coherence in writing as "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 & Hasan, 1976; Belmonte & McCabe, 1998).

Theme system and thematic progression can make the text coherent. Halliday (1985) stated that the textual function of the clause is that of constructing a message and the theme and rheme structure is the basic form of the organization of the clause as message. So, this is the reason that students need to learn theme and thematic progression for making good writing and they can convey the ideas smoothly and accurately for the readers. 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, p. 19). Furthermore, Theme is the "point of departure for the message" (Halliday, 1994, p. 37; Eggins, 2004, p. 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, p. 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). Through this study, it is expected for the

teacher having knowledge how to exploit a text. According to Sutopo (2014), they should have a better idea of what text is, how to categorize and describe in terms of their genre, function organization and style. They need to encourage their students to cope with texts and make sense of them as well as produce them.

Systemic Functional Grammar can be applied not only in English but also in Indonesian. But, not all meta-functions can be applied in Indonesian clauses. There are two kinds of meta-functions that can be applied: clause as message (textual meta-function) and clause as representation (ideational meta-function). The clause as exchange (interpersonal meta-function) could not be applied to Indonesian clauses since Indonesian has no finite concept. The present writer found the word 'there' in English is equivalent to the word 'ada' in Indonesian. Both of the words have no representational function; they are required because of the need for a subject in English.

This research figured out applying theme and thematic progression in Indonesian clauses. Indonesian is official language in Indonesia and it is one of Austronesia languages that it is spoken by about 230 million people. Indonesian also becomes First Language (L1) that refers to the language a person learns from birth or it is used for the language that a person learnt at home (usually from his parents). There are two types of clauses in Indonesian: verbal and non-verbal clauses. Predicate in Indonesian can be verbal and non-verbal. And English is as Second Language (L2) that is a language which is not normally used for communication in a particular society. This term is used to refer to a language which is not a mother tongue but which is used for certain communicative functions in a society. It is learned after the first language (L1) or mother tongue.

This research also found out the differences and similarities of discourse patterns, particularly coherence in terms of thematic structure and progression, deductive-inductive paragraph and schematic structure (generic structure) between texts written in different languages by the same native-language speakers.

Contrastive Rhetorical study proposed by Kaplan (1966) is used to analyze the differences and similarities of text linguistics between Indonesian and English that is influenced by cultural background of the language. There is a limitation of this research. Since all the participants of the research are native speaker of Indonesian so it only could see the influence of Indonesian culture toward writing of English texts.

METHODS

Since this study aimed to analyze and describe data to recognize how the thematic structure and progression between English and Indonesian exposition texts written by the undergraduate students of UPI, so this study used descriptive-qualitative design. The participants were divided into two groups. Each group consisted of ten to fifteen students to write exposition text in English and another one was asked to write exposition text in Indonesian. All the students were native speakers of Indonesian and they were asked to write in different language (English and Indonesian texts). Unit of analysis in this research is clauses of exposition texts. They were divided into clauses and analyzed each clause to recognize the use of thematic structure and progression. Besides, analysis of each paragraph was needed in order to compare the generic structure between English and Indonesian exposition texts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Thematic Structure Realized in English and Indonesian Exposition Texts

From the analysis, it was found that the students applied the thematic structure by realizing all three types of themes in their texts; they are the topical, interpersonal, and textual themes. There are ten English texts and ten Indonesian texts which were purposively selected to be analyzed.

The data showed that total number of clause are 311 clauses in ten English exposition

texts and 417 clauses in ten Indonesian Exposition texts. The topical themes appears 270 times or 87% in English exposition texts and 364 times or 87% in Indonesian Exposition texts. Either in English or in Indonesian texts is the highest number than all of themes. The high number of occurrences of topical themes in English and Indonesian exposition texts indicate that the students write effectively orient the reader to what their texts are about. This findings meet Bloor and Bloor's theory, that "all clauses in English incorporate what is known as a topical theme" (2004; 72). There are two types of topical theme; unmarked and marked topical themes. Based on the data above, in English texts, the unmarked theme occurs 243 times or 78% and in Indonesian texts, it occurs 312 times or 75%. It means that most of Theme used by the students are subject as Theme. In other words, the students put the subject in initial position in each clause. The finding is in line with Damayanti (2012) in both ST and TT, the topical Theme is mostly dominated by Participant grammatical function due to the process it owns. While marked theme occurs 27 times as equal with 9% in English texts and 52 times as equal with 12% in Indonesian texts. It means that the students use adverbial, prepositional phrase or complement as Theme. In other words, the students did not put subjects in initial position. The students seem to be aware that in their exposition texts they have to focus on generalized participants and the participants are realized by the topical themes.

The second type of Theme written by the students in their English and Indonesian exposition texts are interpersonal Themes. There are 14 clauses out of 311 or 5% in English texts while there are 17 times or 4% in Indonesian texts. The rarity of interpersonal theme is expected, as the use of interpersonal meta-function is only needed to foreground the writer's position/judgment. In this case, the students put either vocative, modal adjunct or mood adjunct in initial position. The students put them as theme. This confirm Butt et al.'s statement that the interpersonal theme are more

often found in spoken texts for students to join and sustain their interaction (2000, p.152).

The last types of Theme written by the students in their English and Indonesian exposition texts is textual Themes. The tables show that all of the students apply Textual Themes in a quite high frequency in their text. Compares to the Interpersonal Theme (discussed in the previous subchapter), the number of occurrences of textual themes is much higher in each of the texts. There are 176 clauses out of 311 or 57% in English texts and there are 204 times or 49% in Indonesian texts. The use of Textual Theme indicates that students have the ability to develop the text to be coherent and cohesive. The students used either continuative, conjunction or conjunctive adjunct in initial position in 176 clauses in English texts and 204 clauses in Indonesian texts. The elements come before interpersonal or topical Theme. Especially in exposition texts in which the students are expected to use 'conjunction and text connectives to extend and enhance meanings' (Joyce & Feez, 2012, p. 92).

The Thematic Progression Patterns Realized in English and Indonesian Exposition Texts

Analysis on thematic progression was intended to answer the second research question about the thematic progression pattern realized in English and Indonesian exposition texts. This included the analysis of the topical theme in every clause in the students' texts as the basis for identification and classification of the thematic progression and then the dominant thematic progression occurred was identified. From the data analysis, it was found that all of thematic progression patterns were applied in English and Indonesian exposition texts, namely the theme reiteration pattern (the theme of one clause is repeated and becomes the theme of the next clause), zigzag pattern (a constituent of a rheme of a clause becomes the theme in the following clause), and multiple theme pattern (a rheme includes several constituents and then they are reintroduced one by one in the following clauses as Themes).

The data revealed that the texts applied all types of thematic progression pattern. From the total number of clauses, Theme Reiteration pattern, 'as the one which also characterized scientific texts' (Sugiarto, 2010, p. 70), occurs 64 times or 21% in English texts and 81 times or 19% in Indonesian texts. This finding suggest that the students start their texts star with the quite similar expression as the point of departure of clause as message.

In English texts, Zigzag pattern appeared as many as reiteration theme pattern, it is 64 times or 21%. But in Indonesian texts, Zigzag pattern is slightly higher than reiteration pattern. It occurs 83 times or 20%. And from the table above, it could be seen also that the students also employed multiple theme pattern in their English and Indonesian texts but they are in lest frequency compared to the other patterns.

The occurrence of multiple theme patterns is only 13 times or 4% out of 311 clauses in English exposition texts while it is only 9 times or 2% out of 417 clauses in Indonesian texts. The rarity of multiple theme pattern in common English texts is confirmed by Nwogu & Bloor (1991, p. 379) who argues that this pattern is commonly less frequent than the other types of thematic progression patterns.

Contribution of the Thematic Structure and Progression to the Nature of Exposition Texts

There are four aspects that was analyzed in relation to the nature of exposition texts i.e. the theme choice, topical theme, theme markedness, and thematic progression.

Theme Choice and the Nature of the Texts

In terms of theme choice, there are three types of thematic structure that applied in students' English and Indonesian exposition texts. They are topical theme, interpersonal theme, and textual theme. Each type has different contribution to the nature of exposition texts. The high number of occurrences of topical themes in students' English and Indonesian exposition texts indicate that the students effectively orients the reader to what their texts is about (Eggins, 2004). This also shows that in

the text constructed, she seems to focus on generalized participants, and the participants are realized by the topical themes. Regarding the interpersonal themes, the use of this theme in the text aims at presenting the student's perspective in the text. In expository genre, students need to express their point of view or comment. The rarity occurrence of this theme in the students' texts is in line with the nature of academic text which avoids involving too much interaction between speakers or writer and the position they are taking. It indicates also that the students are aware the use of interpersonal theme in exposition texts as position of their belief because most of them are full of certainty like facts or evidences to support their beliefs. In term of textual themes, it has high proportion in students' English and Indonesian texts. The high occurrence of this theme in students' texts is expected because they link logical steps of arguments in the whole texts. It helps the students build the cohesion and coherence in their texts. Eggin (2004, p. 281) states the textual themes are useful to provide a cohesive tie that links the clauses to its context.

Topical Theme and the Nature of the Texts

There are two kinds of participants involved in students' texts i.e. human and non-human participants. There are some categories of participants also applied in their texts i.e. nominal group and pronouns then called unmarked theme, and adverbial and prepositional groups then called marked theme. Nominal group can be in form human or non-human participants in students' texts. Both of them can be found in students' English and Indonesian texts.

The use of nominalization in the text shows that the students have ability to written-like text. The employment of nominalization is very critical in argumentative texts (including exposition) in order to make a condensed text.

The large number of pronouns found in students' both English and Indonesian texts is expected because it brings the nature of endophoric references which makes an effective referencing. The employment of pronouns also

causes the efficiency of writing, as the word which they refer to does not have to be repeated for times.

The existence of adverbial groups in the students' texts indicates that the students have the ability to use an alternative way of starting their clause other than merely by using nominal groups or pronouns. The presence of adverbial groups in students' texts also signals the emphasis of circumstances (time, location, manner, etc.) to strengthen the students' arguments in their writing.

The use of prepositional groups in students' texts is another option for students to develop their texts, and also to enhance the students' arguments through the emphasis of circumstances by putting them as theme in the first place in the clause.

Theme Markedness and the Nature of the Texts

There are two types of topical theme i.e. unmarked topical theme and marked topical theme. Concerning the unmarked topical theme, the use of personal pronoun provides the text with clear focus. Moreover, the student's text attains the degree of cohesion through the use of reiterated proper noun. The reiterated proper noun was used by the student in order to maintain the focus of the text.

The high number of occurrence of the marked theme indicates the students' ability in strengthen their arguments by emphasizing the meaning to influence the reader. In addition, the existence of marked topical theme also proposes another indication. The use of marked themes help the cohesion of the texts by giving an impact of undelaying ideas. Concerning this, the marked theme structures can serve "the effect of natural cohesion, symmetrical structure and sequential information flow" (Qi, 2012, p. 200) of texts.

Thematic Progressions and the Nature of the Texts

In term of thematic progression, there are three types of thematic structure applied in students' English and Indonesian exposition texts. All the three patterns proposed by Eggins (2004) are Reiteration pattern, Zigzag pattern, and Multiple pattern.

Based on the analysis of thematic progression, theme reiteration pattern helps students maintain the focus of the arguments. Students use this pattern in the text to elaborate different ideas of one participant in a range of clauses.

In addition, the high number of occurrence of zigzag pattern means that this pattern can give an impact to the development of information in argumentative writings where arguments are arranged in a meaningful way to achieve its purpose (Nwogu & Bloor, 1991). The use of zigzag pattern can reinforce the arguments in students' writings, particularly in the relation of causality.

In this case, multiple pattern plays a significant role in developing the ideas. By applying this pattern, it helps students to build the text easily and present their series of arguments in students' texts.

The Differences and Similarities between English and Indonesian in Terms of Coherence and Schematic Structure of the Exposition Text.

This section aims to answer the fourth research question dealing with the differences and similarities between English and Indonesian in terms of coherence and schematic structure of exposition texts. Contrastive rhetoric studies the differences and similarities in the use of coherence and cohesion devices and schematic structure between different languages from the sociocultural viewpoint (Kobayashi: 2003). It means that in contrastive rhetoric, it is assumed that the differences can be found regarding the concept of coherence and schematic structure in different culture.

Coherence

There are three aspects that were analyzed to find out the differences and similarities between English and Indonesian exposition texts in term of coherence i.e. development of clause (theme-rheme pattern), development of sentence (deductive-inductive), and the development of paragraph. Based on Rustipa, Badid, and Rukmini (1980), the flow of ideas of a discourse is classified into linear and non-linear development pattern. The criteria for linear development are as follows: organizing one central idea; having direct, clear, unified, logical, top-down flow of ideas. Non-linear pattern can be classified into circular, parallel/ zig-zag, digress patterns.

The result of data analysis showed that English and Indonesian texts have similar frequency of theme. In addition, thematic progression supports the coherence of the text. The data means that students use reiteration as much as zigzag pattern in their English in order to maintain the focus and reinforce the arguments in their texts but in Indonesian texts, students more reinforce the argument than maintain the focus to the arguments in their Indonesian texts.

Besides the coherence can be analyzed through thematic structure and progression analysis (the ties between clause to clause), it can be indicated by wider unit. In other words, the ties between sentences to sentences in one paragraph. There are three types of paragraph i.e. deductive style, inductive style, and mix style.

The data mean that students prefer to put the main idea or topic at the first sentence in a paragraph and it is supported by the following sentences. It can be said the students manage their sentence from general to specific. Only one inductive and mix style of paragraph were used in English texts. It indicates that most of English texts use deductive rather than inductive or mix type of paragraph.

In contrast, in Indonesian texts, even the most frequency of paragraph type is deductive similar with English texts, but the use of inductive and mix types of paragraph in

Indonesian texts are more than in English texts. In other words, students realized the use of both inductive and mix style in their Indonesian texts.

Schematic Structure

This section presents the analysis of genre in order to find out the differences and similarities of schematic structure between English and Indonesian texts.

Based on the data analysis, most of English texts consist of the three generic structure of exposition texts. The every student applied a thesis in their first paragraph which introduced the topic and the main arguments. It was developed by giving supporting arguments at the second paragraph. Then the last paragraph, it restated the writer's opinion as conclusion. This results shows that the students have already known the acknowledgment of schematic structure of English text so they could manage the English text systematically.

Indonesian texts consist of the three schematic structure as similar as in English text i.e. thesis, arguments, and reiteration. According to the data analysis, there are some Indonesian texts that is not give the reiteration or conclusion at the last paragraph. The texts only consist of thesis and arguments even the number of paragraph are more than English texts. As Rahman & Sofwan (2012) in their article said that both English and Indonesian article introductions make use of typical linguistic features which are generally similar but differ to a certain extent. It confirms the theory of Kaplan (1994) that English is direct language and Asian language is oriented language. Every languages are effected by the culture even they have the same purpose and schematic structure of paragraph.

CONCLUSION

As conclusion, both English and Indonesian texts, students applied three theme patterns; topical, interpersonal, and textual theme. The frequency of occurrence for each theme in English texts is the same with in Indonesian texts. It is different from thematic

progression, students used more zigzag pattern in Indonesian texts than used reiteration pattern.

Either thematic structure or progression has signifiant contribution to the nature of exposition text both English and Indonesian. There were several differences and similarities found in students' exposition texts. It can be seen from the coherence and schematic structure used in their English and Indonesian texts. Based on Rahman&Sofwan (2012), regarding the cultural variation in the schematic structures, exposing the differences is crucial to sensitize EFL students therefore the pattern they apply and the realization they perform can match the international standard as English is increasingly becoming global academic Lingua Franca.

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