

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter shows a description of the full contents of the research. In detail, this chapter explains the background of the research, research questions, research purposes, research significances, research framework, and previous studies.

A. Background

The study aims to analyze text structures in EFL students' *skripsi* abstracts and to analyze thematic progression in EFL students' *skripsi* abstracts.

Abstract is the most important element of the research paper (Arono, 2019). It represents a prominent genre of academic culture because it is the first part inviting the reader to read the whole research paper (Hyland – Tse, 2005 cited in Stašková, n.d., 2005). It contains the information given on the following aspects of the research paper: what the author did; how the author did the research; what the author found; what the author concluded (Hyland – Tse, 2000 cited in Stašková, n.d.; Bhatia, 1993 cited in Donesch-Je, 2016).

In the context of the present research, based on a preliminary limited analysis of three *skripsi* abstracts written in the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia, *skripsi* abstracts have a considerable problem related to the aspect of coherence. Based on the limited analysis, the three *skripsi* abstracts were written with the unsmooth flow of information, that new information becomes a new theme in many clauses. The unsmooth flow of information does not support coherence and logical progression of ideas (See Appendix 1 for more details).

The findings of the preliminary analysis call for more comprehensive analysis and discussion. For that reason, the present study explores thematic progression in the EFL students' *skripsi* abstracts to find out how students organized their idea and put their ideas into a chain. Thematic progression

concerns where themes come from and how theme and rheme are connected to the previous sentence (Francis, 1989; Hasan & Fries, 1995, cited in Wtoei, 2017). Besides, thematic progression has an essential role of coherence at a text by forming unity between concepts, sentences, paragraphs, and units of kinds of writing (Wei, 2016).

In the recent five years, two studies have investigated the thematic progression used in the abstract. First, the study conducted by Rahmawati & Kurniawan (2017) indicated that thematic progression in *skripsi* abstract mostly occurs in a constant pattern, then followed by a linear pattern and derived themes patterns. The findings showed that the abstracts were not hanging together because students found challenging to shorter their research into 200 words in the abstract. Second, the study was conducted by Dou & Zhao (2019) indicated that the linear pattern was mostly used by the undergraduate students' abstracts. As a result, linear pattern builds coordination by agreement between authors and readers so that the communication between authors and readers are effective through a text.

Unlike the two related studies, this research not only focuses on thematic progression patterns but also on the structures of *skripsi* abstract. This research offers a more comprehensive understanding because it provides a more detailed analysis and more explanation about text structures and thematic progression. Furthermore, this research gives an implication for the further *skripsi* supervisor so that students' writing is more coherent by applying thematic progression in students' writing.

B. Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. What is the structure of *skripsi* abstracts in English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung?
2. How is the thematic progression in EFL students' *skripsi* abstracts?

C. Research Purposes

Regarding the research problem above, this study aims as follow:

1. To find out the structure of *skripsi* abstracts in English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.
2. To find out thematic progression in EFL students' *skripsi* abstract.

D. Research Significances

This research has significant in two aspects: theoretical and practical significants. Those are as follows;

1. Theoretically, this study can develop the literature of the theories of coherent text, thematic progression, thematic structure, *skripsi* abstract, and structures abstract .
2. Practically, the results of this research are needed to improve students' *skripsi* abstract because thematic progression has a role to make a text coherent. Then, this research also gives an educational implication for teachers and further *skripsi* supervisors to guide students using a thematic progression in students' writing so that students can write coherent text.

E. Research Framework

Thematic progression is the flow of information between sequential themes and rhemes in a text (Egins 2004, cited in Wei, 2017). It helps to organize ideas in a text to make the reader understand the text easier (Egins 2004, mentioned in Dewi, 2016). Since writers must know where to place information and how to establish crucial information into themes (Wang, 2007, cited in Thi Trung & Thi Quynh Hoa, 2018). Furthermore, thematic progression keeps the reader focus on the main topic. If writers fail to mechanism the flow of information from theme and rheme, their texts are hard for a reader to understand because the texts do not have clear notice to guide the reader (Wang, 2007, cited in Thi Trung & Thi Quynh Hoa, 2018).

Bloor & Bloor (2004) mentioned that four thematic progression patterns occur in English writing. First, constant theme pattern shows the topic for the

paragraph introduced as the theme of the first clause. Second, linear theme pattern describes the idea informed in the rheme of each clause, but the rheme of one clause is obtained as the theme of the subsequent clause. Third, split rheme pattern is a mixture of both constant and linear patterns. Split rheme pattern happens when the rheme of a clause has two or more components. Last, derived themes pattern is used to explain languages in the position of theme, which is cohesively related in meaning, but not automatically inform to a topic which has been uttered earlier in the text.

Abstract has a very important role in the *skripsi* because abstract is a promotional genre to gain readers' interest and acceptance of the research (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995; Pearce, 2005, in Emilia, 2009; Donesch-Je, 2016). Generally, abstract involves five specific parts: a brief introduction providing essential background and representing the significance of the research; a purpose statement; the research methodology; the results of an experimental study; the conclusion of the study and implicitly suggests a line of further research (Hyland, 2000 cited in Donesch-Je, 2016).

F. Previous Studies.

In the last five years, the study of thematic progression focuses on document analysis to see the thematic progression pattern mostly appear in written text, and what the impact on the pattern of the text is.

First, the study conducted by Yuniawati et al. (2017) indicated that the pattern mostly used in a text is constant, then followed by a zig-zag pattern and derived themes pattern. The constant pattern is applied in all texts. Constant pattern makes a text with a clear focus (Eggins, 1994 in Yuniawati et al., 2017). Additionally, the use of zig-zag pattern is to introduce new information to keep the text logical (Bloor & Bloor, 2004; Emilia, 2014; (Yuniawati et al., 2017). Besides, derived themes pattern used in the text is to introduce a number of different parts of information, (Emilia, 2014 cited in Yuniawati et al., 2017).

Second, the study was investigated by Trung & Hoa (2018). The research was targeted at studying the thematic progression patterns used in 20 academic

IELTS sample essays from the books published by Cambridge University Press and IELTS official websites. The results of the research showed that the impact of the theme selection made a high input to the organization of the ideas in a text, the reader's interpretation, and construal of meaning. By examining the thematic progression in the sample essays, theme selection was significant to news developed, to information arranged, and to message delivered.

Third, the study was discussed by Rahmawati & Kurniawan (2017) investigating the kind of thematic progression patterns. Rahmawati & Kurniawan (2017) concluded that the most-applied pattern of thematic progression in students' abstracts is constant, then followed by a linear pattern, and derived themes. The excessive use of constant pattern and lack of linear theme and derived themes used in the abstracts may show that the abstracts are not suspended together. The excessive use of constant pattern could be credited to the fact that the students may find it challenging to shorten their research into 200 words.

Fourth, the study done by Dou & Zhao (2019) indicated that the linear pattern and constant theme pattern were the most repeated pattern applied in the students' abstracts in Chinese non-English major undergraduates. The findings suggested that the tendency of using linear pattern of thematic progression was supported by the logic of students' thinking in the process of writing. Using linear pattern builds coordination by agreement between authors and readers so that the communication between authors and readers is more effective.