

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Writing is the way of communication language that used to communicate with other people without limitation with time and distance. Writing is mostly recognized as a difficult task for language learners, especially for EFL students (Rosa, 2007). It is different from the other skills because, on writing, the writers need to be more focused on delivering their ideas effectively to the readers. Because of that, writing is not always about grammar but also coherence. Instead of just focus on the tenses, adjectives, or verbs, the writers also need to focus on how they distribute their ideas in each sentence to make it communicative to the readers. The coherence of the texts can be analyzed in terms of thematic progressions.

The definition of the theme is the element that serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned. There must be at the beginning of the text, paragraph, or clause, and then followed by Rheme (Halliday, 1994, p.37). Rheme, according to Halliday (1994, p.37) is the remainder of the message, the part in which Theme is developed. 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 the Theme is put first. The rheme is very important in a clause because it is presenting the information about the subject.

In the language term, Thematic Progression is the exchange of information between Theme and Rheme in a sentence. The whole text needs to follow certain patterns to make it more coherent. The coherence between the Theme and the Rheme in a text is to make the writers easy to deliver their ideas to the readers. Therefore, the text becomes communicative to the readers.

Due to its important role in increasing the quality in writing, research on thematic progression in writing had been done to investigate the correlation between thematic progression and the quality of writing, or to see the pattern that was found on text or writing. Many researchers already researched thematic progressions in such kind of writings that have been done quantitatively or qualitatively to analyze the pattern of thematic progression in academic writing such as students' English essays or research article abstracts. (Wei, 2016; Wang, 2007; Lores, 2004). Some researchers also researched non-academic texts such as in C. Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* (Abed, 2010) and the animated film "Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs" (Wardhani, 2013). In this present research, the researcher is trying to analyze the thematic progressions in non-academic writing texts and especially on social media such as Twitter. By seeing the explanation before, thus, this research aims to reveal the patterns of thematic progressions found in non-academic texts on Twitter.

Twitter is one of the nowadays popular social media, where people can communicate in short messages called tweets. Twitter only gives 280 characters or less for every tweet. This size restriction makes everyone easy to read but also challenging to write. One of the most popular features on Twitter is a thread. Thread on Twitter is a series of connecting tweets from one person. A thread can

provide additional context, an update, or an extended point by connecting multiple tweets. Some popular topics that are usually created by the user of Twitter are opinions, experiences, tips and tricks, horrors, and funny stories.

One of the most viral threads on Twitter in 2017 is *Dear David's* story threads by Adam Ellis. The total of threads he made that related to *Dear David* is twenty-two threads. His first thread is already retweeted over 53.2 thousand and liked over 80.7 thousand. He made threads consist of a paranormal activity that he experienced since 2017 at his apartment. He believed that his apartment was haunted by a dent-headed ghost of a dead child who was trying to kill him. He would make a thread when there was an episode of the paranormal activity.

Based on the phenomenon above, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled “An Analysis of Thematic Progressions in *Dear David's* Story Threads on Twitter” to provide information about the theme and the thematic progression patterns that are found in the non-academic texts especially texts in social media such as Twitter.

1.2 Research Questions

The present research investigates the coherence of *Dear David's* story threads using the Theme system and Thematic Progression. Thus, the research questions for this research are:

1. What kind of theme appeared most in the threads?
2. What kind of thematic progression used by the writer in developing the threads?

1.3 Purposes of the Research

The research aims to investigate the kind of Theme that mostly appear on the threads and the kind of thematic progression found on *Dear David* story threads by Adam Ellis on Twitter.

1.4 Limitation of the Research

In order to keep the the analysis on track, the researcher limits the topic. The research focuses on analyzing the theme and thematic progression in *Dear David* story threads by Adam Ellis on Twitter. There are some limitations to this research. First, the researcher focuses on the thematic progression patterns and Theme and Rheme. Second, the researcher chooses five threads from the total twenty-two threads related to *Dear David*'s story. The threads were written between August 2017 and January 2018. Those threads were with mostly above fifteen thousand likes. The researcher also only analyzes the texts in the threads with ignoring the pictures and the videos inserted by the writer in the threads.

1.5 Significances of the Research

The result of the research is expected to add more information about the patterns of thematic progression that are found in the non-academic text, especially on Twitter, so that Twitter users can get the meaning of the text easily.

Additionally, this research is supposed to contribute as a reference to other researchers who want to conduct research related to this research more intensively in a particular written format.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

In this section, the researcher provides several key terms related to research to avoid misunderstanding. The definitions of the key terms are as follows:

- Theme is the main idea of the sentence that the writer is talking about.
- Rheme is what the writer says about the main idea.
- Thematic Progression is the exchange or linking of information between theme and rheme in the paragraph of the text.
- Twitter is a social networking service on which users post and interact with messages called Tweets.
- Thread on Twitter is a series of connected Tweets from one person.