Theme-Rheme and Thematic Progression in Obama's Speech and Its Translation

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ABSTRACT

The study entitled Theme-Rheme and Thematic Progression in Obama's Speech and Its Translation focuses on how a translator puts differences in worldview between the source and the target language text. The differences of worldview itself can be found by analyzing each sentence chosen by the translator. This study used Theme-Rheme and Thematic Progression as proposed by Halliday, which is developed by Gerot and Wignell (1994) and Eggins (2004). The study shows that both texts use Participants as the most frequently used theme. However, the text in the target language considers Participants much more important than the text in source language does. Meanwhile, the analysis of thematic progression shows that both texts use Theme Reiteration. It can be concluded that both texts tend to be monotonous because Obama often begins the speech with the same words.

Keywords: *Theme-Rheme, Thematic Progression, Worldview, Speech.*

INTRODUCTION

In an English clause there are two points of prominence, the beginning (theme) and the end (rheme). The beginning of a clause is where we put information which links the clause to what has come before. This information is contained in the first nominal group in the clause (Gerot & Wignell 1994, p. 102)

Theme according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 64) is "the element which serves as the starting-point for the message: it is what the clause is going to be about." The theme of a clause typically contains familiar, or 'given', information, i.e. information which has already been mentioned somewhere in the text or is familiar from the context. Meanwhile, rheme is defined as the part of the clause in which the Theme is developed. The rheme typically contains unfamiliar, or 'new' information. The identification criteria for the Rheme are simple: everything that is not the Theme is the Rheme. Thus, once you have identified the theme in a clause, you have also identified the Rheme, which is just 'everything else' (Eggins, 2004: 300).

The term ideology has always been accompanied by its political connotation as it is evident in its lexical definition; ideology is 'a system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy' (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). Furthermore, ideology can also be understood as how people see the world. In relation to this, the study only focuses on people's worldview. The worldview of in a translation can be seen by analyzing several aspects of the text.

METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive qualitative method. It is relevant and appropriate since the study described the worldview in a text through textual analyses using theme-rheme and thematic progression theory. In regard to the object of the study which is in form of text, this study applied content analyses to analyze the theme which is most frequently used in the SL and TL text, and the differences in worldview between the

source language text and target language text.

The researcher chose the scripts in English and bahasa Indonesia as the main data. The data of the research were taken from *Isi Pidato Lengkap Obama di Kampus UI. 2010.* http://vivanews.com. The date of speech was on Wednesday, 10 November 2010. The speech was transcribed by Bonardo Maulana Wahono. The transcript was taken from *Transkrip Pidato Obama di Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia.* *2011.*http://herilhalim.wordpress.com. Posted by Haeril Halim on January 9,2011 in Transkip Pidato-Pidato Penting. In analyzing the data, the researcher used the theme-rheme and thematic progression proposed by Halliday which is developed by Gerot and Wignell (1994) and Eggins (2004). The study was conducted in several steps. The first step is breaking down the speech into clauses, then, analyzing the clauses using theme-rheme. After analyzing the theme rheme of the clauses in the

speech, the analysis of thematic progression was carried out to these clauses. The result from of the analysis was used as the basis to find out the worldview in the texts and to find out the theme which is most frequently used in the SL and TL text.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis, it is found that participant, conjunction structural, and circumstantial of time are the dominant themes in both the source language and the target language text. Meanwhile, in terms of thematic progression, both texts use theme reiteration.

Theme-Rheme Analysis of Source Language

From the theme-rheme analysis on Obama's speech as the source language, eight types of theme have been found in various number. Table 4.1 and table 4.2 present the types of theme and the number of their appearance in the source language text.

Table 4.1 Distribution of Types of Themes in Source Language

	Types of Theme	Number of Appearances
Topical Theme	circumstantial of time	11
	circumstantial of place	4
	circumstantial of manner	-
	circumstantial of cause	-
	circumstantial of accompaniment	-
	circumstantial of matter	-
	circumstantial of role	-
	Participants	197
	Process	4
Textual Theme	Continuity	7
	Conjunctive Adjunct	7
	Conjunction Structural	58
Interpersonal Theme	Modal Adjunct	1
	Vocatives	-

Table 4.2 The Rank of Types of Themes Appearance in Source Language

Types of Theme	Number of Appearance	Percentage	Rank
Participants	197	68,17	1
Conjunction Structural	58	20,07	2
circumstantial of time	11	3,81	3
Continuity	7	2,42	4
Conjunctive Adjunct	7	2,42	5
circumstantial of place	4	1,38	6
Process	4	1,38	7

Modal Adjunct	1	0,35	8
circumstantial of manner	-	-	-
circumstantial of cause	-	-	-
circumstantialofaccompaniment	-	-	-
circumstantial of matter	-	-	-
circumstantial of role	-	-	-
Vocatives	-	-	-
Total	**289**	**100%**	

It can be seen that the three types of theme which are frequently used in the source language text are Participant as the Topical Theme, Conjunction Structural as Textual theme, and Circumstantial of time as Topical Theme. Participant as the topical theme took the first position (68,17 %), followed by conjunctive structural as textual theme (20,07%) in the second, and circumstantial of time as topical theme (3,81) in the third.

Participants as the Topical Theme

Participants as the topical theme is 68,17%, and serve as the type of theme which is mostly used. The following is the textual evidence of clauses that consist of participant as theme in the source language text.

Paragraph 45

➢ Moslems are also allowed in churches.

"Moslems	are also allowed in churches.
Top: part	
THEME	RHEME

Because participant as theme (topical theme) gained the first rank as the type of theme which is moslty used, it can be said that source language sees participants as the most important thing in the speech.

Conjunction Structural as Textual Theme

Conjunction structural as textual theme is 20,07%, and ranks the second as the types of theme which is moslty used as illustrated in the following clause in the source language text.

Paragraph 2

➢ As always, the United States stands with Indonesia in responding to this natural disaster, and we are pleased to be able to help as needed.

As always, the United States		stands with Indonesia in responding to this natural disaster,
Conj: Str	Top: Part	
THEME		RHEME

and	we	are pleased to be able to help as needed.
Conj: Str	Top: Part	
THEME		RHEME

Because conjunction structural as textual theme ranks the second as the types of theme which is moslty occurred used, it can be said that the native speaker prefers to use conjunctive than decoding words.

Circumstantial of Time as Topical Theme

Circumstantial of time as topical theme is 3,81%, and ranks the third as the types of theme which is moslty used as evidenced in the following clauses from source language text.

Paragraph 12

➢ In recent years, the world has watched with hope and admiration, as Indonesians embraced the peaceful transfer of power and the direct election of leaders.

In recent years,	the world has watched with hope and admiration, as Indonesians embraced the peaceful transfer of power and the direct election of leaders.
Circ of Time	
THEME	RHEME

Because circumstantial of time as topical theme ranks the third as the types of theme which is moslty used, it can be said that the native speaker prioritizes time information.

Theme-Rheme analysis of Target Language Text

From the theme-rheme analysis on Obama's speech translation into the target language, eight types of theme have been found in various number as a result. Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 present the types of theme and their appearance in target language text.

Table 4.3 Distribution of Types of Themes in Target Language Text

	Types of Theme	**Number of Appearances**
	circumstantial of time	18
	circumstantial of place	4
	circumstantial of manner	
	circumstantial of cause	
Topical Theme	circumstantial of accompaniment	
	circumstantial of matter	
	circumstantial of role	
	Participants	185
	Process	8

Textual Theme	Continuity	4
	Conjunctive Adjunct	5
	Conjunction Structural	41
Interpersonal Theme	Modal Adjunct	1
	Vocatives	

Table 4.4 The Rank of Types of Themes Appearance in Target Language

Types of theme	Number of appearance	Percentage	Rank
Participants	185	69,55	1
Conjunction Structural	41	15,41	2
circumstantial of time	18	6,77	3
Process	8	3,01	4
Conjunctive Adjunct	5	1,88	5
circumstantial of place	4	1,5	6
Continuity	4	1,5	7
Modal Adjunct	1	0,37	8
circumstantial of manner	-	-	-
circumstantial of cause	-	-	-
circumstantialofaccompaniment	-	-	-
circumstantial of matter	-	-	-
circumstantial of role	-	-	-
Vocatives	-	-	-
Total	**266**	**100%**	

It can be seen that the three types of theme which are mostly used in the target language text are Participants as the topical theme, Conjunction Structural as Textual theme, and Circumstantial of time as Topical Theme. Participant as theme took the first position (69,55%) followed by conjunction structural as Textual theme (15,41%) in the

second, and circumstantial of time as topical theme (6,8%) in the third.

The following paraghraphs present a detailed explanation about all of the types of theme in target language, and the interpretation about the important things in the clauses of the target language.

Participants as the Topical Theme

Participant as the topical theme is 69,55%, and ranks the first rank as the type of theme which is moslty used. Here are several clauses that consist of participant as theme in target language.

Paragraph 2

➢ Amerika Serikat senantiasa ada di sisi pemerintah dan bangsa Indonesia dalam menghadapi bencana alam ini, dan kami akan dengan senang hati menolong semampunya.

➢ As always, the United States stands with Indonesia in responding to this natural disaster, and we are pleased to be able to help as needed.

Amerika Serikat	senantiasa ada di sisi pemerintah dan bangsa Indonesia dalam menghadapi bencana alam ini, dan kami akan dengan senang hati menolong semampunya.
Top: Part THEME	RHEME

Because participant as theme (topical theme) ranks the first rank as the type of theme which is moslty used, it can be said that target language sees participants as the most important thing in the speech.

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Conjunction Structural as Textual Theme

Conjunction structural as Textual theme is 15,4%, and ranks td the second as the type of theme is which moslty used. Here are several clauses that consist of Conjunctive structural as textual theme in target language text.

Paragraph 2

> Sebelum berbicara lebih jauh, saya ingin menyampaikan bahwa doa dan perhatian kami tertuju kepada para korban bencana tsunami dan gunung meletus baru-baru ini, khususnya bagi mereka yang kehilangan orang tercinta serta tempat tinggal.

> Before I go any further, I want to say that our thoughts and prayers are with all of those Indonesians affected by the recent tsunami and volcanic eruptions – particularly those who have lost loved ones, and those who have been displaced.

Sebelum berbicara lebih jauh, saya		ingin menyampaikan
Conj: Str	Top: Part	
THEME		RHEME

bahwa doa dan perhatian kami		tertuju kepada para korban bencana tsunami dan gunung meletus baru-baru ini, khususnya bagi mereka yang kehilangan orang tercinta serta tempat tinggal.
Conj: Str	Top: Part	
THEME		RHEME

Because conjunction structural as Textual theme ranks the second as the type of theme which is moslty used, it can be said that the translator used conjunctive more to continue sentences as the second most important thing in this speech.

Circumstantial of Time as Topical Theme

Circumstantial of time as topical theme is 3,81%, and ranks the third as the type of theme which is moslty used as shown by following clauses in the target language text.

Paragraph 9

> Kini, generasi baru Indonesia termasuk dalam golongan paling terhubung dalam jagat komunikasi dunia melalui telepon genggam dan media sosial.

> While a new generation of Indonesians is among the most wired in the world – connected through cell phones and social networks.

Kini,	generasi baru Indonesia termasuk dalam golongan paling terhubung dalam jagat komunikasi dunia melalui telepon genggam dan media sosial.
Circ of Time	
THEME	RHEME

Because circumstantial of time as topical theme ranks the third as the type of theme which is moslty used, it can be said that the translator used more time information in the beginning of the sentence as the third most important thing in target language text.

Based on the thematic progression analysis on Obama's speech as the source language text, the three types of thematic progression have been found in various numbers as a result. Table 4.5 presents the types of theme progression and their number of appearance.

Thematic Progression in Source Language Text

Table 4.5 Thematic Progression in Source Language Text

Thematic Progression Type	Number of Appearances	Percentage
Theme Reiteration	36	16
The Zigzag Pattern	19	8.44
Multiple Rheme	1	0.44
Number of clauses in the story	**225**	**24.89**

There are 225 clauses in the source language text, however, only 56 of them can be identified according to Eggins's patterns of thematic development or 24,89% of the clauses in the source language text.

The pattern of thematic development found is the theme reiteration which is used more than the zig-zag pattern in the speech. Therefore, it can be said that the ideas or the points of departure in the source language text begins with the same thing.

Thematic Progression in Target Language Text

Based on the thematic progression analysis on Obama's speech as the target language, only two types of thematic progression have been found in various numbers as a result. Table 4.6 presents the types of theme progression, and the number of their appearance in target language text.

Table 4.6 Thematic Progression in Target Language Text

Thematic Progression Type	Number of Appearances	Percentage
Theme Reiteration	41	18.47
The Zigzag Pattern	15	6.76
Multiple Rheme	0	0
Number of clauses in the story	**222**	**25.23**

There are 222 clauses in the target language text, however, only 56 of them can be identified according to Eggins's patterns of thematic development, or 25,23% of the clauses in the target language text.

Based on the patterns of thematic development appearance, theme reiteration is used more than the zig-zag pattern in the speech. Therefore, it can be said that the ideas or the points of departure in target language is leaving from the same spot.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, the research found that participant, conjunction and circumstantial of time are the most frequently used theme in both SL and TL texts. However, there are different percentages of their appearance in the texts, which mean that the translator put his own worldview in his translation. This can be understood that the source language text uses conjunction more than the target language text. Meanwhile, the target language text considers participant and circumstantial of time more important than the source language text does. Furthermore, the source language text prioritizes continuity, while the target language text prioritizes process as the theme. From these findings, it can be concluded that in this research, it is

not proven that English native speakers are more disciplined with time than Indonesian native speakers.

In term of thematic progression, both texts use theme reiteration and zigzag pattern. However, the target language text uses more theme reiteration, while the source language uses more zigzag pattern. It is clear that the source language text has a better thematic development than the target language text.

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