An Analysis of Thematic Progression on News and Editorial of The Jakarta Post

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Abstract

The purposes of this study are to find the thematic progression pattern on news and editorial of The Jakarta Post, and to find similarities and differences between them. The researcher uses theory from Paltridge (2006) as the framework. The thematic progression pattern items consist of three categories, namely, theme reiteration, zig-zag pattern, and multiple or split theme pattern. The data of this research was derived from The Jakarta Post in printed version. There were three news and three editorials. The reason why the researcher chosen The Jakarta Post as the source of data because of The Jakarta Post uses English language in presenting the newspaper. Also, The Jakarta Post is one of the most read by Indonesian regular. The researcher chosen three news which as headline, meanwhile, the researcher chosen three editorials randomly in each different topics or issues. By using descriptive qualitative in textual analysis approach, the result showed that from news and editorial did not find the all of the thematic progression pattern (theme reiteration and zig-zag pattern). The similarities of news and editorial regarding the use of thematic progression pattern that were the researcher found two patterns of thematic progression which are theme reiteration and zig-zag theme pattern, and many patterns mostly applied in clause (9, 19) and the writers’newspaper used personal pronoun in writing the news and editorials of The Jakarta Post. On the other hand, the difference of them is that news tend to use theme reiteration, meanwhile editorials tend to use zig-zag theme pattern.

Key words: Thematic Progression, Theme, Rheme, News, Editorial, Theme Reiteration, Zig-Zag Pattern, Multiple Pattern.

Introduction

Writing is one of productive skills that needs practice much how to organize expression in a text to make the point precisely. In non-academic context, writing news or
editorial is one of the common activities done by writers or journalists. Being writers are not easy, there are many things that need to be prepared. One of them is that should be able to write a text well and coherence with one another. It means that the text should be well written in terms grammar and sentence structure in order to be comprehensible for the intented readers. Also, they should be able to produce their ideas through language. To do this, they need to have rich knowledge of what they are going to write and how to organize the language in a text. By knowing that, the writers can flow and organize the ideas in a clear way to the readers. In order to be good writers, it is necessary for them to know how to organize the Theme and Rheme in their writing.

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014 : 89), Theme is the element that serves as point of departure of the message, it is which locates and orients the clause within its context. Meanwhile, Rheme is defined as the rest of the clause in which the Theme is developed or the remainder of the message in a clause. As a message structure, therefore, a clause consists of a Theme accompanied by a Rheme, and the structure is expressed by the order whatever is chosen as Theme is put first. The Rheme is the most important element in the structure of the clause as a message because it represents information the speaker that wants to convey to the hearer. It is the Rheme that fulfills the communicative purpose of the utterance. By knowing those understanding, it can be said Theme represents “This is what I am talking about” and Rheme “This is what I am talking about it”.

As what the Theme and Rheme that have been discussed in System Functional Grammar, it is viewed language as a resource for making meaning in a text. This grammar tries to express the language in actual use and focuses on text or their context. However, theme belongs to the textual metafunction of the language with relevance to the context both of preceding text and the context of situation. It is also concerned with the organization or pattern of the text. So, for this matter, every clause is organized as a message related to an unfolding text.

In addition, writers who write news and editorial, it is a work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express the ideas and organize them into sentences, into paragraphs that will be clear for the readers. However, not only those aspects to be paid attention by the writers but also how the thematic progression pattern that exist in the text and also how the information in a text develops. Furthermore, to produce a good writing, one of many ways to deal with the problem regarding the writing quality, is by knowing the thematic progression pattern. It is the notion of Theme and Rheme employed the method of development of a text. It refers to the way the Theme of a clause may pick up, or repeat, a meaning from a preceding
Theme or Rheme. There are three kinds of thematic progression patterns, they are reiteration or constant theme pattern where the theme of each clause is the same, zig-zag or linear theme pattern where the rheme of one clause is picked up in the theme of the next clause and multiple theme or split rheme pattern where the combining of those patterns. All of these patterns are important because they are the basic things to make the writers or journalists produce high-quality of their writing in both news and editorial. By analyzing the thematic progression pattern, it can show the ability of writers in organizing their ideas. The more patterns obtained from a text, the more coherent a text is.

By looking above definition, the writers who write news and editorial should not only focus on grammar, punctuation, cohesion and coherence to conduct their writing but also they need to know the thematic progression pattern which can help the writers to expand their ideas. Knowing the definition of news and editorial are very needed in order to avoid misunderstanding in this research. News and editorial are written in order to transmit the message, ideas, or thought to the readers. News and editorial are different. News items especially that ones published in Jakarta Post (JP) must have been done careful wordings and strict editorial process. Or it can be said that they have been written carefully by the journalist. However, editorial is newspaper or magazine article that gives the opinions of the editors or publishers. It also written by someone who expertise in writing. Because of that, the researcher wants to see how the writers who are expert develop their ideas in the using of thematic progression pattern. Whether they use the same pattern nor different pattern in writing the news and editorial of The Jakarta Post.

Because of its importance role in expanding the ideas in writing, research on thematic progression in writing had been done to investigate correlation between thematic progression and the quality of writing, or to see the pattern that was found on text or writing. In Indonesia, research on thematic progression in such kind of writings have been done quantitatively or qualitatively to find the pattern of thematic progression (Marfuaty and Wahyudi, 2015; Mulatsih, 2006; Rakhman, 2013; Rustipa, 2010). The focus is more on students’s writing such as the researchers analyzed the thematic progression on paragraph writing, learner’s texts, and exposition text. Also, they just focus on one subject that want to be analyzed. However, the researcher here wants to conduct recent study that focus on thematic progression pattern on news and editorials of The Jakarta Post. By seeing the explanation before, thus, this research aims to fulfill the unexplored gap.
Methods

This research used descriptive-qualitative design which focused on textual analysis approach to find the thematic progression pattern and the differences and similarities of thematic progression pattern on news and editorial of The Jakarta Post. The data of this research were 3 news and 3 editorials collected from the Jakarta Post which published from March until April 2018. Then, the researcher chosen 3 news as headlines and 3 editorials randomly in each different topics or issues that will be found on the Jakarta Post newspaper in printed version. It had been written in 500-600 words.

After that, the researcher analyzed to find the thematic progression and similarities and differences of thematic progression on news and editorial of The Jakarta Post with the following stages:

a. The researcher read the news and editorials for many times in order to get better understanding and interpreting to the data.
b. Segmented the texts into clause that arranged in each topic. Then, the researcher started segmenting the text from the news until editorials.
c. Identifying the Theme and Rheme of every clause of news and editorials with giving the coding of Theme (T) and Rheme (T).
d. After that, segmented it into the table based on it’s type in order to make the researcher be easier to see the pattern of thematic progression. Then, explaining the result into the text.
e. Describing the thematic progression pattern that were found on news and editorial. Furthermore, the researcher drew the thematic progression pattern of news and editorials. Then, explaining the pattern of thematic progression that were found on news and editorial.
f. For the sake of objectivity and accuracy of identifying the thematic progression on news and editorials, the researcher did double-checking with the supervisor regularly to avoid bias.
g. Last, the researcher seen whether there are the similarities and differences of the thematic progression patterns that were found on news and editorials. Then, explaining it into the text.
Findings and Discussion

The researcher used thematic progression pattern proposed by Paltridge (2006) as the framework. He argues 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. This is a key way in which information flow is created in a text. There a number of ways in which this may be done that are: Theme reiteration or constant theme pattern where the theme of each clause is the same, a zig zag or linear theme pattern where the rheme of one clause is picked up in the Theme of the next clause, and multiple or split theme pattern may also be combined into those patterns.

In addition, after analyzing news and editorials, the researcher found that were two patterns which was applied in the news and editorials of The Jakarta Post, theme reiteration and zig-zag theme pattern. The researcher did not find the multiple or split theme pattern. Theme reiteration is commonly found on news. However, zig-zag pattern is more applied in the editorials of The Jakarta Post.

From the table about, the occurrences of each patterns of thematic progression on news and editorial of The Jakarta Post that can be seen as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Theme Reiteration</th>
<th>Zig-Zag Pattern</th>
<th>Multiple or Split Pattern</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News 1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News 2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News 3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial 3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The Result of The Occurrences on News and Editorials

1. First News

The title of first news is “More Money Spent on House, MPR Speakers”. It was published at 27th March 2018. After the first news is segmented into each clause as well
as type of theme and rheme, it can be seen the thematic progression pattern which existed in text above. The researcher drew the pattern of the text as below:

- Theme 5 → Rheme 5
- Theme 6 ← Rheme 6
- Theme 8 → Rheme 8
- Theme 9 ← Rheme 9
- Theme 10 → Rheme 10
- Theme 11 ← Rheme 11
- Theme 12 → Rheme 12
- Theme 13 ← Rheme 13
- Theme 14 → Rheme 14
- Theme 15 ← Rheme 15
- Theme 16 → Rheme 16
- Theme 17 ← Rheme 17
- Theme 18 → Rheme 18
- Theme 19 ← Rheme 19
- Theme 25 → Rheme 25
- Theme 26 ← Rheme 26
- Theme 27 → Rheme 27
- Theme 28 ← Rheme 28
- Theme 29 → Rheme 29
- Theme 30 ← Rheme 30
- Theme 31 → Rheme 31

Based on the figure above, the researcher found two kinds of thematic progression patterns which are theme reiteration (6 patterns) and zig-zag pattern (6 patterns). This is the example of theme reiteration:

- **The estimate** only includes House and MPR secretariat budgets and MPR leaders official expenses. (T18)
- **It** does not include salaries, transportation costs, and other allowances. (T19)

2. Second News

The title of second news is “RI pitches Greater Safety, Female Participation in Peacekeeping”. It was published at 29th March 2018. After the second news is
segmented into each clause as well as type of theme and rheme, it can be seen the thematic progression pattern which existed in text above. The researcher drew the pattern of the text as below:

Based on the figure above, the researcher found two kinds of thematic progression patterns which are theme reiteration (6 patterns) and zig-zag pattern (4 patterns). This is the example of theme reiteration:

- **Retno** said she also told UN undersecretary general for peacekeeping operations. (T22)
- **Minister Retno** is currently in New York to rally support for Indonesia’s bid. (T23)

3. Third News

The title of third news is “Uber drivers Hop on Go-Jek, not Grab, amid Uncertainty”. It was published at 3rd April 2018. After the third news is segmented into each clause as well as type of theme and rheme, it can be seen the thematic progression pattern which existed in text above. The researcher drew the pattern of the text as below:
Based on the figure above, the researcher found two kinds of thematic progression patterns which are theme reiteration (15 patterns) and zig-zag pattern (5 patterns). This is the example of theme reiteration:

**He** added that if Uber has not ceased its’ operation. (T17)
He would still be working as Uber driver. (T18)

4. First Editorial

The title of first editorial is “Reporting a problem: Facebook”. It was published at 27th March 2018. After the first editorial is segmented into each clause as well as type of theme and rheme, it can be seen the thematic progression pattern which existed in text above. The researcher drew the pattern of the text as below:

Based on the figure above, the researcher found two kinds of thematic progression patterns which are theme reiteration (1 pattern) and zig-zag pattern (6 patterns). This is the example of zig-zag pattern:

- The story of Facebook has been like the strange case of Dr.Jekyll and Mr.Hyde. (R1)
- Mr.Hyde of Facebook claims that it has the most effective marketing tool. (T2)

5. Second Editorial

The title of second editorial is “No Worms, Thank You”. It was published at 3rd April 2018. After the second editorial is segmented into each clause as well as type of theme and rheme, it can be seen the thematic progression pattern which existed in text above. The researcher drew the pattern of the text as below:
Based on the figure above, the researcher found two kinds of thematic progression patterns which are theme reiteration (3 patterns) and zig-zag pattern (5 patterns). This is the example of zig-zag pattern:

- Health Minister Nila Djuwita Anfasa Moeloek has assured us that the worms are not dangerous. (R2)
- Because they die when fish is cooked properly. (T3)

6. Third Editorial

The title of third editorial is “Know Your Candidates”. It was published at 4th April 2018. After the third editorial is segmented into each clause as well as type of theme and rheme, it can be seen the thematic progression pattern which existed in text above. The researcher drew the pattern of the text as below:
Theme 22  →  Rheme 22

Based on the figure above, the researcher found two kinds of thematic progression patterns which are theme reiteration (3 patterns) and zig-zag pattern (5 patterns). This is the example of theme reiteration:

- Because the KPU has declared them eligible in the first place. (T18)
- They had already embarked on their campaign trail. (T19)

**Similarities and Differences of Thematic Progression Pattern on News and Editorial of The Jakarta Post.**

**Similarities**

In general, the researcher found two patterns which are theme reiteration and zig-zag pattern of thematic progression. Multiple or split pattern, the researcher did not find this pattern. The similarity from news and editorial regarding to the use of thematic progression pattern is found that the mostly patterns occured on news and editorial in clause 9 and 19. The researcher found the pattern of these clauses that are theme reiteration and zig-zag theme pattern. From this, it can be seen the similarity of the using thematic progression patterns. Another similarity found in that both 3 news and 3 editorials that have been analyzed that the writer used personal pronoun in writing them.

**Differences**

The researcher found the differences after analyzing the thematic progression pattern that are news tend to use theme reiteration. However, editorials tend to use zig-zag theme pattern. It can be seen from the total of news is 45 which derived from the total of theme reiteration (6, 7, 16) and zig-zag pattern (6, 4, 5). Meanwhile, the total of editorial is 22 which derived from the total of theme reiteration (2, 3, 2) and zig-zag pattern (6, 5, 4). It can be seen that the news has 29 theme reiteration, it is more than zig-zag theme pattern (15). On the other hand, the editorials has 15 zig-zag pattern, it is more than theme reiteration (7). From this differences, it can be seen that theme reiteration is mostly occured in the news. It because news provides any facts of the problem. So, the writers write the news based on the fact. They could not be able to give arguments, critiques, and suggestions in writing news. On the contrary, zig-zag theme pattern is mostly occured in the editorial of The Jakarta Post. It because editorials serve the information based on writers’ own thinking. They are free in giving comments or critiques in editorials. It actually makes the differences happened.
In addition, the researcher found that the news writers tend to use personal pronoun such as (he, I, we, they) where the facts is served by the writers rather than editorials writer where the opinion about something is served by the writers. From whole total, news and editorial writing has different number that researcher found. News has 45 patterns, however editorial has 22 patterns. As Eggin (2004) says that in order to make the text has coherent, repetition of the theme is an effective way. So, the more patterns obtained from a text, the more coherent a text is.

Conclusion

The intention of the present research is to find the thematic progression pattern on news and editorial of The Jakarta Post and to find similarities and differences of the use thematic progression pattern between them. The findings reveal that from thematic progression pattern proposed by Paltridge (2006) both news and editorials are found two patterns which are theme reiteration and zig-zag theme pattern. The researcher did not find the multiple or split theme pattern. Theme reiteration is commonly found on news. However, zig-zag pattern is more applied in the editorials of The Jakarta Post.

There are also similarities and differences in using of thematic progression pattern on news and editorials of The Jakarta Post. What seems to be similar is that both of them just found two patterns which are theme reiteration and zig-zag theme pattern, these patterns mostly occured in the (9, 19) clause and the writers used personal pronoun in writing news and editorials. What seems to be different between news and editorial is that news got a higher number of patterns that was found rather than editorials (45, 22). Moreover, after analyzing news and editorials, it can be seen that news tend to use theme reiteration (29) rather than zig-zag pattern (15). However, editorials tend to use zig-zag theme pattern (15) rather than theme reiteration (7).

References


