

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the investigation of Theme and Theme progression analysis of students' Exposition texts in an English Education study program of a state university in Bandung. The Theme and Theme progression analysis draws on Systemic Functional Linguistics approach. This chapter introduces the underlying principles towards this study including background, statement of problems, purpose of the study, scope of study, significance of the study, clarification of key terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1. Background

Writing is the most significant cultural accomplishment throughout human history. It signals new age of civilization — findings of written record are often associated with the initial development of the “literate society” which is more complicated than the former society found in human history. In line with this, Coulmas (2003 p. 1) stated that ‘humanity relies on writing to an unprecedented extent’. Through writing, we record, convey, and communicate something that appears in our mind (Rodgers, 2005). Besides, writing can also maintain our memory since the written text is more fallible than human memory.

Throughout its development, writing becomes an important aspect in many fields, including education. In many schools or universities, writing is a core subject to be taught to students. According to Schleppegrell (2004 p. 3) schools play an important role to prepare and shape students for achieving particular roles in the society. One of the ways to achieve those purposes is by teaching writing. Through the teaching of writing, students learn to convey information through written page. In learning writing, students are taught how to know effectively what is on people's mind, how to affect other people, and how to plan to achieve

that effect (Bazerman, 2010). This happens because when students learn writing, they also learn new knowledge about language (linguistic features) which is important to make the text communicative and informative. Thus, roughly speaking, learning to write can also mean learning how to encrypt language (utterance) to the visible form; the language that is learned becomes a vehicle to the achievement of particular social roles in a society.

The accomplishment of writing task among the educational levels is different. Regarding this, Schlepegrell (2004) says

As students move from the early primary years into late primary school, middle school, and high school, and then into college or university, they need to engage in increasingly advanced literacy tasks in which language is typically structured in ways which condense information through lexical choices and clause structures that are different from the way language is typically used in ordinary contexts of everyday interaction (p.4).

In relation to this study, the university students majoring in English Education study program who are prepared to be a teacher also learn writing. According to the statement above, the requirements of writing in the university tend to be high. One of the requirements is to compose a text showing their position or argument towards an issue. In the academic area, expressing arguments are the ways for creating belief, changing mind, and altering perception which is commonly found in academic discourse (Fulwiler, 2002). One of the typical texts that students wrote in showing their position towards an issue is Exposition.

In addition to that, the needs to investigate the text made by students come up since it is important to know how the text is organized textually. The textual analysis gives many benefits, especially for those who are willing to be involved in the teaching of language. Regarding this, Achugar et.al (2007) noted that teachers do not only need knowledge about language, they also need tools to analyze language to understand their requirements of their subject matter delivered to students, to support the students' literacy development, to critically

approach the text they use, and to develop their professional capacity. The text analysis can reveal the information flow or the organization of message in a text (Halliday, 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004). One of the means to analyze the text is by applying Theme-Rheme system and thematic progression of Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) analysis. By analyzing thematic structure of a text, we can identify the organizational approach and method of development used by the writer (Schleppegrell, 2001).

However, there are few studies concerning the analysis of university students' Exposition text majoring in English Education study program using Theme-Rheme system and thematic progression analysis. Recent publications are mainly concerned to the analysis of junior and senior high school student's text. Yang et al (2007) who investigated Chinese students' text in a nationwide English examination found out that there are important differences in the students' degree of control of the textual resources of the text through the explicit instruction of genre. Mineshima (2010) noted that purposeful language in the text is organized at higher or macro level. It can be elaborated by examining its component and diagrammatical representation of its hierarchial relations.

In terms of Theme choice and Theme progression, some researchers have investigated their effects on the text development. Rakhman (2012), who investigated thematic progression of high school students' Exposition text found out that the thematic progression (SLP, CTP, and DTP, see also Eggins, 2004; Bloor and Bloor, 2004) are consistent with the linguistics features of argumentative essays. The somewhat similar study has also been conducted by Wang (2007) in China. She investigated university students' writing in terms of thematic choices and progression. This study found out that by analyzing Theme and Rheme in a text, the students can learn to perform the same analysis in their own writings, and thus improve cohesion in their own work. In addition, Bowen (2013) who investigated the 1st and 3rd year graduate students text found out that the system of Theme shows writer's rhetorically frames the information. It is

shown that some Theme choices link co-textually to the surrounding discourse, whilst others are chosen to look outward from the text to wider contextual issue.

Based on the reasons above, this study aims at analyzing undergraduate English Education study program students' Exposition text in terms of its schematic structure and textual organization using Theme-Rheme and thematic progression of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The Theme and Theme progression analysis play a significant role in the organization and development of the text thus contributing to the successful of writing — the achievement of overall text's purpose.

1.2. Statement of Problem

Related to the previous explanation, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. How are the schematic structures of English Education study program students' Exposition text?
2. Which Theme and Theme progression mostly occur in students' Exposition texts?
3. What are the factors contributing to creation of such texts?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Relevant to the statements of problems, this study is aimed to meet the following purposes:

1. To find out the schematic structures of Exposition text made by English Education study program students.
2. To investigate the Theme and Theme progression that mostly occurs in students' Exposition texts.
3. To find out the factors contributing to the creation of such texts.

1.4. Scope of the Study

This study concerned to the analysis of English Education study program students in one of state university in Bandung in terms of its schematic structures and the textual organization.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Since this study is aimed at investigating schematic structures and textual organization of English Education study program students' Exposition text, it hopefully gives the significance in some areas, such as theory, practice, and policy.

Firstly, the result of this study is expected to have a significant impact to the theory enrichment of schematic structures and textual organization of students' text, especially the one related to the Systemic Functional Linguistics Theme-Rheme system, Theme progression, and text analysis.

Secondly, this study is expected to provide an in-depth analysis of Theme-Rheme system and thematic progression by applying Systemic Functional Linguistics analysis in both language studies and language teaching studies. Teachers can gain information of this study to broaden their knowledge their knowledge of schematic structures and textual organization of Exposition text. Besides, the result of this study hopefully gives the contribution to help further researcher who are interested in investigating schematic structures and textual organization by providing relevant information.

Thirdly, by investigating the schematic structures and textual organization of Exposition text, this study hopefully gives the contribution of designing English curriculum in this country by providing the information of how the Exposition text should be in terms of schematic structure and textual organization. Besides,

teachers can also use the information of this study to provide better materials and to develop their professional capacity by analyzing text.

1.6. Clarification of Key Terms

- a. **Systemic Functional Linguistics** is a linguistics theory which concerns language as a source of meaning making process rather than a set of grammatical rules (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004, Emilia, 2005; 2012; Bloor and Bloor, 2004; Downing and Locke, 2006).
- b. **Theme system** in this study refers to the point of departure of a message, it is that which locates and orients the clause within its context. In English for example, Theme can be identified through the position of the clause. In the text, what comes first in the clause has thematic status (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004).
- c. **Theme progression** is Theme choice to which support the texts develop the ideas they present (Fries, 1995a; 1995b; Eggins, 2004).
- d. **Genre** in this study refers to ‘a staged, goal oriented, purposeful activity in which the speakers engaged as a member of our culture’ (Martin, 1984 as cited in Kay and Dudley-Evans, 1998). It comprises class of communicative events, the member of which share some sets of communicative purposes (Swales, 1990).
- e. **Exposition text** is a text which argues for a particular point of view of an issue. It gives reason to support thesis and elaborate this using evidence (Martin and Rose, 2008; Christie and Derewianka, 2008; Knapp and Watkins, 2005; Johns, 2002; Gerrot and Wignell, 1995).

1.7. Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized into five chapters. Each chapter is provided with some subtopics to give an insight into the topic under investigation.

The first chapter is introduction. This section gives the readers an overview to the study by providing background of the study, statement of problems, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, clarification of key terms used in the study, and organization of the paper.

The second chapter is literature review. This chapter elaborates the literature relevant to this study: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Theme system including Theme progression, genre, Exposition text, related previous research dealing with the analysis of Theme and Theme progression of Exposition text and the factors contributing to the creation of such text.

The third chapter is research methodology. This chapter focuses on the methodological aspects of this study. It covers four main aspects: research design, research site and participant, data collection, and data analysis.

The fourth chapter is findings and discussions. This section presents and discusses the result of the study. Furthermore, the interpretation of finding can also be found in this chapter.

The last chapter is conclusions. This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendation of this study. This chapter will be divided into two: conclusion and recommendation. The conclusion section begins with a brief description of aspects underlying this study: background, purpose, findings, and conclusion. Meanwhile, the recommendation section provides the suggestion for further research, generally in Text Analysis using SFL, particularly in investigating the Theme and Theme progression either for teachers, students, or other researchers.

1.8. Concluding Remark

This chapter has presented the underlying principles of this study covering background, statement of problem, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper. In the next chapter, the literatures relevant to this study will be elaborated.