

# THE ANALYSIS OF COHERENCE IN THE BACKGROUND OF SKRIPSI WRITTEN BY ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION FACULTY OF MURIA KUDUS UNIVERSITY

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## ABSTRAK

*Tiap teks yang dihasilkan harus koheren agar disebut sebagai teks yang baik. Untuk itu dibutuhkan elemen yang menghasilkan koheren secara menyeluruh yaitu perkembangan tema yang mempunyai perkembangan elemen yang menghubungkan antar klausa yang disebut tema dan rima. Teks yang koheren juga diperlukan dalam menulis skripsi sebagai salah satu persyaratan lulus sarjana S1, khususnya di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muria Kudus. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menganalisa koherensi dalam bagian latar belakang skripsi yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Muria Kudus 2010. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui koherensi dalam belakang skripsi. Penelitian ini tergolong penelitian kualitatif yaitu analisa wacana. Dalam penelitian ini disimpulkan bahwa semua latar belakang skripsi mempunyai koherensi yang kurang.*

**Kata kunci:** tema dan rheme, perkembangan tematik, koherensi, latar belakang skripsi

## ABSTRACT

*Every text created should be coherence to be considered as good text. Thus, it needs the elements producing a coherent whole text which is thematic progression that has the elements development of a clause connects each other called theme and rheme. The coherence text should also be necessary in writing skripsi as a requirement of sarjana program, especially in English Education Department of Muria Kudus University. This research is conducted to analyze the coherence in the background section of skripsi written by English Education Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2010. The purpose of this research is to find out the coherence in the background section of skripsi. This research design belongs to qualitative taht is discourse analysis. It can be concluded that all of the backgrounds of skipsi lack coherence.*

*Key words : theme and rheme, thematic progression, coherence, background of skripsi.*

## A. INTRODUCTION

For academic purpose, especially in college, writing has significant purpose as the main tool for learning. It is explained by Artkinson and Curtis (cited in Paltridge and Starfield, 2007:46) that “Academic writing at an advance level is more than ‘just getting ideas down on

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paper' and being sure that they are in 'good English'". It is a fundamental ways of getting across our thoughts to develop our understanding.

In university, especially in Muria Kudus University, writing a research paper as academic writing product called skripsi has to be written by the students for completing their last examination scientific project before graduating from sarjana degree. Skripsi consists of some chapters; one of them is the introductory section. The introductory section is the main section of the research, since it becomes the reason why writer does the research. As Bathia (cited in Flowerdew, 2002:58) states that introduction is the key role in presenting the connection of the research to be reported.

The introduction of research itself consists of six subchapters; they are: background of the research, statement of problem, objective of the research, significance of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms. The background section is very important thing in the research paper. It is because it becomes the foundation of the research paper, exposes the reason of the researcher do the research, the theories that corroborate his or her research and the fundamental information concerning to the study to broader fields and signs concisely the expansion of the research problem (McMillan; 2004:20).

Writing a skripsi as a kind of discourse, especially background section in this case, should have a good construction and need the cohesion and coherence to be unified. As Halliday and Hasan (1989:2) explain that a text is considered to be good if it fulfills two properties, they are cohesion and coherence. According to them, cohesion is internal property, while coherence is contextual properties of paragraph. Furthermore, Halliday (1994:309) states that it is needed to be able to establish additional relations within the text, relations that may involve the elements of any extent, both smaller and larger than a clause, from single words to lengthy passages of text.

To find the relation within the text cannot be achieved by grammatical structure, but depends on the non-structural resources that can be found by analyzing the textual meanings. Butt, et. al. (2001:135) state that "to analyze and discuss textual meanings, we need a simple and distinct meta-language: we call the first element Theme and the rest of the clause Rheme". Whereas, Halliday (2004:64) characterizes Theme as 'what the message is concerned with: the point of departure for what speaker is going to say'. It functions as a starting point or signpost, the frame the speaker chosen for the message that put first; while, Rheme is considered as the reminder of Theme that accompany it.

For example (cited from Halliday and Matthiessen (2004:66)):

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Rheme</b>
the duke	has given my aunt that teapot
my aunt	has been given that teapot by the duke
that teapot	the duke has given to my aunt

The flow of information in a sentence from Theme to Rheme is crucial in achieving communicative effectiveness in a message. The exchange of information between successive Theme and Rheme pairings in a text is called Thematic Progression (Eggs, 1994). Thematic progression contributes to the cohesive development of a text, and then produces a coherent whole text (Butt, et. al.; 2001:134).

The coherence text should also be a requirement in writing background section of skripsi to be a unified text. However, it did not happen in one of the backgrounds of skripsi written by English Education Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2009 analyzed. It actually lacks coherence. It is shown by analyzing the theme and the thematic progression as follow:

Table 1.1 The example of analysis of Theme and Rheme (cited from the background of skripsi by Mukhlas (2009:1)):

No	Theme	Rheme
1.	Grammar as the one of the language components	is very important which must be learned by students
2.	According to Brown (2000:362) Grammar	is the system of rules governing conventional arrangement and relationship of words in a sentences
3.	The students	will understand how the language is used after they learn grammar
4.	We	may find the students mastery at vocabulary
5.	but they	cannot communicate in a good grammar in some skill such as Writing and Speaking

The example of thematic progression:

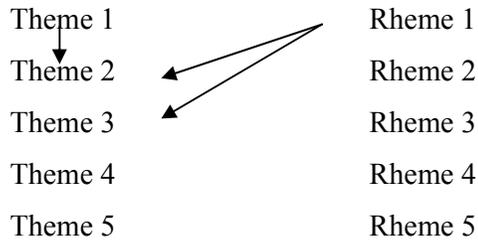


Figure 1. The example of thematic progression

From both analyses, it is concluded that the text lacks coherence. From seeing the draft, there are some missing connection among the themes and the rhemes. It is because the topic of the text is more than one or the out of focus of the topic or the new theme created.

Therefore, this reserach is aimed at analysing the coherence of the background of skripsi of English Education Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2010 using thematic analysis and thematic progression.

## B. Literature Review

### *Theme*

The definition of Theme given by Halliday and Matthiensen (2004:64) is the given information serving as “the point of departure of a message”. In other words, Theme typically contains familiar, old or given information and provides the settings for the remainder of the sentence. At the level of a clause complex (paragraph), the first clause will be taken as the theme (topic sentence), while at the level of a text, the first clause or clause complex will be regarded as the departure of what the author is going to say in the article (Butt et. al., 2000).

According to Gerot and Wignell (1994: 104-108), theme is categorized into three types: Ideational or Topical Theme, Textual Theme, and Interpersonal Theme.

1. Ideational or topical theme (is usually the first nominal group in the clause)

e.g.: The girl who wears a long blue dress and veil is my sister.

Theme

Rheme

2. Textual theme (continuative, conjunction/ structural, conjunctive adjunct)

e.g.:

Oh,	however,	then	they	Should go
Cont.	Conjunctive	Conjunction		

Textual	Topical	
Theme		Rheme

3. Interpersonal theme (modal/comment adjunct, vocative, finite verbal operator in yes/no interrogative, mood, polarity)

e.g.:

1. Modal adjunct → *Surely, the students* need to study hard.
2. Vocative → Sweetheart, we should take a rest now.
3. Finite → Did, you pass the exam last week?
4. Wh-Elements → What kind of book do you look for?
5. Polarity adjuncts → Yes/ No
6. Comment adjuncts → *Unfortunately, the rain* comes down so hard

Beside the three types of theme above, there are other types of theme as Eggins (1994) explains

Multiple Theme → when the theme consists of more than one types of theme

e.g.:

Yes	and,	anyway,	of course	Abe	should	the one	be to lead the group.
Cont.	Conj.	Conjtv.	modal	Voc.	finite		
Textual			Interpersonal			Topical	
Theme						Rheme	

### ***Rheme***

Rheme is the remainder of the message in a clause which Theme is developed (Halliday and Hasan, 2004: 64-65). Rheme includes what the author wants to tell about the Theme, which should be new and interesting to the reader (according to the writer).

### ***Thematic Progression***

Butt et al (2000: 142) define Thematic Progression as the progression of new Themes, which has textual meanings of how experiential and interpersonal meanings are organized in a linear and coherent way that contributes to the cohesive development of a text then produces a coherent whole text.

The types of thematic progression by Eggins (1994:303-304):

1. Re-iteration or constant theme

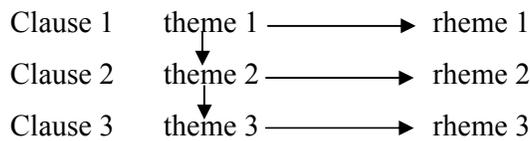


Figure 1.2 Re-iteration or constant Theme

2. Zigzag theme

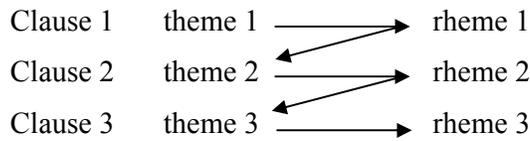


Figure 1.3 Zigzag Theme

3. Multiple theme

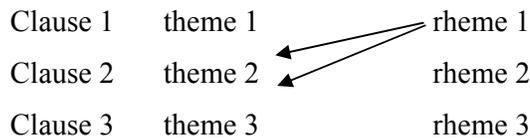


Figure 2. Multiple Theme

**Coherence**

Coherence is a matter of content or contextual property of paragraph that contributes to the unity of a piece of discourse such that the individual sentences or utterances hang together and relate to each other (Murcia and Olshtain, 2000:8).

**Background of Skripsi**

The background section is very important thing in the research paper. It becomes the foundation of the research paper because in background section the researcher will explain their research in broad outline. The background section exposes the reason of the researcher do the research and the theories that corroborate his or her research, becomes the fundamental information concerning to the study to broader fields and also signs concisely the expansion of the research problem (McMillan; 2004:20).

**Previous Study**

An analysis of thematic progression has ever been done by Rokhayani (2009). The method of analysis in her research and in this research is similar. The distinctions are the development analysis of coherence after analyzing the thematic progression and the data source of the research. After analyzing the thematic progression, the level of coherence is determined. The data source of the research in Rokhayani's (2009) is the descriptive text written by the fourth semester students of English Education Department of Muria Kudus

University in academic year 2008/2009, while the data source of this research is the background of skripsi written by English Education Department Students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University in 2010.

### C. Methodology

This research belongs to descriptive qualitative research that is discourse analysis, because the data analyzed is the level of coherence in the background of skripsi and the data source are the backgrounds of skripsi written by English Education Department Students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2010. The analyzing process of coherence is by analyzing and calculating types of theme, then interpreting by signposting the thematic progression first to find the coherence next. The data are analyzed based on the concept of theme and rheme and the thematic progression suggested by Eggins (1994). The levels of coherence is determined based on these factors:

Table 1.2 Level of coherence

No.	Level of coherence	Explanation
1.	Good	If the type of thematic progression is constant in one type each paragraph.
2.	Fair	If the type of thematic progression is inconstant or change from one type to others type each paragraph.
3.	Less	If new theme(s) is/are created in the middle of paragraph.
4.	Poor	If there is no thematic progression used.

### D. Findings and Discussion

There are three important things to be explained in this section; the types of theme, the thematic progression and the coherence in the background of skripsi written by English Education Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2010.

Firstly, the types of theme found in the background of skripsi are presented in the table as follows:

Table 1.3 The number of types of theme

No.	Background of skripsi	The number of types of theme				
		Tex.	Int.	Top.	Mr.	Un.
1.	The first background	14	2	52	9	43
2.	The second background	16	2	62	11	51
3.	The third background	21	5	60	0	60
4.	The fourth background	6	1	45	7	38
5.	The fifth background	11	0	34	2	32
6.	The sixth background	19	1	63	7	56
7.	The seventh background	21	2	47	6	41
	Total	108	13	363	42	321

Based on the table above, it is known that there are many themes use unmarked -topical theme. After analyzing the types of theme used in the background of skripsi, it is known the percentage of themes used. The calculation is as follows:

1. The percentage of textual theme used in the background of skripsi

$$\frac{n}{N} \times 100 \% = \frac{108}{484} \times 100 \% = 22.31 \%$$

$$N = 484$$

2. The percentage of interpersonal theme used in the background of skripsi

$$\frac{n}{N} \times 100 \% = \frac{13}{484} \times 100 \% = 2.69 \%$$

$$N = 484$$

3. The percentage of topical theme used in the background of skripsi

$$\frac{n}{N} \times 100 \% = \frac{363}{484} \times 100 \% = 75 \%$$

$$N = 484$$

4. The percentage of marked theme used in the background of skripsi

$$\frac{n}{N} \times 100 \% = \frac{42}{363} \times 100 \% = 11.57 \%$$

$$N = 363$$

5. The percentage of unmarked theme used in the background of skripsi

$$\frac{n}{N} \times 100 \% = \frac{321}{363} \times 100 \% = 88.43 \%$$

$$N = 363$$

Note : n : the total number of each type of theme

N: the total number of all themes

Secondly, the thematic progressions in the background of skripsi written by English Education Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2010 are not specific and inconstant in one types each paragraph. It is because mostly there are a lot of new themes created that do not connect with the theme or rheme before and the change type of thematic progression in one single paragraph.

At last, the coherence in the background of skripsi is divided into several levels as shown in the table as follows:

Table 1.4 The level and percentage of coherence in the background of skripsi

Background of skripsi	Paragraph	Level of Coherence			
		Good	Fair	Less	Poor
First Background	1	√	-	-	-
	2	-	-	-	√
	3	-	-	√	-
	4	-	-	√	-
	5	-	-	√	-
	6	-	-	√	-
	7	-	-	√	-
First background	8	-	-	√	-
	9	-	√	-	-
Total		1	1	6	1
Percentage		11.11 %	11.11 %	66.67 %	11.11 %
Second background	1	√	-	-	-
	2	-	√	-	-
	3	-	-	√	-
	4	√	-	-	-
	5	-	-	√	-
	6	-	-	√	-

Table 1.4 Continued

Background of skripsi	Paragraph	Level of Coherence			
		Good	Fair	Less	Poor
Second background	7	√	-	-	-
	8	-	-	√	-
	9	-	-	√	-
	10	-	-	√	-
Total		3	1	6	-
Percentage		30 %	10 %	60 %	-
Third background	1	-	-	√	-
	2	-	-	√	-
	3	-	√	-	-
	4	-	√	-	-
	5	-	-	√	-
	6	-	-	√	-
	7	-	√	-	-
Total		-	3	4	-
Percentage		-	42.86 %	57.14 %	-
Fourth background	1	-	-	√	-
	2	-	-	√	-
	3	-	√	-	-
	4	-	√	-	-
	5	-	-	√	-
	6	-	-	√	-
Total		-	2	4	-
Percentage		-	33.33 %	66.67 %	-
Fifth background	1	-	-	√	-
	2	-	-	√	-
	3	-	-	√	-
	4	-	-	√	-
	5	√	-	-	-

Total		1	-	4	-
Percentage		20 %	-	80 %	-
Sixth background	1	√	-	-	-
	2	-	-	√	-
	3	-	√	-	-
	4	-	-	√	-
	5	-	-	√	-
	6	-	-	√	-
	7	-	-	√	-
	8	√	-	-	-
	9	-	√	-	-
	10	-	-	√	-
11	-	√	-	-	
Total		2	3	6	-
Percentage		18.18 %	27.27 %	54.55 %	-

Table 1.4 Continued

Background of skripsi	Paragraph	Level of Coherence			
		Good	Fair	Less	Poor
Seventh background	1	-	-	√	-
	2	-	-	√	-
	3	-	-	√	-
	4	-	-	√	-
	5	-	-	√	-
	6	√	-	-	-
	7	-	-	√	-
Total		1	-	6	-
Percentage		14.29 %	-	85.71 %	-

## DISCUSSION

The presenting of analyzing data above shows the result of the research. Here, there are three points to be discussed; they are: the types of theme, the thematic progression and the

coherence in the backgrounds of skripsi written by English Education Department student of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2010.

First are the types of theme in background of skripsi. After calculating the percentages of types of theme used in the background of skripsi (see in page 78), it is known that the percentage of using each type of themes. The percentage of textual theme used in the background of skripsi I have analyzed is 22.31 %, the interpersonal theme is only 2.69 % and the topical theme is 75 %. Moreover, there are quite different percentages between marked and unmarked theme. The percentage of unmarked theme used is higher than the percentage of marked theme used in the background of skripsi. The percentage of unmarked theme used is 88.43 %, while the percentage of marked theme used is only 11.57 %. From calculating the percentages of types of theme used in the background of skripsi, it can be concluded that the types of theme mostly used is unmarked-topical theme.

Second is the thematic progression in the background of skripsi. Most of the thematic progression used in the background of skripsi I have analyzed is inconstant and unclear because there is a changing type of the thematic progression used and the existential of new themes in each paragraph. As presented in table 1.4 there are only 8 paragraphs from 55 paragraphs in seven backgrounds have one constant type of thematic progression.

Third is the coherence in the background of skripsi based on the table 1.4. In the first background of skripsi, it is concluded that it has less of coherence. It is because the total level of coherence at most is in less level that is 6 paragraphs from 9 paragraphs, so that the highest percentage of level of coherence is in less level that is 66.67 %. In the second background of skripsi, it is concluded that it has less of coherence. It is because the total level of coherence at most is in less level that is 6 paragraphs from 10 paragraphs, so that the highest percentage of level of coherence is in less level that is 60 %. In the third background of skripsi, it is concluded that it has less of coherence. It is because the total level of coherence at most is in less level that is 4 paragraphs from 7 paragraphs, so that the highest percentage of level of coherence is in less level that is 57.14 %. In the fifth background of skripsi, it is concluded that it has less of coherence. It is because the total level of coherence at most is in less level that is 4 paragraphs from 5 paragraphs, so that the highest percentage of level of coherence is in less level that is 80 %. In the sixth background of skripsi, it is concluded that it has less of coherence. It is because the total level of coherence at most is in less level that is 6 paragraphs from 11 paragraphs, so that the highest percentage of level of coherence is in less level that is 54.55 %. In the seventh background of skripsi, it is concluded that it has less of coherence. It

is because the total level of coherence at most is in less level that is 6 paragraphs from 7 paragraphs, so that the highest percentage of level of coherence is in less level that is 85.71 %.

### **E. Conclusion and Suggestions**

Completing this research, firstly it is found that the most number of themes found in the background of skripsi is unmarked topical theme. It is shown by the percentage of topical theme used is 75 %, the percentage of textual theme is 22.31 % and the percentage of interpersonal theme is 2.69 %. Whereas, there are 88.43 % of unmarked theme and only 11.57 % of marked theme is used. Secondly, the thematic progression patterns used in the background of skripsi to develop the themes are not specific, inconstant and unclear. From the facts, it cannot be concluded what pattern of the thematic progression is. At last, it can be said that all of the backgrounds of skripsi written by the English Education Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University are less of coherence, because the level of coherence in there at most is in less level.

Considering the result of this research, it is suggested that; first, the reader can add their knowledge about the theory of how to create the coherence text by concerning the system of theme and rheme and the thematic progression. Second, the English students, especially for the English Education Department of Muria Kudus University can enrich their knowledge and more concern about the system of theme and rheme and the thematic progression pattern in order to create coherent text whole, especially in writing skripsi as the requirement for completing Sarjana Program in the English Education Department. In addition, the lecturers of English Education Department of Muria Kudus University can motivate their students to write, especially in writing for academic purpose like skripsi and enrich the knowledge of their students about the system of theme and rheme and the thematic progression which supposed to be able to create coherence text.

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