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**An Analysis of Thematic Development Pattern in Thesis Abstracts by Undergraduate English Education Students**

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**Abstract**

This research aims to find the types and the most applied of thematic development patterns, also to describe students writing an abstract. This study was a descriptive qualitative design. The data of this research was abstract by undergraduate English education students of Bengkulu University academic year 2019 with a total of 20 abstracts. The data collection was the documentation on students' thesis in 2019, while two undergraduate English education students to be respondents. The analysis of data was identification, coding, tabulation, interpretation, and conclusion. Then, a model of an analytical framework theory by Paltridge 2006 as the thematic progression in this study. The results showed there was Simple Linear Progression (SLP), Constant Theme Progression (CTP), and Split Rheme Progression (SRP) in the thesis abstract. Furthermore, the constant theme progression (CTP) was the most applied. The order of occurrence was a constant theme (69.4%), a simple linear theme (25%), and split rheme (5.6%). It is also found that the researchers are not able to study existing standard patterns, they just write based on the guidance from their lecturer. On the other hand, they writing an abstract without following other guidance such as a book that contains how to write a good abstract. It is concluded that the researcher is not independent in abstract writing. Moreover, this is because lecturers will decide and acceptable their abstracts.

**Keywords:** Abstract; Thematic Development Pattern; Undergraduate English Students.

**Introduction**

An abstract is one of the most important parts of a journal article because the determining abstract is continued or does not read the article as well as the abstract in a thesis. An abstract is an entry point for readers of the article, a

measuring instrument for the quality of articles to be published in a journal, and determinants of papers accepted or rejected at a seminar or conference. For example, when completing the study, students are required to publish their research articles from the thesis they wrote. As one of the important parts of the thesis, it is an abstract part. Abstracts written by students are generally written in the Indonesian language and then translated into the English language. That means that the Indonesian language must first be good to make it easier and more correctly translated in English (Arsyad and Arono, 2018). Because abstracts have a main role in the thesis, students must be able to do it write well-written abstracts.

Although abstracts are usually written most recently, abstracts are the first part that is read by readers after titles in academic writing, such as articles, theses, research reports, etc. to be read by the reader after the title. The abstract is located after the title and if the author did not write it correctly, interestingly, and precisely, the reader may not continue reading the article after reading the abstract (Belcher, 2009).

Numerous studies have been published that are using thematic development patterns in their analysis. Rakhman (2013) found when examining the paragraph writing of nine high school students at SMA Kartika Candra 3 Bandung exposition texts from the low, middle, and high level of achievement, she revealed that the applications of thematic development patterns to scientific texts have been carried out. The students organized their ideas in three ways of thematic development, including simple linear, constant theme, and derived theme.

In another researcher by Marfuaty (2015) about analyzing thematic development on the opinion section texts of The Jakarta Post also found that the texts used all the four thematic development patterns which are a simple linear, constant theme, and split rheme. She found that; First, the most dominant theme type is a topical theme (202 in total) as can be found in five texts. Following the position of the topical theme are the textual theme (49) in the second place and the interpersonal theme (25) in the last position. The findings of her study also reported that the highest occurrence of thematic development pattern is a simple

linear progression (57 in total), constant theme (with a frequency of 44), rheme reiteration (38), zig-zag pattern (17).

Although most of the students at Bengkulu University have not known what theme-rheme and its organization is, abstract in a thesis that the students have written must have theme-rheme and also the pattern that is applied to connect these two terms. Besides, by analyzing thematic development in the thesis abstract by undergraduate, it can show the ability of students to organize their ideas and making their sentences coherent (Wang, 2007). By using the theory of thematic development pattern suggested by Paltridge (2006) as the framework, the study aimed to identify theme-rheme realization and to find out thematic development patterns mostly applied in the thesis abstract by undergraduate English education students of Bengkulu University.

### **Research Method**

This research used descriptive qualitative research. So this research is not only limited to collect and arrange the data in good order but also analyzing and interpreting the meaning of the data. The researcher used a thematic development pattern theory that proposed by Paltridge (2006), since this study attempts to investigate the thematic progression patterns found in 20 thesis abstracts written by undergraduate students whose major is English Education at the University of Bengkulu to see how their ideas are constructed. The reason why the researcher chose the abstract is the corpus because it has one paragraph and normally already coherent.

The instruments of the research were the documentation and interview guidelines. In this research, the interview as a supporting instrument. According to Arikunto (1998), the function of interview is to judge some people's situations like to find out student background, parent, education, attention, and attitude. The purpose of using an interview was to find out how the student writes an abstract. The researcher interviewed two students who are graduated in English education students of Bengkulu University academic year 2019. The interview question is consisting of five questions. The data were analyzed by the following steps :

(1) Close-reading of undergraduate abstracts theses, (2) Breaking down the abstracts into clauses. (3) Placing the clauses into table format to make the process of the analysis easier and clearer, (4) Determining the theme and rheme, (5) Classifying the thematic development pattern, whether it is simple, constant, split, or derived hyper, (6) Calculating the occurrence of each type of thematic development patterns found in the abstracts, (7) Interpreting the findings to conclude how English students of Bengkulu University present their ideas in their abstracts.

## Findings and Discussion

### Finding

#### *Thematic Development Patterns in Thesis Abstracts*

The first section concern with what thematic development patterns are in thesis abstracts.

**Table 1. The Number of Occurrence of Thematic Development Pattern**

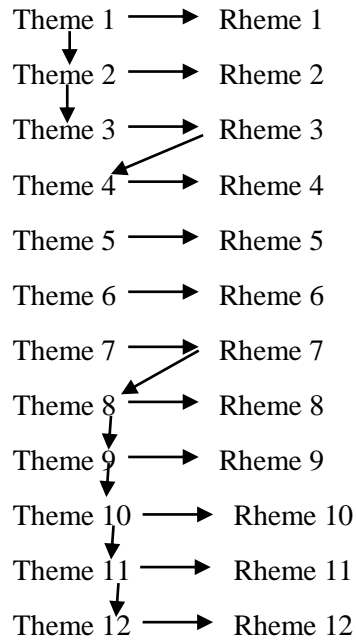
No	TD Patterns	Total	Percentage (%)
1.	SLP	18	25%
2.	CTP	50	69,4%
3.	SRP	4	5,6%
4.	DTP	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

As seen in the table 1, there is a total of 3 types of Thematic Development Pattern in 20 thesis abstracts by undergraduate English education study program in the academic year 2019 that could be found by the researcher. There are Simple Linear Progression, Constant Theme Progression, and Split Rheme Progression.

#### *Thematic Development Pattern that Mostly Applied*

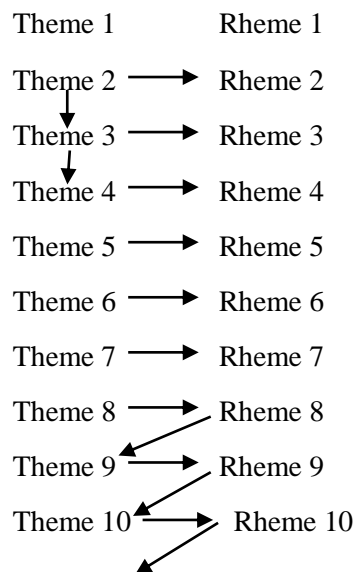
Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Constant Theme Progression (CTP) becomes the first mostly applied pattern in thesis abstracts with a total number of occurrence 50 (69.4%). Simple Linear Progression (SLP) becomes the second most applied pattern in thesis abstracts with a total number of occurrence

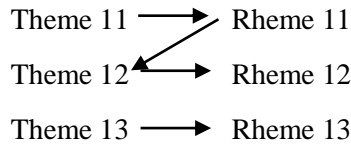
18 (25%). And the last mostly applied pattern in thesis abstracts is Split Rheme Progression (SRP) with a total number of occurrence 4 (5.6%). But Derived-Hyper Theme Progression (DTP) does not appear in their abstracts. The types of thematics progression can be seen from the description below.



**Figure 1. Constant Theme Progression**

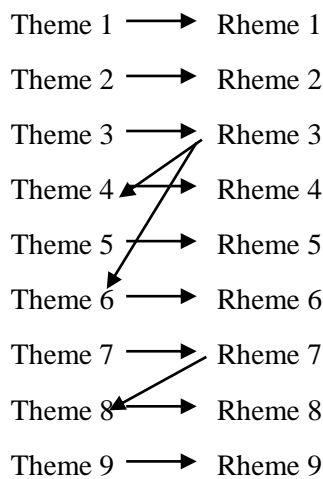
The Figure 1. is a form of abstract development in the form of types of continuous patterns. Types of continuous patterns are seen in the development of each clause or sentence in an abstract. Types of the continuous pattern can be seen in repetition at the beginning of each clause or sentence that is presented.





**Figure 2. Simple Linear Progression**

This can be seen from the theme rheme (R8) as a subject in the blocking on the clause or next sentence. The marker is a theme rheme, (R9), (R10), and (R11). The development of this paragraph is more dominant in developing part of the research results.



**Figure 3. Split Rheme Progression**

The development of the multiple pattern type paragraph developments. The development of this type is more dominant in the stages of research results. The results of the research on the rheme theme (R3) are developed into the topical theme in the next clause.

**How do the Researchers Write an Abstract?**

Based on the interview session which was related to their thesis abstracts, There are five questions to know about how students write an abstract, the first question was: "How do you write a thesis abstract?", the second question was "Did you use the past thesis abstract as a reference?", the third question was "What is the guidance from the lecturer that helps you in writing an abstract?", the fourth question was "Did you read the guide to make a thesis abstract?", the last question

was "What makes a good abstract?". All of the questions in the interview used English because the students from the English education department

## **Discussion**

### ***Thematic Development in Thesis Abstract***

In this section, the researcher discusses more what thematic development patterns applied in thesis abstracts by undergraduate English education students of Bengkulu University academic year 2019. Based on this research, there are 3 types of thematic development patterns. There are Simple Linear Progression (SLP), Constant Theme Progression (CTP), and Split Rheme Progression (SRP). However, Derived-Hyper Theme Progression (DTP) is not found in this research. The simple linear theme pattern can be used by taking the rheme from the previous clause to serve as the theme in the next clause, the constant theme patterns are widely used because they are quite easy to use by repeating themes in the previous clause, the split rheme pattern can be used by taking rheme for two or more themes and the derived-hyper theme patterns can be used by using a theme as a topic to develop the next clause. However, in this thesis derived-hyper theme is none applied at all. This probably caused is not appropriately in thesis writing, DTP is found frequently in expository texts (Rakhman, 2013). Moreover, the researchers do not use this pattern because they are difficult to apply using the theme as a topic to develop the next clause.

### ***Thematic Development Pattern that Mostly Applied***

The result has found that Constant Theme (CTP) with a total number of occurrence 50 (69,4%) is the type of thematic progression pattern that is mostly applied by the students in writing their abstracts. Eggins (2004) states by using Constant Theme Progression, the students can make their text a clear focus, which is this pattern is considered as the easiest pattern among other patterns. In other words, using this pattern, the students do not need to find a new theme. The finding is in line with what found Rustipa (2010), which shows that Constant Theme Progression became the most applied pattern among other patterns. Rustipa (2010)

said that the first theme is picked up and repeated at the beginning of the next clause. Which has a simple structure and is defined easy. It can indicate that the student successfully gives the reader a clear orientation to what the text is about and where the information has come from and where it is going.

This finding contradictory with Marfuaty (2015) that shows Simple Linear Progression became the most applied Thematic Development Pattern. This probably caused differences in the genre or kind of text analyzed in the study. As Nwogu and Bloor (1991) state that Simple Linear Progression tends to be found in explanation and argumentation in organizing and developing information in the text because it can give an impact on the development of information in argumentation where arguments are arranged in a meaningful way to achieve its purpose. Meanwhile, Simple Linear Progression (SLP) became the second most applied pattern in this thesis with a total number of occurrence 18 (25%). Arono (2018) said that it is important for researchers to use SLP in their academic research or writing because this is the way that their writing has a consistent flow of information and to provide a logical relationship between their writing. Furthermore, Split Rheme Progression (SRP) is the third most applied pattern with a total number of occurrence 4 (5,6%). Rustipa (2010) stated this pattern is common in longer expository texts and is considered the most difficult one for the students because they need to create new themes by taking up from the rhemes. While Derived-Hyper Theme Progression (DTP) is none applied in this study. This probably happens because this theme is difficult to apply. The researchers do not use a theme as a topic to develop the next clause but write based on the stages in paragraph development.

### ***How do the Researchers Write an Abstract?***

The finding showed that how the undergraduate English education student of Bengkulu University academic year 2019 writing an abstract thesis, based on their experience, they were using past research as a reference, read the guidelines. However, they agreed that guidance from their lecturer was very helpful. This



probably caused them can easily be asked about an error in their abstract. In other words, researchers are not able to study existing standard patterns. However, if researchers follow the guidelines and see correct abstract examples, they will follow the pattern. Popular strategy researchers prefer to ask the lecturer, while the lecturer does not follow the coherent analysis, but it is about what should be contained in the abstract such as, background, method, the result. That is why the researchers did not arrive at the discourse analysis. This means that the researcher is not independent in abstract writing, does not choose to read the guide. In all cases, the abstract is the very last thing you write. It should be a completely independent, self-contained text, not an excerpt copied from your paper or dissertation. According to Sarah Mcombes (2019) stated that An abstract should be fully understandable on its own to someone who hasn't read your full paper or related sources. Moreover, this is because lecturers will decide and acceptable their abstracts

## **Conclusion and Suggestion**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the result of the research that was described in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that there were 3 types of thematic development patterns found in thesis abstracts written by undergraduate English Students of Bengkulu University in the academic year 2019. The first type is Simple Linear Progression (SLP), the second is Constant Theme Progression (CTP) and the last is Split Rheme Progression (SRP).

The second the types of Constant Theme Progression patterns (CTP) are mostly applied (69,4% ), and Simple Linear Progression (SLP) pattern (25%), followed by Split Rheme Progression (SRP) pattern (5,6%). While Derived-Hyper Theme Progression (DTP) was not applied at all in this study. This probably caused is not appropriate in thesis writing. While this is found frequently in expository texts. Moreover, the researchers do not use this pattern because they are difficult to apply using the theme as a topic to develop the next clause.

Third, the researcher agreed that guidance from their lecturer was very helpful. So, they writing an abstract based on the guidance from their lecturer. On the other hand, they writing an abstract without following other guidance such as a book that contains how to write a good abstract. It means that the researcher is not independent in abstract writing, does not choose to read the guide. Moreover, this is because lecturers will decide and acceptable their abstracts.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the research results, the researcher would like to give some suggestions. For the teacher, this research is expected to provide a more detailed explanation about how to apply thematic development pattern appropriately so that in the future it can help students in writing a text. For the students, this research is expected to know the importance of using thematic development pattern in writing is to make the text coherent and easier to understand by the readers. Besides knowing the types, students are also advised to understand how to use them appropriately.

For the researcher as a reference to the other researchers who want to conduct further research about thematic development patterns. Further research specifically dealing with thematic development progression should take another part of the thesis or they can also investigate the other writing text for example journals or articles. Hopefully, the future researcher will find other research questions and other ideas relating to English language teaching and learning processes. It would be better to repeat this study with a larger sample.

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