

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEMATIC PROGRESSION AND ENGLISH
DISCOURSE COHERENCE: AN INVESTIGATION BASED ON SOME
UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA STUDENTS' WRITTEN DISCOURSE

By
Naomi Njobvu

A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in Linguistic Science



The University of Zambia
Lusaka
2010

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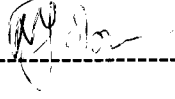
Lusaka

2010

DECLARATION

I, **Njobvu Naomi**, do hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own, and that it has not been submitted for a degree at this or any other university, and that it does not include any published work or material from another dissertation except where due reference has been made.

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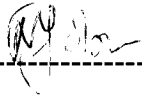
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Signed-----



Date-----

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APPROVAL

This dissertation of Njobvu Naomi has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts in Linguistic Science by the University of Zambia.

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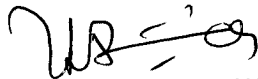
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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between thematic progression patterns and English discourse coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by a sample of University of Zambia students registered for the 2009 Academic Year in the School of Education and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The purpose of the exercise was to establish the types of theme-rheme patterns used by students at different levels of study at the University of Zambia in order to determine the extent to which these patterns enhanced discourse coherence. The investigation was motivated by informal complaints from lecturers about lack of coherence in most of the students' written pieces of discourse. Two types of patterns were examined: those which enhanced coherence and those which obscured it. The former included simple linear, constant, derived hyper-thematic and split progression while the latter included brand new theme, empty rheme, incomplete split progression, split-theme progression, empty use of *there*, use of dummy *it*, and use of conversational personal pronouns.

The data were collected from 200 scripts comprising samples of written pieces of discourse produced by students at four academic levels of study which are: **first year, second year, third year and fourth year** as part of their normal coursework test and examination tasks. Of the 200 scripts, 50 were drawn from each of the four academic levels. From each script, coherence-enhancing and coherence-obscuring theme-rheme patterns were identified and categorized according to types. As regards data analysis and interpretation, the study adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Each of the findings was categorized further according to the set research objectives.

The major findings indicate that there is a relationship between thematic progression patterns and discourse coherence in that there was evidence of discourse coherence in the scripts which had adhered to the application of the coherence-enhancing thematic progression patterns and lack of coherence in those which had applied other patterns. It was also observed that the type of question and level of study were important attributes to determining the type of patterns to use. It was further observed that the constant progression pattern was the most dominantly used pattern by students at all levels of study. In some cases, there were combinations of either constant and linear progression or linear and constant progression patterns.

Arising from the findings, the study has made some recommendations for enhancing coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students. The most notable of these is that upon entry into the university all students should be introduced to the application of theme and rheme patterns which enhance coherence in written pieces of discourse in order to equip them with relevant academic writing skills.

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DEDICATION

To my parents: Mr. Cornelio David Njobvu and my late mother Mrs Henriret Njobvu.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To complete my dissertation, I, in the first place, owe everything to my God for giving me the grace to face life's challenges with love and patience for nothing is impossible with Him.

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To my sister Cecilia, I want to say thank you so much for your encouragement and for being there for me throughout my programme. To all my brothers and sisters, I love you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title of the Dissertation.....	
Declaration.....	
Copyright.....	
Approval.....	
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgement.....	vi
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	 1
1.0 General.....	1
1.1	
Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Rationale.....	3
1.4 Purpose of the Study.....	4
1.5 Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.6 Research Questions.....	5
1.7 Methodological Framework.....	5
1.8 Theoretical Framework.....	6
1.9 Operational Definitions.....	6
1.9.0 General.....	6
1.9.1 Discourse	7
1.9.2 Discourse Analysis.....	7
1.9.3 Coherence	8
1.9.4 Cohesion.....	8
1.9.5 Thematic progression.....	9
1.9.6 Theme.....	9
1.9.7 Rheme.....	10
1.9.8 Thematic Progression Patterns.....	11
1.9.8.0 General.....	11
1.9.8.1 Thematic Progression Patterns which Enhance Coherence.....	11
1.9.8.1.1 Simple Linear Progression Pattern.....	11
1.9.8.1.2 Constant Progression Pattern.....	12
1.9.8.1.3 Derived Hyper-thematic Progression.....	13
1.9.8.1.4 Split Rheme Progression Pattern.....	14
1.9.8.1.5 Constant Linear Progression Pattern.....	15
1.9.8.1.6 Linear Constant Progression Pattern.....	16
1.9.8.2 Thematic Progression Patterns which Obscure Coherence.....	17
1.9.8.2.1 Brand new theme.....	17
1.9.8.2.2 Empty rheme.....	17
1.9.8.2.3 Empty use of <i>there</i>	18
1.9.8.2.4 Use of the dummy <i>it</i>	18
1.9.8.2.5 Incomplete split progression.....	19

1.10 Scope of the Study.....	19
1.11 Structure of the dissertation.....	20
1.12 Conclusion.....	20
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	21
2.0 General.....	21
2.1 Studies on the use of English in Zambia.....	21
2.2 Studies on the relationship between thematic progression patterns and Discourse coherence.....	22
2.3 Literature related to Second Language Writing Strategies.....	26
2.3.0 General.....	26
2.3.1 Second Language Writing as a product.....	26
2.3.2 Second Language Writing as a process.....	27
2.3.3 Second Language Writing Approach Adopted in the Present Study.....	28
2.4 Conclusion.....	29
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	30
3.0 General.....	30
3.1 Research Design.....	30
3.2 Data Collection.....	30
3.2.1 Study population.....	30
3.2.2 Sample size.....	31
3.2.3 Data collection	31
3.2.3.1 Data collection instruments.....	31
3.2.3.1 Administration of the instruments.....	32
3.3 Data Analysis.....	33
3.4 Conclusion.....	33
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....	34
4.0 General.....	34
4.1 Thematic progression Patterns used in the Corpus.....	35
4.1.1 Academic Level One.....	35
4.1.1.1 Coherence-Enhancing Thematic Progression Patterns.....	35
4.1.1.1.1 Simple Linear Progression Pattern.....	36
4.1.1.1.2 Constant Progression Pattern.....	37
4.1.1.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns.....	37
4.1.1.2.1 Brand new theme.....	38
4.1.1.2.2 Empty rheme.....	39
4.1.1.2.3 Empty use of <i>there</i>	39
4.1.1.2.4 Use of dummy <i>it</i>	40
4.1.1.2.5 Split theme progression pattern.....	40
4.1.1.2.6 Use of conversational pronouns.....	41

4.1.1 Academic Level Two.....	41
4.1.2.1 Coherence-Enhancing Thematic Progression Patterns.....	41
4.1.2.1.1 Simple Linear Progression Pattern.....	42
4.1.2.1.2 Constant Progression Pattern.....	43
4.1.2.1.3 Constant Linear Progression Pattern.....	44
4.1.2.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns.....	44
4.1.2.2.1 Brand new theme.....	45
4.1.2.2.2 Empty rheme.....	45
4.1.2.2.3 Empty use of <i>there</i>	46
4.1.2.2.4 Use of the dummy <i>it</i>	46
4.1.3 Academic Level Three	47
4.1.3.1 Coherence-Enhancing Thematic Progression Patterns.....	47
4.1.3.1.1 Simple Linear Progression Pattern.....	48
4.1.3.1.2 Constant Progression Pattern.....	49
4.1.3.1.3 Split Progression Pattern.....	49
4.1.3.1.4 Linear Constant Progression.....	50
4.1.3.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns.....	51
4.1.3.2.1 Brand new theme.....	51
4.1.3.2.2 Empty rheme.....	52
4.1.3.2.3 Empty use of <i>there</i>	52
4.1.3.2.4 Use of the dummy <i>it</i>	53
4.1.3.2.5 Incomplete split progression.....	53
4.1.4 Academic Level Four.....	54
4.1.4.1 Coherence-Enhancing Thematic Progression Patterns.....	54
4.1.4.1.1 Simple Linear Progression Pattern.....	55
4.1.4.1.2 Constant progression Pattern.....	56
4.1.4.1.3 Split Progression Pattern.....	57
4.1.4.1.4 Constant Linear Progression Pattern.....	57
4.1.4.1.5 Linear Constant Progression.....	58
4.1.4.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns.....	59
4.1.4.2.1 Brand new theme.....	59
4.1.4.2.2 Empty rheme.....	60
4.1.4.2.3 Empty use of <i>there</i>	60
4.1.4.2.4 Use of the dummy <i>it</i>	61
4.2 Conclusion.....	61

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....63

5.0 General.....	63
5.1 Discussion of Findings.....	63
5.1.1 Thematic Progression Patterns which Enhanced Coherence.....	63
5.1.1.1 Constant progression pattern.....	64
5.1.1.2 Simple linear progression pattern.....	70

5.1.1.3 Split progression pattern.....	73
5.1.1.4 Constant linear progression pattern.....	74
5.1.1.5 Linear constant progression pattern	75
5.1.2 Thematic Progression Patterns which Obscured Coherence.....	77
5.1.2.0 General.....	77
5.1.2.1 Brand new theme.....	77
5.1.2.2 Empty rheme.....	78
5.1.2.3 Empty use of <i>there</i>	79
5.1.2.4 Use of Dummy <i>it</i>	80
5.1.2.5 Incomplete split progression.....	80
5.1.2.6 Split theme progression pattern.....	81
5.1.2.7 Use of conversational pronouns.....	81
5.2 Conclusion.....	81
5.3 Implications.....	83
5.4 Recommendations.....	84
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	86
APPENDICES.....	94
Appendix 1.....	94
Appendix 2.....	96

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Illustration of the theme-rheme relationship.....	10
Table 2:	Illustration of the simple linear progression pattern.....	11
Table 3:	Illustration of the constant progression pattern.....	12
Table 4:	Illustration of the derived hyper-thematic progression pattern.....	13
Table 5:	Illustration of split progression pattern.....	14
Table 6:	Illustration of constant linear progression pattern.....	15
Table 7:	Illustration of linear constant progression pattern.....	16
Table 8:	Illustration of the brand new theme progression pattern.....	17
Table 9:	Illustration of the empty rheme pattern.....	17
Table 10:	Illustration of the empty use of <i>there</i>	18
Table 11:	Illustration of the use of the dummy <i>it</i>	18
Table 12:	Illustration of the incomplete split progression pattern.....	19
Table 13:	Thematic progression patterns used by students by academic levels of study...	64
Table 14:	Frequency of application of constant progression pattern	65
Table 15:	Frequency of application of simple linear progression pattern.....	71
Table 16:	Frequency of application of split progression pattern	74
Table 17:	Frequency of application of constant linear progression pattern...	75
Table 18:	Frequency of application of linear constant progression pattern...	76
Table 19:	Frequency of application of brand new theme	77
Table 20:	Frequency of application of empty rheme.....	78
Table 21:	Frequency of application of empty use of <i>there</i>	79
Table 22:	Frequency of application of the dummy <i>it</i>	80

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig.1:	Diagrammatic presentation of the simple linear progression pattern.....	12
Fig.2:	Diagrammatic illustration of the constant progression pattern.....	13
Fig.3:	Diagrammatic illustration of the derived hyper-thematic progression....	14
Fig.4:	Diagrammatic illustration of the split-rheme progression pattern	15
Fig.5:	Diagrammatic presentation of the constant linear progression pattern...	15
Fig.6:	Diagrammatic presentation of the linear constant progression pattern...	16

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 General

This chapter introduces the investigation into the relationship between thematic progression and English discourse coherence with particular reference to samples of written pieces of discourse produced by some University of Zambia Students. The presentation begins with some observations on the status of English in Zambia; the expectations attached thereto and how Zambian students using English at tertiary level fall short of these expectations. Thereafter, the chapter presents the problem under investigation, the rationale, the purpose and objectives of the study as well as the specific questions through which the objectives are addressed. The chapter also provides the conceptual framework for the study by defining and exemplifying some of the core concepts applied in the analysis of thematic progression. The chapter ends by defining the scope of the study, outlining some of the limitations and providing a summary of the issues dealt with in the chapter.

1.1 Background

English is one of the most commonly used languages in the world. In Africa, especially south of the Sahara, it has been adopted by all the former British colonies as one of the official languages. Upon attaining independence from Britain, Zambia also adopted English as the official language at national level. In addition, the government selected seven local languages: Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja and Tonga and designated them as official languages by region and, in some cases as in the Northwestern Province, by district. Under this linguistic zoning, Bemba caters for (or is expected to cater for) Luapula Province, Copperbelt Province, parts of Central Province (Kabwe, Mkushi and Serenje) and Northern Province. Nyanja is expected to cater for Eastern and Lusaka Province; Lozi for Western and parts of Southern Province, Tonga for Southern (except for Livingstone urban and Mambova areas where Lozi is spoken) and parts of Central Province (Kabwe Rural and Mumbwa). In the Northwestern Province, government recognises three languages as official languages. These are Kaonde catering for Solwezi and Kasempa districts;

Lunda catering for Mwinilunga, Kabompo and Chizela and Luvale catering for Kabompo and Zambezi districts. Although government recognises these local languages as official, the recognition is by proclamation in a number of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information documents and is not enshrined in the Republican Constitution which recognises English as the only official language. The local official languages are used mainly in the media for dissemination of information and in education as media of instruction in the first four grades of primary education.

Despite being a second language in Zambia, English has remained the most dominant language of the nation because of its elevated status as official language at national level and as official language of classroom instruction. It is used in education, administration, commerce and in the media. In education, it is the main medium of instruction in schools from primary to tertiary education level. At tertiary level, English is the main language of communication and it is expected that most of the students at this level are able to express themselves fluently, both in speech and writing (Trewby, 1983:10). However, this is not the case at most of the institutions of higher learning in Zambia as many students are not able to write coherently. This observation is supported by Wizgell (1983:5) who states that many students at university level 'find themselves struggling to express concepts that are dimly understood in a language which is inadequate for their needs, resulting in garbled and incoherent discourse'. The statement has been confirmed at various fora such as Boards of Examiners and Boards of Studies meetings by a number of lecturers at the University of Zambia who have complained of lack of coherence in most of the students' written pieces of discourse. To date there has been no explanation as to the cause of the 'garbled and incoherent discourse'. In this regard, the proposed study sought to establish whether or not, as has been observed in other settings, lack of coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia students is related to thematic progression. This was done by examining the theme-rheme or given-new patterns employed by a selected sample of students in their written pieces of discourse within their normal routine test and examination tasks.

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1.2 Statement of the Problem

The importance of thematic progression in achieving discourse coherence has been acknowledged by Halliday (1968, 1985) and Downing (2001). Other researchers such as Danes (1974) have observed that adherence to certain theme-rheme patterns enhances discourse coherence while non-adherence obscures it. These patterns have been identified as: simple linear progression, derived hyperthematic progression, constant progression and split progression. To date, no study has been carried out to investigate the relationship between thematic progression patterns and coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by Zambians using English as a second language even though lack of coherence in their written pieces of discourse has been acknowledged. The present study, which is based on written discourse produced by a randomly selected sample of University of Zambia students, is the first. Stated as a question, the problem under investigation is: Is there any relationship between thematic progression patterns and coherence in the written discourse produced by University of Zambia students? Or do thematic progression patterns employed by University of Zambia students enhance or obscure discourse coherence? In statement form, the problem under investigation is: we do not know whether or not the thematic progression patterns employed by University of Zambia students enhance or obscure discourse coherence.

1.3 Rationale

Even though there is substantial literature on the causes of incoherence in written discourse, empirical studies on the role of thematic progression in the production of coherent discourse among second language users of English in Zambia are yet to be undertaken. Studies to investigate causes of incoherent written discourse have mostly focused on the relationship between cohesion and coherence. The present study seeks to investigate the relationship between theme and rheme in improving coherence in the written discourse of selected pieces of written discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students. To date, no research has been conducted to relate discourse coherence in the students' written essays at the University of Zambia to thematic progression patterns. The present study is significant in that it will provide

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empirical data on the importance of thematic progression patterns to discourse coherence by examining instances of incoherent pieces of written discourse arising from students' inability to adhere to the principles of thematic progression which are based on the relationship between theme and rheme. It is hoped that the investigation will provide further evidence and support for the theoretical position that there is a relationship between thematic progression and discourse coherence, as established in studies carried out in English-as-a-first-language settings. The investigation will also help fill the knowledge gap regarding the cause of incoherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students. The expectation is that the study will yield information which can be used by the undergraduate students at the University of Zambia to enhance coherence in the written pieces of discourse.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish whether or not there was a relationship between thematic progression patterns and discourse coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by selected University of Zambia undergraduate students.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) To establish the relationship between thematic progression and Discourse coherence in selected University of Zambia students' written discourse;
- (ii) To identify the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students;
- (iii) To establish whether or not the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students vary with level of study;
- (iv) To establish whether or not the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students vary with type of question asked;

- (v) To examine the implications of the theme-rheme patterns identified in (i) above on coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students; and
- (vi) To identify appropriate theme-rheme patterns to be used by University of Zambia students in order to enhance discourse coherence.

1.6 Research Questions

Six specific questions concerning the type of relationship between thematic progression patterns and coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students were asked:

- (i) What is the relationship between thematic progression and English discourse coherence in the selected University of Zambia students' written discourse?
- (ii) What theme-rheme patterns do University of Zambia undergraduate students use in their written pieces of discourse?
- (iii) Is there a relationship between the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students and students' levels of study?
- (iv) Is there a relationship between the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students and type of question asked?
- (v) What implications do the theme-rheme patterns used by University of Zambia undergraduate students in their written pieces of discourse have on discourse coherence?
- (vi) What are the appropriate theme-rheme patterns to be used by University of Zambia undergraduate students in order to enhance discourse coherence?

1.7 Methodological Framework

In order to collect relevant data to answer the questions raised in 1.6 above, the study employed the qualitative approach in order to identify the appropriate theme-rheme patterns that would enhance discourse coherence and the quantitative approach to establish and compare the frequencies with which the various theme-rheme patterns

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- (iii) Is there a relationship between the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students and students' levels of study?
- (iv) Is there a relationship between the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students and type of question asked?
- (v) What implications do the theme-rheme patterns used by University of Zambia undergraduate students in their written pieces of discourse have on discourse coherence?
- (vi) What are the appropriate theme-rheme patterns to be used by University of Zambia undergraduate students in order to enhance discourse coherence?

1.7 Methodological Framework

In order to collect relevant data to answer the questions raised in 1.6 above, the study employed the qualitative approach in order to identify the appropriate theme-rheme patterns that would enhance discourse coherence and the quantitative approach to establish and compare the frequencies with which the various theme-rheme patterns

occurred. The two approaches were used because the investigation sought to identify the theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia students and also to establish whether or not the patterns varied with level of study and type of question asked. The sample for the study was drawn from scripts produced by students who had registered for courses in the School of Education and School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zambia in the 2009 Academic Year. From each academic level, or year of study, a sample of 50 scripts was selected for the investigation. Simple random sampling techniques were used to obtain samples to ensure that equal opportunity was extended to all the students constituting the population at the time of the study. A detailed description of the research procedures and techniques adopted in the study is presented in Chapter Three.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The present study is based on the theory of thematic progression which originated from the Prague scholars and Hallidayan systemic grammarians in the early 1970's. This theory is based on the relationship between theme and rheme in the development and organization of information in a text. The thematic progression approach to discourse coherence states that the pattern of the flow of information in a sentence from theme to rheme is crucial in achieving communicative effectiveness in a text. This view is supported by Mauraanen (1993:103) who explains that thematic progression investigates how themes can be related to previous themes and rhemes by means of different semantic links which include identity, synonymy, partial identity, contrast and specification.

1.9 Operational Definitions

1.9.0 General

This section presents a brief linguistic description of the main concepts dealt with in the study. Most of the definitions, unless otherwise stated, have been adapted from Halliday (1968, 1985) and Halliday and Hasan (1976). This is because these provide an insight into a critical and comprehensive discussion of cohesion, coherence and

thematic progression. All the illustrations given have been drawn from the actual samples analysed in the study.

1.9.1 Discourse

There is no consensus with regard to the definition of the term ‘discourse’. Different scholars have defined it in different ways. Wassniewsk, (2006) explains that the word ‘discourse’ has its genesis from the Latin word ‘discursus’ which denoted ‘conversation speech’. Crystal (1992:25) defines it as “a continuous stretch of language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit such as a sermon, argument, joke, or narrative”. Dakowska (2001:81) on the other hand, indicates the unity of communicative intentions as a vital element in defining the term ‘discourse’. Stubbs (1983) and Cook (1989) define discourse as naturally occurring language or language in use which is characterized by its ability to communicate and by being recognized by the receiver as meaningful and unified, that is, as coherent. Discourse may be written or spoken. It may consist of a single word or utterance or a series of words or utterances. The underlying principle is that it should be meaningful to both the sender and the receiver. However, the terms ‘text’ and ‘discourse’ could be used almost interchangeably to refer to linguistic product and linguistic process respectively. In this particular study, the term ‘discourse’ has been used to mean any stretch of naturally-occurring language as produced in a real life situation.

1.9.2 Discourse Analysis

This is a qualitative approach that is used to analyse written, spoken or signed language. As a branch of linguistics it deals with the study and application of approaches to analyse written, spoken or signed language (Cook, 1989). In other words, Discourse Analysis is the analysis of language in use. Stubbs (1983) uses the term discourse analysis to refer mainly to the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring, connected spoken or written discourse.

1.9.3 Coherence

The term coherence refers to the logical interrelatedness of ideas in a given text or piece of discourse. This relationship functions as a link between meanings of utterances in spoken discourse or sentence in written discourse to make a unified whole. The links, according to Cook (1989:9) may be based on the receiver's shared knowledge with the sender or on both shared knowledge and the words and structures used. Brown and Yule (1983) relate coherence more to the 'sense' a reader makes of a text in semantic terms and whether it shows an overall unity. On the basis of this, they identify two ways of determining whether a stretch of discourse is unified and meaningful or not. One is recourse to one's knowledge of the world which comprises the sender, the social conventions and situational factors such as the events and activities taking place as one reads or listens. The other is to a large extent dependent on the reader's ability to infer language rules that operate within or between sentences. This is the view supported by Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Couthard et. al. (1994). In the context of the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia students, which is the context of the present study, coherence is understood as the logical presentation and relatedness of information from the theme, which constitutes the initial component of a clause, to the rheme, which constitutes the completion component in a given text or piece of discourse.

1.9.4 Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the formal grammatical and lexical relations that exist between two or more linguistic units in a piece of discourse. These units may be words, phrases or clauses. Cohesion is said to occur when one linguistic unit in a piece of discourse is dependant on that of another unit within the discourse. This means that the meaning of one linguistic unit cannot be effectively decoded without reference to the meaning of another linguistic unit. Halliday and Hasan (1976) define cohesion as a set of meaning relations between elements in discourse that are crucial to the interpretation of a text. They assent to the claim that a discourse has certain linguistic features which contribute to its total unity. The main function of cohesion is to relate one part of text to another of the same text. Halliday and Hasan hold that cohesion is the

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presupposition of something that has gone before in the discourse, whether in the immediately preceding sentence or not. This kind of presupposition is referred to as anaphoric and when the presupposition points forward it is called cataphoric. Those presuppositions that refer to something outside and inside a text are called exophoric and endophoric respectively. Endophoric presuppositions are the main cohesive relations that exist within any discourse. Halliday and Hasan recognise five types of cohesive devices in English. These are reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion.

1.9.5 Thematic progression

This term is generally defined as the ordering and organization of information in a text indicated by theme and rheme relations to show coherence in a given piece of discourse. It can also be explained as the topical development of a text or the progression of theme and rheme. Nwogu (1990), quoting Fibas (1974) states that thematic progression is the extent to which the sentence element contributes to the development of the communication, to which it 'pushes' the communication forward as it were. Mauranen (1993:103) explains that thematic progression investigates how themes can be related to previous themes and rhemes by means of different semantic links which include identity, synonymy, partial identity, contrast and specification. In this paper thematic progression will mean the logical interrelationship existing between theme and rheme to enhance discourse coherence.

1.9.6 Theme

In systemic functional linguistics theme is viewed as the 'point of departure' of a sentence. It usually contains familiar, old or given information which provides a setting for the remainder of the sentence called the rheme. Halliday (1985:38) quoted in Wang (2002:2) defines theme as "given information serving as the point of departure of a message in a clause." The given information is information that has already been mentioned somewhere in the text or could be referred to as shared information between the speaker and the listener. In such instance theme would be considered as a point of departure or the first component in the clause and shows the

reader what the clause is all about. Theme is therefore everything that comes before the main verb. Wang (2007) claims that this could be a nominal group, verbal group, adverbial group, prepositional phrase or a dependent phrase or clause.

1.9.7 Rheme

This is the remainder of the clause after the theme has been identified and it represents new information or end point. Lock (1996:222) defines rheme as “part of the message that is presented as most important, most newsworthy”. It could also be considered as the remainder of the information in the sentence and contains unfamiliar or new information. In other words, rheme is everything or all the information that comes after the main verb.

Theme and rheme are the main elements required for the achievement of thematic progression. These concepts are dependent on each other. The only boundary between theme and rheme is that theme is the first element occurring in a clause and rheme is the remainder of the clause as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Illustration of the theme-rheme relationship

Theme	Rheme
The notion of proposition	refers to part of meaning in a spoken sentence and this meaning is able to describe some of the affairs about what is been talked about.
A proposition	holds the meaning of a spoken sentence and this meaning is able to describe some state of affairs about what is being talked about.
It	helps us also to decide whether a statement in a particular situation is true or false.
The notion	is concerned with the truth value in relation to the world
In addition, it	attributes some property to an entity.

The concepts of theme and rheme are central to achieving sentence connectivity and thematic progression. Danes (1974) postulates four types of thematic progression patterns that would help solve the problem of incoherence. These are simple linear progression, constant, split and derived hyper-thematic progression.

1.9.8 Thematic Progression Patterns

1.9.8.0 General

This section presents the key concepts relating to two categories of thematic progression patterns: those which enhance coherence and those which obscure it. As postulated by Danes (1974) the thematic progression patterns which enhance coherence include simple linear progression, constant progression, derived hyper-thematic progression, split progression as well as a combination of either simple linear progression with constant progression, which is referred to as linear constant progression in the study, or constant progression with simple linear progression, which is referred to as constant linear progression in the study. Thematic progression patterns which obscure coherence include brand new theme, empty rheme incomplete split progression, split-theme progression, empty use of *there*, use of dummy *it* and use of conversational personal pronouns. All the examples for these patterns are drawn from the students' scripts except for examples for derived hyper-thematic progression which are picked from Belmonte (1998). This is because the pattern was absent in the scripts which were analysed.

1.9.8.1 Thematic Progression Patterns which Enhance Coherence

1.9.8.1.1 Simple linear progression pattern

The simple linear progression pattern occurs in instances where an item from the rheme of the first clause becomes the theme of the subsequent clause as illustrated in Table 2 below.

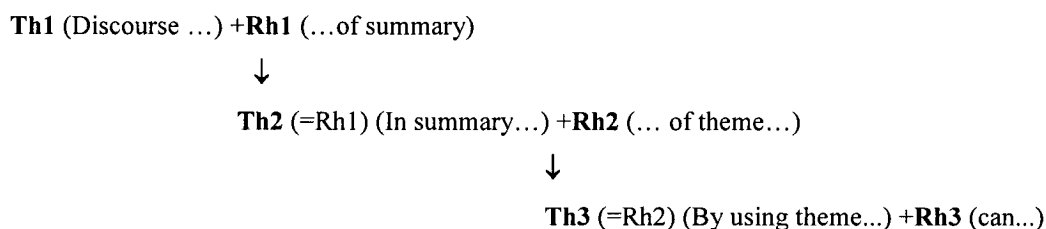
Table 2: Illustration of the simple linear progression pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Simple linear progression	Discourse analysis	is very important in the teaching of summary.
	In summary, pupils	can apply the knowledge of theme, topic and title from the passage.
	By using theme, the pupils	can give a title to the text.

From the above example, it will be observed that in the first clause, *Discourse analysis* is the point of departure or as Firbas (1976:11) claims, "the starting point of

an utterance” while ‘*is very important in the teaching of summary*’ is the rheme. From the rheme of the first clause, the word ‘*summary*’ has been used as the theme of the second clause and part of the rheme for the second clause which is ‘*theme*’ provides the theme for the third sentence. The simple linear progression pattern illustrated in Table 2 can be diagrammed as in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Diagrammatic presentation of the simple linear progression pattern



1.9.8.1.2 Constant progression pattern

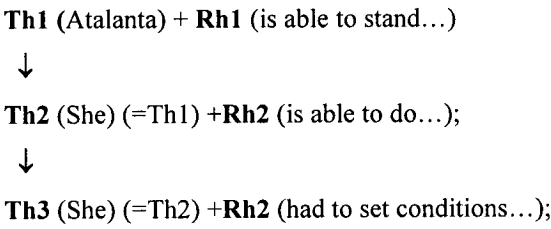
In this pattern a common theme is shared by all clauses and this theme is equivalent to given information. In other words, the constant progression pattern deals with an item in the theme of the first clause also being selected as the theme of the following clause as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Illustration of the constant progression pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Constant progression	Atalanta	is able to stand amongst men and challenge them.
	She	is able to do all other things that men can do.
	She	had to set conditions for men who were interested in her.

In Table 3 above, the pattern takes the same element ‘Atalanta’ as the point of departure for all the clauses and the rheme for each clause provides further information and explanation about the theme. The use of the personal reference ‘she’ does not imply a change in theme. This is used to avoid repetition. This pattern is easy to comprehend though the over use of the same theme may perhaps render the text monotonous. The pattern can be diagrammed as in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Diagrammatic illustration of the constant progression pattern



1.9.8.1.3 Derived hyper-thematic progression pattern

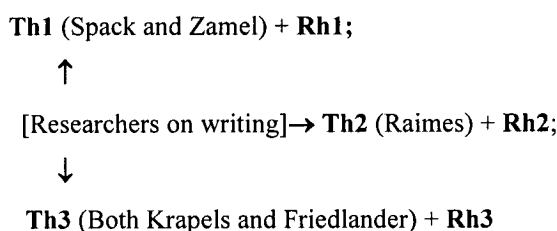
In this pattern, particular themes from the subsequent clauses are derived from a Hyper-theme or the same overriding theme. An example of this pattern, drawn from Belmonte (1998), is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Illustration of the Derived Hyper-thematic Progression

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Derived Hyper-thematic progression	Many researchers on writing	Conducted different investigations on ESL writing process.
	Spack (1984) and Zamel (1983)	studying ESL writers corroborated Hayes and flower's finding about the writing process for their populations.
	Raimes (1987:459-460)	compared ESL students' composing processes with other researcher's findings on L2 basic writers, and concluded that the two groups of students had much in common.
	Both Krapels (this volume) and Friedlander (this volume)	continue the discussion of ESL writing process research.

Table 4 shows that each theme in a clause is different from the other. In clause one the theme is *many researchers on writing* while in clause two the theme is *Spack and Zame*. *Raimes* is the theme of clause three and in clause four the theme is both *Krapels and Friedlander*. Despite this difference, the themes are all related under the same hypertheme, *researchers on writing*. This pattern uses a variety of words referring to the same hypertheme, thus solving the problem of unnecessary repetitions. Diagrammatically, this would be shown as in Figure 5 below.

Figure 3: Diagrammatic illustration of the Derived Hyper-thematic Progression



1.9.8.1.4 Split-rheme progression pattern

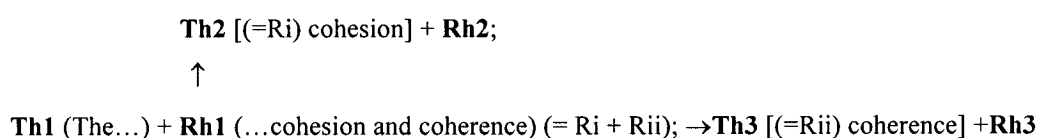
In this pattern the rheme of the first clause is split into two items. Each of the rhemes is in turn taken as theme element in the following clause. This pattern improves the flow of information as the rheme of the previous sentence becomes the theme of the sentence that follows. The subsequent theme therefore becomes given information. This correlates with the opening sentence of a paragraph called the topic sentence as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Illustration of split-rheme progression pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Split progression pattern	The study	predominantly deals with <i>cohesion and coherence</i>
	Cohesion	is the study that looks at the texture of discourse in relation to reference, substitution, conjunctions, comparatives and other similar variable applicable in the study.
	Coherence	deals with meaning in a unified text or conversation.

In Table 5, the rheme of the first clause has been split into two items namely *cohesion* and *coherence*. Each of these items is the theme of the subsequent clauses. In this case, *cohesion* has constituted the theme of the second clause while *coherence* has become the theme of the third clause. This pattern improves the flow of information as new information in the rheme of the first sentence becomes given information in the theme of the sentences that follow. The subsequent theme therefore becomes given information as diagrammatically shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Diagrammatic illustration of the split-rheme progression pattern



1.9.8.1.5 Constant linear progression pattern

The constant linear progression pattern combines two patterns: constant progression and simple linear progression. The occurrence of this pattern reflects the observation made by Danes (1974) who states that some of the patterns sometimes combine in a text as illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Illustration of constant linear progression pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Constant linear progression pattern	therefore, the social case work process	is that process where the person with a problem approaches a case work agency.
	<u>The whole process</u>	begins when the client approaches <i>a case worker</i> or the agency for help.
	<u>The case worker</u>	might not know about the problem that the client is facing.

The information in Table 6 above has been presented diagrammatically in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Diagrammatic presentation of the constant linear progression pattern

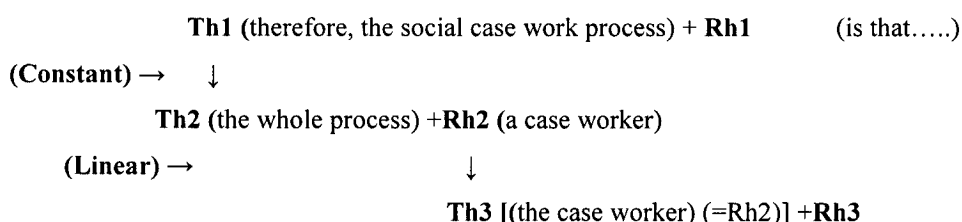
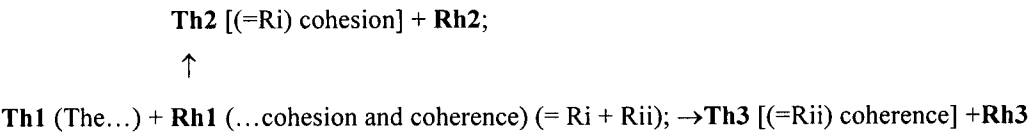


Figure 5 above shows that constant progression has been applied in the first two sentences where the theme of the first clause of the paragraph which is *therefore, the social case work process* has been repeated as the theme in the second clause under

Figure 4: Diagrammatic illustration of the split-rheme progression pattern



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	<u>The case worker</u>	might not know about the problem that the client is facing.

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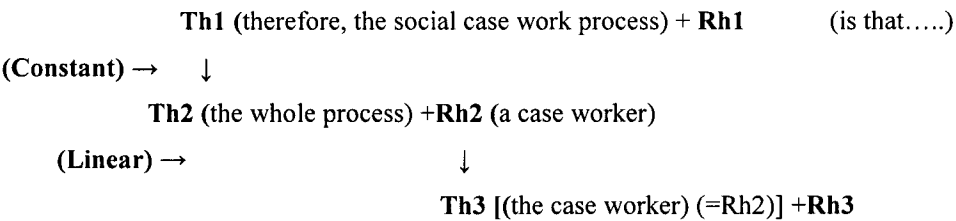


Figure 5 above shows that constant progression has been applied in the first two sentences where the theme of the first clause of the paragraph which is *therefore, the social case work process* has been repeated as the theme in the second clause under

the expression *The whole process*. However, it will be noticed in the example that part of the information in the rheme of the second clause which is *a case worker* has become the theme of the subsequent sentence under the expression *The case worker*.

1.9.8.1.6 Linear constant progression pattern

Linear constant progression is achieved by combining ideas in such a way that the Simple Linear Progression leads to Constant Progression. This happens when the information in the rheme of a clause is developed into the theme of the following sentences. Table 7 below presents an illustration of this type of thematic progression.

Table 7: Illustration of linear constant progression pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Linear constant progression pattern	<u>Discourse analysis</u>	is also a very important component in <i>composition writing</i>
	<u>For a composition to be coherent,</u>	the teacher has to teach the concepts of theme and rheme
	<u>For any composition to be coherent,</u>	the teacher presents various kinds of compositions to the pupils.

The information displayed in Table 7 above has been diagrammatically presented in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Diagrammatic Presentation of the Linear Constant Progression Pattern

Th1 (Discourse analysis) + **Rh1** (composition writing)

(Linear) →

↓

Th2 (=Rh1) + **Rh2**

(Constant) →

↓

Th3 (=Th2) + **Rh3**

In Figure 6, the phrase *composition writing* which is the rheme of the first sentence has been used as the theme of the subsequent sentences. This scenario shows a movement in progression from the simple linear progression pattern, to the constant progression pattern hence the name linear constant progression.

1.9.8.2 Thematic Progression Patterns which Obscure Coherence

1.9.8.2.1 Brand new theme

The application of the brand new theme occurs in instances whereby before a given idea introduced in the initial theme of the sentence is exhaustively substantiated, a new theme is introduced, followed by a 'jump back' or a return to the previous theme with a view to providing further explanation. This approach to thematic development creates a rupture in the flow of information thereby compromising discourse coherence as shown in the examples listed below as illustrated in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Illustration of the brand new theme progression pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Brand new theme	<i>Fertility</i>	is the total number of live births in a given time per thousand of population.
	<i>Fertility</i>	is affected and influenced by many factors.
	The women who are educated	have less time to have children
	<i>Fertility</i>	however is the positive force of continuity of life.

From Table 8 it will be observed that *fertility* being an initial theme has also been used in the second sentence. However, a brand new theme **the women**, has been introduced in sentence three creating a sudden break in the logical flow of information. The theme for sentence four, *fertility* is a 'jump back' which also disrupts the logical flow of information.

1.9.8.2.2 Empty rheme

The application of the empty theme as thematic progression is experienced when the rheme is empty of new information. In this case, the writer does not present any new information in the rheme thereby leaving the rheme empty of content as indicated in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Illustration of the empty rheme pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Empty rheme	Age at marriage	is important

Table 9 shows that the rheme, which is *is important*, does not provide any new information to what has been mentioned before, which is *Age at marriage*. This type of progression causes a rupture as the writer is unable to expand the initial argument in the rheme, thereby resulting in discourse incoherence.

1.9.8.2.3 Empty use of *there*

The use of the empty adverbial *there* occurs in instances where this word is used without any reference to any preceding information. It is considered empty because of none specificity of reference. This pattern is illustrated in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Illustration of the empty use of *there*

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Empty use of <i>there</i>	<i>A morpheme</i>	can also be defined as the simplest unit of a word
	There	are many other morphemes that linguists have come up with.

Table 10 shows that the theme for the second sentence which is *there*, is meaningless because it does not refer to either the theme or the rheme of the previous sentences and therefore does not contribute to discourse coherence.

1.9.8.2.4 Use of the dummy *it*

The use of the dummy *it* occurs when the pronoun *it* is used without any clear reference to either the theme or the rheme of the previous sentence. The application of this pronoun creates rupture in the presentation of ideas thereby obscuring discourse coherence. An instance of this case is presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Illustration of the use of the dummy *it*

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Use of the dummy <i>it</i>	<i>Discourse analysis</i>	is relevant to the teaching of English in secondary schools
	It	is only through utterances that one is able to understand meaning.

Table 11 above shows that the pronoun *it*, as used in the second sentence is empty of content because it does not refer to any specific item in the previous sentence.

1.9.8.2.5 Incomplete split progression

Incomplete split progression occurs when the information in the rheme is not exhaustively elucidated in subsequent sentences as shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Illustration of the incomplete split progression pattern

Pattern	Theme	Rheme
Incomplete split progression	<i>The teaching of structure</i>	<u>comprises sentence transformation and formation</u>
	<i>Sentence transformation</i>	can be achieved through the knowledge of cleftness.
	The knowledge of pragmatic inferencing	is also important in the teaching of comprehension.

Table 12 shows that the information which has been captured in the rheme of the first sentence is *sentence transformation and formation*. Part of this information, which is *sentence transformation*, has become the theme of the second sentence. However, nothing has been discussed on sentence *formation*. Instead, a new theme *the knowledge of pragmatic inferencing* has been introduced disrupting the flow of information. This failure to develop the other information into the theme has created a rupture as nothing new about sentence *formation* has been provided.

1.10 Scope of the Study

This study examines the relationship between thematic progression and discourse coherence with specific focus on the thematic progression patterns used by the University of Zambia students in their academic written discourse. It identifies and discusses the theme-rheme patterns and relates them to participants' levels of study, type of question asked and whether the patterns enhance or obscure discourse coherence. The study is not intended to document syntactic or any other errors made by University of Zambia undergraduate students. In this regard, the findings should

be interpreted within the framework of thematic progression patterns and discourse coherence.

1.11 Structure of the dissertation

The study consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the study and presents the back ground to the problem under investigation, the statement of the problem, the rationale and the purpose of the study. The chapter also outlines the objectives, the research questions, the theoretical framework and conceptual frameworks as well as the scope of the study and the structure of the dissertation. The second chapter presents a review of literature related to the topic and to some of the concepts applied in the study. The methodology of the study is described and outlined in Chapter Three. Chapter Four presents the findings while Chapter Five discusses the findings, draws the conclusion, points out the implications of the conclusion drawn and makes some recommendations.

1.12 Conclusion

The chapter has introduced the title of the study and has briefly provided some background information on the use of English in Zambia. The chapter has also provided the statement of the problem, the significance of the study as well as the main aim and objectives of the study. The rest of the chapter has defined some of key concepts such as discourse, discourse analysis, cohesion, coherence, thematic progression, theme and rheme and has illustrated two types of thematic progression patterns: those which enhance discourse coherence and those which obscure it. The next chapter presents a review of relevant literature on the subject

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 General

This chapter reviews studies that have relevance and significance on the use of English in Zambia as well as those on the relationship between thematic progression and English discourse coherence. Literature related to second language writing strategies of students in other parts of the world with focus on writing as a product and writing as a process, has also been reviewed.

2.1 Studies on the use of English in Zambia

English in Zambia is a second language. Because of this, most of the speakers are faced with the challenge of how to use it correctly in either speech or writing. Most of the studies that have been conducted on the use of English in Zambia have focused on elements which constitute a second language such as the Zambian variety of English. These include Simukoko (1977, 1983); Africa (1980); Lawrence and Sarvan (1983) and Chisanga (1987). Further research conducted by Chishimba (1979); Mukuni (1984); Kapena (1985); Musakabantu (1985) and Tambulukani (1985) concentrated on language in education. Little attention has been paid to studies connected with naturally occurring spoken and written discourse in Zambia. Although, studies conducted by Kapena (1985); Musakabantu (1985) and Tambulukani (1985) dealt with text analysis, which is an aspect of discourse analysis, they did not deal with naturally occurring spoken or written pieces of discourse but with institutionalised registers. The corpus for the studies included business reports, law reports and civil service letters which were collected from institutions. The objective of these reports was to find out the discoursal and linguistic and to some extent rhetorical structures that could be taught to those training to write business and law reports and civil service letters in colleges in Zambia.

Other studies that depart from this trend are studies conducted by Kashina (1988) and O'Brien (1996). Kashina on the one hand investigated the distribution of patterns of the noun phrase in English clauses produced by some University of Zambia students.

The study revealed that noun phrase distribution patterns in the written discourse produced by Zambians using English as a second language were the same as those in the pieces of discourse produced by people using English as first language. O'Brien on the other hand presented information on writing for second language learners for Zambian schools. The study focused on the organization of writing, grammar and the significance of cohesion and coherence in pieces of discourse.

Another study like that of Kashina (1988) that departs from the trend that characterised the studies of English was that by Simwinga (1992). The work analysed complete and authentic pieces of discourse produced by a stratified sample of University of Zambia undergraduate students. The study was an exercise in discourse analysis as it aimed at discovering regularities in the use of cohesive ties and established how these relate to or with coherence measures.

The present study like that of Kashina (1988); O'Brien (1996) and Simwinga (1992) departs from the studies that have focused much on comparative studies of native and non-native varieties of English in Zambia. The study is an exercise in discourse analysis aimed at establishing the relationship between thematic progression patterns and English discourse coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by a randomly selected sample of University of Zambia undergraduate students through the application of theme and rheme patterns.

2.2 Studies on the Relationship between Thematic Progression Patterns and Discourse Coherence

The concept of coherence has been studied by many linguists including Halliday and Hasan (1976); Clark (1977) and Fishman (1977). Different scholars have drawn different conclusions on the causes of incoherence in written discourse in general. Some have attributed the problem to lack of cohesion (Halliday and Hassan, 1976) others to lack of organization skills (Leonard and Hukari, 2005) yet others to thematic progression (1985). It is the case, therefore, that literature on sources of coherence in discourse has been characterized by two dimensions: cohesion and rhetorical predicates. Some of the findings have revealed that incoherent discourse is caused by

lack of cohesion. The view of cohesion as a source of coherence has been postulated by several linguists including Lyons (1968); Halliday and Hasan (1976); and Van Dijk (1977). Since then a number of experiments have been conducted to test the theory. Witte and Faigley (1981) carried out a study from which it was concluded that though cohesion and coherence interact to a certain extent, a cohesive text may be only “minimally coherent”. They indicated that coherence in a text is as a result of the reader’s expectation for particular types of texts and the reader’s knowledge of the world. The same results were obtained by Tierney and Mosenthal (1983). These findings support the claims made by Meyer (1975, 1979); Meyer, Freedle and Walker (1977) and Meyer, Brant and Bluth (1978) that micro- level cohesive elements are less important in discourse than rhetorical predicates. Louwerse and Graesser (2005) also observed that cohesion alone is not sufficient for the interpretation of discourse, adding that both speakers and listeners generate inferences on the basis of background knowledge and discourse constraints. It does not follow, therefore that the more cohesive a given piece of discourse is, the more coherent it will be. If this were the case, then the issue of incoherent discourse being produced by University of Zambia students would not arise.

As earlier stated, the second dimension in accounting for discourse coherence involves rhetorical predicates. It is on the basis of this concept that Moore (1971:115) defines coherence as “the rhetorical quality by which all of the parts are clearly and smoothly joined to each other”. In this regard, as pointed out by Almaden (2006:128), writers “have the responsibility to produce coherent discourse to indicate unobtrusively logical interrelationships of parts to their readers”. One way in which logical interrelationships of parts can be clearly presented to the readers is the application of the theme and rheme concepts through the process of thematic progression. Danes (1974) claims that the way in which lexical strings and reference chains interact with theme and rheme is not random, rather the patterns of interaction realize what they refer to as text’s thematic progression. A number of empirical investigations have been conducted on the role of thematic progression in English discourse coherence. These include Witte and Faigley (1981); Fries (1995) and

Martin (1992). Though few studies have been conducted on the role of thematic progression in discourse coherence, Leonard and Hukari (2005) report how undergraduate English second language (ESL) students were being helped to improve their organizational skills in academic writing by teaching them thematic progression skills. The report shows that coherence in the students' written pieces of discourse improved as a result of the tuition they received on how to apply thematic progression in their written discourse.

Another study in which thematic progression was applied involved the analysis of Christian tracts written in Nigeria and was reported by Sade (2007). The study was based on the randomly selected tracts produced by three church organizations. Sade states that the findings revealed that the simple linear and the constant thematic progression patterns were prominent. The study concluded that the analysis of thematic progression pattern in Christian written discourse had unveiled their readability characteristics which made it easier for readers to understand them. Further investigations of thematic progression were conducted by Perez (1999) who reports a study which focused on the relevance of cohesion, thematic choice and thematic progression for translation studies. The investigation concluded that the theoretical study of translation carried out by discourse analysis must centre not only on levels of lexis and grammar but also on aspects of cohesion and thematic structure.

The aspects of cohesion and thematic structure were also investigated by Halliday and Hasan (1976:7) who wanted to know whether there is thematicity and cohesion in grammatical notions. It was concluded that thematicity and cohesion have nothing to do with whether a given sequence is grammatical, but has something to do with acceptability and naturalness.

Almaden (2006) carried out a study which investigated thematic progression (also called topical progression) in paragraphs written by Filipino English Second Language students. Data consisted of 60 paragraphs lifted from the definition essays that were part of the students' portfolios. It was found that parallel progression was

most frequently used in the paragraphs, followed by extended and sequential progressions. The extended sequential progression was least used. The study concluded that knowledge of the type of progression used could help Filipino teachers of English determine whether or not the student compositions were coherent. The study recommended that students should be taught to revise not only in terms of mechanics and grammar but also in terms of discourse features and that topical structure analysis or thematic progression was one strategy which would make their written pieces of composition easier for the audience to understand.

Wang (2007) reports results of a thematic progression analysis of a piece of discourse written by a student in order to show how coherence in the student's written discourse could be improved. She identifies and illustrates some of the problems which arise when the flow of theme and rheme is not appropriately handled as: the problem of the brand new theme; the problem of the double theme and the problem of the empty rheme. She also outlines some of the pedagogical implications of the findings and concludes that thematic progression provides an effective method of identifying causes of incoherence in discourse as well as remedies for addressing them.

Belmonte (1998) reports an investigation which sought to prove that the notion of theme/rheme could serve as a useful tool of instruction for the teacher to evaluate L2 writing at the level of discourse. The investigation involved conducting a thematic progression analysis of 25 student compositions written by Spanish native speakers learning English as a second language. The empirical analysis of the data had enabled the researcher to uncover several common problems for textual cohesion and coherence in L2 writing which could be addressed through the application of the concept of thematic progression.

It is evident from the studies listed above that there is merit in applying thematic progression in assessing discourse coherence. To the best knowledge of the author no such application has been made to the analysis of written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students.

2.3 Literature Related to Second Language Writing Strategies

2.3.0 General

The purpose of this section is to provide a review of the literature related to the second language writing strategies applied by students in other parts of the world. Writing strategies are defined as conscious decisions made by writers to solve a writing problem (Beck, 2002; Flower, 1993). According to Archibald and Jeffery (2002), second language writing studies mainly center on four important areas which include: the process, the product, the context and the teaching of writing. In this literature review, focus will be put on writing as a product and writing as a process as these two researches are particularly relevant to the present study.

2.3.1 Second Language Writing as a product

The analysis of students' written pieces of discourse is necessary because quality in higher institutions of learning is evaluated on the basis of the written products as produced by the students. Mu (2006) observes that the product-based second language writing research has paid attention to the differences between the first language and the second language, which are likely to interfere with second language writing. Mu indicates that the focus in this type of research is laid on the structure and organization of patterns in the second language text. Building on Mu's observation, Hirose (2003) compared the first language (Japanese) and second language organization patterns in the argumentative writing of Japanese English as Foreign Language student-writers. The results revealed that the students used similar organizational pattern (deductive type of organizational pattern) in both the first language and the second language.

Hinkel (2004) compared the usage of English tenses and voice in a Native English speaking and Non-native English speaking corpus of first language and second language students' academic texts. It was discovered from the findings that there was wide disparity in the use of English tenses and voice between the two groups. The problems of conventionalised uses of tenses, aspect and the passive voice in written academic discourse were still apparent.

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Some studies on product-based research focused on cohesion analysis in order to describe second language writing because cohesive devices are believed to contribute heavily to writing quality in L1 writing research (Hasan, 1984; Pappas, 1985; Cox, 1987). Further research on cohesive devices was conducted by Reid (1988, 1992) where a computer programme called the Writer's Workbench was used to investigate the application of cohesive devices by Native English speaking and Non-native English speaking writers. The findings revealed that there were notable discrepancies in the use of pronouns, coordinative conjunctions, subordinate conjunction openers and prepositions. The Non-native English speaking writers used more pronouns in personal essays than in academic formal writing.

Other studies have tried to compare good and poor writing and explain the use of specific linguistic features that might contribute to quality (Ferrie, 1991; Robinson, 1994; Angelova, 1999). However, Hyland (2003) and Silva and Brice (2004) indicate that it is not enough to consider writing as a product to justify good writing, instead they encourage second language writers to get exposed to the whole writing process instead of second language vocabulary, grammar, discourse and proficiency.

2.3.2 Second Language Writing as a process

Writing as a process is concerned with how information is processed or packaged as a whole. Zamel (1976) and Raimes (1979) were the first researchers to foster writing process in second language writing classroom with most studies being on in depth case studies. Three controversial results in L2 writing process research were identified and these include: the influence of second language proficiency on L2 writing competence, similarity or difference between first language and second language writing process and the use of first language in second language writing (Mu, 2006). Some researchers have claimed that second language writing competence appears to be largely independent of writers' second language proficiency while others have reported that lower proficiency in language did not impede the subjects from quality writing (Jones, 1982; Raimes, 1985; Zamel, 1982). On the contrary, other researchers have discovered that language proficiency is related to writing

competence in foreign language (Cumming, 1989; Hirose & Sasaki, 1994; Pennington and So, 1993).

Another contradictory result was found by Matsuda (1998) where he claimed that the difference between first language and second language lay not in the general process of organizing a piece of writing but in how and to what degree elements of the dynamic model interact with one another.

Several studies have investigated the use of first language when writing in a second or foreign language (Cumming, 1989; Friendlander, 1990 and Scollon, 1991). The results are contradictory. Scollon (1991) asserted that the learner's first language interfered with his or her second language writing. Friendlander (1992) on the other hand, claimed that second language writers plan for their writing more effectively, write better texts containing more content and create more effective texts when they are able to plan in the language related to the acquisition of knowledge of the topic area.

Other studies for second language writing were done on Chinese students and the issue was whether Chinese writers transfer Chinese rhetorical conventions into English writing (Kirpatrick, 1997; Zhang, 2002; Chan, 2004; Xu, 2002). The results indicated that Chinese students used more inductive means to organize their English writing which is considered as negative influence of Chinese writing conventions (Scollon, 1991).

2.3.3 Second Language Writing Approach Adopted in the Present Study

While acknowledging the existence of the two approaches to the study of second language writing as discussed in 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 above, the present study adopted the second-language-as-product approach in both data collection and data analysis. It focused on the output or product of the students' writing effort in form of tests and examination scripts. This approach was applied because it provided a more objective way of determining the competence of the writers. The approach is also in line with

the concept of Discourse analysis as the analysis of naturally occurring language in use or language as used in real life in either speech or writing.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the studies that have relevance and significance on the use of English in Zambia as well as those on the relationship between thematic progression and discourse coherence as reported in other parts of the world. The chapter has also reviewed literature related to second language writing strategies of students elsewhere with focus on second language writing as a product and second language writing as a process in order to locate the present study within the framework of similar studies. The next chapter presents the methodology applied in data collection and data analysis for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 General

This chapter presents the methodology adopted in the study in terms of the research design as well as the specific strategies applied in collecting and analysing the data.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This is in line with the claim by Ragin (1994) that quantitative approaches apply a lot of numerical data which can be used to measure and identify general patterns and relationships among variables. In the present study, the quantitative approach was used specifically to establish the frequency with which each type of the theme-rheme patterns occurred in the texts under analysis. Qualitative approaches do not use numerical data. This position is supported by Rudestam and Newton (1992:31) who state that “In qualitative approaches data is in form of words as opposed to numbers.” In the present study, the qualitative approach was used when relating the theme-rheme patterns identified in the students’ written discourse to discourse coherence factors as well as when identifying the appropriate types of the theme-rheme patterns which would enhance discourse coherence. The approach also assisted in explaining the relationship between thematic progression and coherence.

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Study population

The population in this study was the full-time 2009 academic year undergraduate students enrolled in the School of Education and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, at the University of Zambia, in Lusaka. The two schools were chosen because they have more students than any other school in the University. Further, the demand on the use of English imposed on students from the two schools is greater than that imposed on students from other schools in the University as they have to analyze and express complex concepts in English in connected discourse. This is not

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the case in other schools where either symbols are sufficient or only factual and descriptive information is presented.

3.2.2 Sample size

From the population, a sample of one hundred and twenty male and female students, sixty from each school, took part in the study. From each school, thirty scripts were selected at each level of study. This was done in order to establish whether or not the relationship between thematic progression patterns and discourse coherence was mediated by students' levels of study. A proportional stratified sampling method was used because it was considered most appropriate to the research design. The design meets the two conditions that must exist for such a method to be used. The first is that there exists a method of identifying which stratum each element belongs to and the second that there should be intentions by the researcher to make inferences for each stratum from the study. The first condition was met in that the students were divided according to their academic levels in the University from first year level to fourth year level and each of them belonged to one and only one of these levels. The second condition was also met because the researcher sought to make inferences on whether or not the relationship between thematic progression and discourse coherence was mediated by the students' levels of study.

3.2.3 Data collection

3.2.3.1 Data collection instruments

The instruments that were used in the research included one in-class test and the end of the 2009 first semester examinations written in essay form by the students at each level of study. This was to ensure uniformity in content, environment and topic among the students. The two instruments were chosen because these tasks were part of the students' normal academic requirements in line with the principle that discourse analysis investigates regularities in naturally-occurring language or language in use. The questions that were selected for analysis demanded the students to either compare or discuss certain concepts or characters in a particular field of

study considering that these constitute the major types of tasks students are expected to perform in a university setting.

3.2.3.2 Administration of the instruments

The research instruments comprising tests and end of semester examinations were administered by the subject lecturers under a controlled environment in order to ensure that none of the students had access to any material or extra time for the tasks. The corpus of the study consisted of two hundred students' written scripts for the 2009 academic year. In all, one hundred test and one hundred examination scripts were analysed to ascertain the presence of thematic progression patterns in the students' written discourse. At each level of study, fifty scripts which comprised twenty-five test and twenty-five examination scripts were picked at random. The random sampling was used in order to allow each student an equal chance of being selected. According to Rudestam and Newton (1992:24) random selection of subjects "permits the researcher to generalize the results from a sample to the population".

The administration of the research instrument was done following a natural approach. This approach according to Krashe and Terrell (1983) suggests that variations in the learning process should be according to learner characteristics and that the stages should be fluid and not discrete. This implies that students should be treated in a natural way and that tasks should be assigned according to their level of study. Because of this, the researcher did not set the questions for the subjects. The questions were, instead, set by course lecturers as part of the normal routine academic tasks for the students. This was done in order to maintain the naturalistic approach on how students' writing tasks are administered at the University of Zambia. Although different tests and examinations were given to subjects at each level of study, the administration of these tasks was controlled because all the subjects wrote under the same environment within a stipulated period of time. The subjects did not have prior knowledge about the questions in both the tests and the examinations.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative analysis involved manually counting the frequencies with which each of the types of theme-rheme pattern occurred as exhibited in the data. This was done by reading through each of the selected scripts. The frequencies were tabulated by types of theme-rheme pattern as well as by levels of study of the participants. This tabulation gave an indication of the extent to which types of theme-rheme patterns vary with participants' academic level through simple descriptive statistics presented in form of percentages. The qualitative analysis involved identifying specific instances of theme-rheme patterns in a given piece of discourse, categorising them according to type and making decisions on whether or not such instances of the theme-rheme pattern were or were not congruent with the established thematic progression patterns and therefore enhanced or obscured coherence respectively.

3.4 Conclusion

The chapter has provided information on the research design, data collection techniques and data analysis methods where both qualitative and quantitative approaches were applied. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 General

This chapter presents samples of the thematic progression patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by the University of Zambia students who had participated in the study. The main purpose of the presentation is to show the types of theme-rheme patterns used by the students at each level of study in order to provide answers to the first three research questions posed in Chapter One of the study. The first question sought to identify the types of theme-rheme patterns used by University of Zambia undergraduate students in their written pieces of discourse. The second sought to establish whether or not there was relationship between the types of theme-rheme patterns used in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students and the students' academic levels of study. The third was intended to determine the extent to which the application of the patterns varied with type of question asked. The first research question was addressed by physically counting the number of theme-rheme patterns identified in the scripts at each academic level of study. The second research question was tackled by computing the frequencies and percentages with which the specific patterns occurred at each of the four academic levels of study and comparing the percentages. The third was answered by computing the frequencies and percentages with which the specific patterns occurred in relation to the two types of questions which were answered by the students in order to establish whether or not the use of the thematic progression patterns varied with the type of question asked at each academic level of study. The most prevalent questions asked by the lecturers and answered by the research participants were either argumentative or comparative. For the third and fourth year students taking a course in English Discourse Analysis, coded as ELL 935, the same question was analysed in the examination scripts because the students attend the same lectures and write the same tests and examinations. The presentation focuses on the identification of the thematic progression patterns used in the scripts categorized by academic levels of study and draws conclusions with regard to the frequency of occurrence for each thematic progression pattern at each level of study.

4.1 Thematic Progression Patterns used in the Corpus

This section presents the theme-rheme patterns that were prevalent in the written pieces of discourse produced by the participants at each level of study at the University of Zambia. In the context of the present study, the term ‘pattern’ refers to the way themes recur and/or combine with rhemes to make a piece of discourse coherent. This is in line with the Wikipedia free encyclopedia May 2009 which states that “a pattern is the type of theme of recurring events or elements. These elements repeat in a predictable manner.” Two categories of patterns are identifiable. The first constitutes those which enhance discourse coherence. These include simple linear progression, constant progression, split progression as well as a combination of either simple linear progression with constant progression, which is referred to as linear constant progression in the study, or constant progression with simple linear progression, which is referred to as constant linear progression in the study. The second category relates to thematic progression patterns which obscure coherence. These include brand new theme, empty rheme, incomplete split progression, split-theme progression, empty use of *there*, use of dummy *it*, and use of conversational personal pronouns. For each of the thematic progression patterns, specific examples, derived from the samples of the written work submitted by the participants, are presented in order to justify the claim. The data are presented in their raw form with no attempt at correcting grammatical and other errors. This is by choice because the focus of this study is not to investigate grammatical errors but to establish the types of thematic progression patterns that are used by the students at the University of Zambia to achieve coherence in their written pieces of discourse. The findings are presented according to the academic levels of the participants.

4.1.1 Academic Level One

4.1.1.1 Coherence-Enhancing Thematic Progression Patterns

The written pieces of discourse produced by participants at this academic level displayed two types of patterns which enhance thematic progression. These are simple linear progression and constant progression patterns. The patterns were displayed in response to a comparative type of question, given in the test, which

required the students to explain the differences in character between Mathilde and Atalanta, and an argumentative type of question, which demanded the students to discuss some of the factors that they thought, could affect fertility in women.

4.1.1.1.1 Simple linear progression pattern

The simple linear progression pattern is realized when the rheme of the first clause is turned into the theme of the following clause. At this particular academic level the pattern was only identified in the examination scripts where the question was argumentative but not in the test scripts where the question was comparative. In all the examples at this level and the levels that follow on coherence- enhancing thematic progression patterns, the underlined expressions represent themes while the italicized information represents the rhemes. Instances of some of the sentences which exhibited the use of the simple linear progression pattern at academic level one are illustrated in 1 and 2 below.

1. Fertility is affected by the status of *a woman*. A woman with an important role to play such as being a manager commits and dedicates herself more to work than family.
2. Fertility depends or is affected by *fecundity*. *Fecundity* determines whether a couple is able to reproduce or not.

In examples 1 it is clear that the noun phrase *a woman* in the rheme of the first clause has become the theme of the second clause and that the word *fecundity* in the rheme of example 2 has also become the theme of the following sentence. This application of the theme and rheme between sentences shows the interdependency that exists between the two elements in a given piece of discourse in order to enhance the logical flow of information thereby achieving coherence. From these examples, it is evident that the rheme provides further information on the theme such that lack of rheme acknowledgment in a text results in discourse incoherence.

4.1.1.1.2 Constant progression pattern

The constant progression pattern was the most prevalent type at academic level one. It was identified in both the test and the examination scripts. More instances of the pattern were found in the test scripts where the question was comparative than in the examination scripts where the question was argumentative. The constant progression pattern demands the application of the same or similar theme in a series of sentences. This can be implemented at either sentence or paragraph level. Building on Firbas' (1986) insights that themes are the main constructing elements of a text, the students at this level used the same theme to develop their ideas. The examples below show how the constant progression pattern was applied at this level of study.

3. Atalanta is a strong and dependent woman. She differs from Mathilde because she does not only depend on herself but competes or equals herself to men. Atalanta grew up to be a true daughter of the wilderness, an incomparable hunter.

4. Fertility is the actual reproductive performance. Fertility is simply the ability to give birth to infants. It is actually one of the major three components of population.

In the examples provided in 3 and 4 above, the nouns *Atalanta* and *fertility* are not only the themes of the first sentences but also the themes of all the sentences that follow. The pronoun *she* as used in the second sentence of example 3 and *it* as used in the third sentence of example 4 are substituting the noun *Atalanta* and *fertility* respectively. The application of this pattern helps the students at this level to stick to the theme under discussion.

4.1.1.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns

At academic level one, six patterns were identified as coherence-obscuring. These included the use of the brand new theme, the empty rheme, the empty *there*, the dummy *it*, the split theme and conversational personal pronouns.

4.1.1.2.1 Brand new theme

The use of the brand new theme was particularly pronounced at this academic level. This approach to thematic development created a rupture in the flow of information thereby compromising discourse coherence as shown in the examples listed below. In all the examples at this level and the subsequent ones under coherence-obscuring thematic progression, the italicized words or expressions represent the initial themes, the bolded represent new themes while the underlined represent ‘jump back’.

5. *Fertility* is the total number of live births in a given time per thousand of population. *Fertility* is affected and influenced by many factors. **The women** who are educated have less time to have children. *Fertility*, however is the positive force of continuity of life.

6. *Fertility* is one of the major components to change. *It* contributes to population change by increasing the number of births. **Age** is believed to be one of the factors that affect the level of fertility. **A woman** is only active in terms of child bearing in a specific age.

From examples 5 and 6 above, it will be observed that *fertility* being an initial theme of example 5, has also been used in the second sentence. However, a brand new theme **the women**, has been introduced in sentence three creating a sudden break in the logical flow of information. The theme for sentence four, *fertility* is a ‘jump back’ which also disrupts the logical flow of information. It refers back to the initial theme *fertility* after an intervening brand new theme **the women**. In example 6, the initial theme *fertility*, has been repeated in sentence two through the application of the substitute pronoun *it*. However, sentences three and four have new themes which are *age* and *a woman* respectively. The problem with this approach to organization of information is that it creates a sudden breakdown in the logical flow of information resulting in discourse incoherence.

4.1.1.2.2 Empty rheme

The problem of the empty rheme as identified at academic level one is experienced when the rheme is empty of new information as indicated in examples 7 and 8 below.

7. Age at marriage *is important*.

8. A woman's role in society *is simple*.

Examples 7 and 8 above show that the rhemes which are, *is important* and *is simple* respectively, do not provide any new information to what has been mentioned before. This causes a rupture as the writer cannot expand the initial argument in the rheme, thereby resulting in discourse incoherence. It is not stated as to how age at marriage is important or how simple a woman's role in society is

4.1.1.2.3 Empty use of *there*

The empty use of *there* was frequent and haphazard at this academic level. Examples of this particular application are shown in 9 and 10 below.

9. *Education* has affected the level of fertility in many parts of the world. **There** are many reasons why women have fewer children.

10. *The time at which one married* is also an influence of the level of fertility. **There** is a high chance of having many children when you marry at a tender age.

Examples 9 and 10 above show that the theme for each of the second sentences which is *there*, does not refer to anything that has been mentioned in either the theme or the rheme of the preceding sentences. The word *there* has been used in this position in order to fulfill the function of the subject in the sentences. This type of organization of information creates ruptures which result in discourse incoherence.

4.1.1.2.4 Use of dummy *it*

The problem of the dummy *it* was identified in most of the scripts at academic level one. This pattern is illustrated in examples 11 and 12 below.

11. *Fertility* is the actual reproductive performance. *Fertility* is also the ability to give birth to live infants. *It* is said that fertility is measured through women and not men.

12. *Fecundity* can reduce or increase levels of fertility. *It* is said that a fertile woman can be fecund when she decides to use birth control methods.

From example 11 above, *fertility* is the theme for sentences one and two while *fecundity* is the theme for example 12. However, in the third sentence of example 11 and the second sentence of example 12, the pronoun *it* has been used as theme although it does not relate to any piece of information in the preceding sentences. This type of writing compromises the logical flow of information resulting in discourse incoherence.

4.1.1.2.5 Split theme progression pattern

Some of the students at academic level one used the split theme progression pattern where new information is split in the theme instead of the rheme. This application created ruptures as information in the rheme was not expanded. Examples of this type of thematic progression are presented in 13 and 14 below.

13. *Mathilde and Atalanta* are two different characters. **Dependent and content** is how these two can be described respectively.

14. *Atalanta* is more like just a man. **Hunting and wrestling** are some of the things that she did.

In the examples, while *Mathilde and Atalanta* is the initial theme in 13, *Atalanta* is the theme in 14. However, in the second sentences of each of the examples, the themes have been split into two with *dependent and content* in 13 and *hunting and wrestling* in 14 presenting new information. Considering this type of writing, it is difficult to develop the sentences as new information has been split in the theme instead of the rheme.

4.1.1.2.6 Use of conversational personal pronouns

There was evidence of over-use of the conversational personal pronouns *I, you* and *we* at this level. Use of conversational personal pronouns is not an effective method of developing information in written pieces of discourse as illustrated in examples 15 and 16 below.

15. *Fertility* is the actual reproductive performance. **You** are simply required to give birth to live infants as a woman.

16. *Atalanta* has characteristics of men. **We** can see this when she wrestles with men.

In the sentences above, it will be observed that the pronouns *you* in example 15 and *we* in example 16 do not refer to any information in the theme or rheme thereby obscuring the logical flow of information resulting in discourse incoherence.

4.1.2 Academic Level Two

4.1.2.1 Coherence-enhancing thematic progression patterns

At academic level two, the test question was argumentative. It required the students to discuss the functions of the case work process and a case worker. In the examination, the question was comparative. It demanded that the students show the relationship between derivational morphemes and inflectional morphemes. Three types of thematic progression patterns were identified at this level. These are simple linear, constant and constant linear progression.

4.1.2.1.1 Simple linear progression pattern

The simple linear progression pattern was identified in both the test and the examination scripts at this level. There were more instances of the pattern in the examination scripts where the question was argumentative than in the test scripts where the question was comparative. All the simple linear progression patterns identified in the test scripts were used across paragraphs as illustrated in example 17 below.

17. The inflectional morpheme does not take the progressive form which is the 'ing' participle as in the word 'walking'. The root in this word is *walk* and the 'ing' is a *derivational morpheme*.

The derivational morpheme is a morpheme that can be added to the root or the base to make up another word. For example the 'er' can be added to the word 'teach' to come up with the word 'teacher'.

In example 17 above, the rheme of the last sentence in the first paragraph has become the theme in the following paragraph. This manifestation of the theme-rheme relationship is in line with the observation by Fontain and Kodratoff (2003) that in simple linear progression the theme of one clause derives from the rheme of the previous clause. In the examination scripts, the pattern used only applied between sentences as indicated in example 18 below.

18. It is now up to the case worker to end *the process*. The process does not have an exactly true frame.

In example 18 above, part of the rheme of the first clause, *the process*, has become the theme of the following sentence. This development suggests that at academic level two, simple linear progression was an important device for the students to use in order to provide more insight on the new information in the rheme as it became given information in the following sentence.

4.1.2.1.2 Constant progression pattern

The constant progression pattern was utilized in both the test and the examination scripts at academic level two. More instances of the pattern were exhibited in the test scripts both within and across paragraphs. Example 19 illustrates how the pattern was used.

19. Derivational morphemes are not productive. They are also opaque in that after an addition of derivational morphemes there is no clear or no relation between the formed word and the supposed meaning after the combination of words from the already existing meaning of the separate words.

Derivational morphemes have a syntactic role. They also have a lexical form. Derivational morphemes can be placed inside other derivational morphemes. Derivational morphemes can be placed either at the beginning of a word or at the end of the word.

20. The client who is the troubled person presents the problem to the case worker in a case work agency. He should participate in the problem solution by giving ideas on how best he can help.

Example 19 above shows that the phrase *derivational morphemes* which is the theme of the first clause in the first paragraph is also the theme of the second clause. The pronoun *they* has, however, been used as a substitute word for the phrase *derivational morphemes*. The same theme has also been used as the theme of the first sentence in the second paragraph. This implies that constant progression at academic level two was used beyond sentence level and across paragraphs for the purpose of achieving coherence. In example 20, the phrase, *the client*, is the initial theme which has been substituted by the pronoun *He* in the second clause. From the two examples, it can be deduced that personal pronouns play a significant role in the application of constant progression and in enhancing coherence.

4.1.2.1.3 Constant linear progression pattern

The constant linear progression was only identified in the examination scripts. The following are some of the examples that indicate the application of the constant linear progression pattern.

21. Therefore, the social case work process is that process where the person with a problem approaches a case work agency. The whole process begins when the client approaches *a case worker* or the agency for help. The case worker might not know about the problem that the client is facing.

Example 21 above shows that constant progression has been applied in the first two sentences where the theme of the first clause of the paragraph which is *therefore, the social case work process* has been repeated as the theme in the second clause under the expression *The whole process*. However, it will be noticed in the example that part of the information in the rheme of the second clause which is *a case worker* has become the theme of the subsequent sentence under the expression *The case worker*. This scenario constitutes a movement from the constant progression pattern to the linear progression pattern hence the name constant linear progression pattern. From the information presented in this example, it can be deduced that the combination of constant and simple linear progression is particularly important to the enhancement of discourse coherence in a text. The combination of these patterns solves the problem of ruptures and introduction of brand new themes which constituted some of the most common sources of incoherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia students who participated in the study.

4.1.2.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns

At academic level two, four patterns were identified as obscuring discourse coherence. These include the brand new theme, the empty rheme, empty use of *there* and the use of the dummy *it*.

4.1.2.2.1 Brand new theme

The problem of the brand new theme was also identified in some of the scripts at academic level two. The application of the brand new theme pattern created a rupture in the logical flow of information in the students' written pieces of discourse as shown in examples 22 and 23 below.

22. *Inflectional morphemes* can be combined with almost any word especially verbs to show the 3rd person singular. **The plural marker '-s'** has a wide variety of words. Further, inflectional morphemes do not change the meaning of the words to which they have been added.

23. *The case work* is the method of social work that deals with individuals, family and groups. *Case work* is a process by which an individual with a problem is helped. **The case worker** works with individuals who have problems that need to solve and need solutions.

In example 22, *inflectional morphemes* is the theme for sentences one and three. However, a new theme that of **the plural marker**, has been introduced in sentence two which is contrary to the initial theme while sentence four has 'jumped back' to the initial theme which is *inflectional morphemes*. In example 23, sentences one and two have the same theme, that of *the case work* while sentence three has introduced a brand new theme which is **case worker**. The introduction of new themes in both examples has created a breakdown in the logical flow of information resulting in lack of discourse coherence.

4.1.2.2.2 Empty rheme

The problem of the empty rheme, where the rheme was devoid of new information, was also identified in some of the students' written pieces of discourse at this level of study. In this case, the writers did not present any new information in the rheme thereby leaving the rheme empty of content as exemplified in 24 and 25 below.

24. Derivational morphemes *are relevant*.

25. *In a social case work* relationship there are principles which must be followed in order for a process to go smoothly. These principles *play a significant role*.

In example 24 above, it will be noticed that the rheme, which is *are relevant*, is empty of new information. In example 25, the rheme of the second sentence which is, *play a significant role* is equally empty because it does not provide any new information. This type of organization of information in a sentence leads to incoherence because it becomes difficult to develop the sentences that follow.

4.1.2.2.3 Empty use of *there*

The use of the empty adverbial *there* was also observed at academic level two regardless of the thematic development pattern coming either before or after this item as illustrated in 26 and 27 below.

26. *A morpheme* can also be defined as the simplest unit of a word. **There** are many other morphemes that linguists have come up with.

27. *In some agencies*, they give a time frame for the process to come to an end. *It* comes to an end when both the client and the case worker are satisfied. **There** is no exact true time frame to end the process.

From examples 26 and 27 above, it will be observed that the theme for the second sentence in 26 and third sentence in 27 which is *there*, is meaningless because it does not refer to either the theme or the rheme of the previous sentences and therefore does not contribute to discourse coherence.

4.1.2.2.4 Use of the dummy *it*

The problem of the dummy *it* usually occurs when the pronoun *it* is used without any clear reference to either the theme or the rheme of the previous sentence. The

application of this pronoun created serious problems of ruptures in the presentation of ideas in the students' written discourse at this academic level as shown in examples 28 and 29 below.

28. *In some agencies*, they give a time for the process to end. *It* comes to an end when both the client and the case worker are satisfied. **It** is now up to the case worker to end the process.

29. *Inflectional morphemes* are also very productive. *Inflectional morphemes* such as *-ing*, *-s* and even *-ly* are easily added. **It** should be observed that suffixation usually occurs outside the morpheme as in *quick- quickly*.

From examples 28 and 29 above, it is clear that the application of the theme *it* in the third sentence of each example is void of meaning as it does not refer to any preceding information.

4.1.3 Academic Level Three

4.1.3.1 Coherence-Enhancing Thematic Progression Patterns

Four coherence-enhancing thematic progression patterns were applied at academic level three. These are simple linear progression, constant progression, split progression and linear constant progression which constituted a combination of simple linear and constant progression. The question that was asked in the test was comparative as it required students to explain the relationship between a proposition, a sentence and an utterance. In the test scripts, only two patterns were used. These are the simple linear progression pattern and the constant progression pattern. The question asked in the examination was argumentative. It demanded that the students discuss the relevance of Discourse Analysis to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia. Four thematic progression patterns were identified in the examination scripts. These included the simple linear progression pattern, the constant progression pattern, the split progression pattern and the linear constant progression pattern.

4.1.3.1.1 Simple linear progression pattern

The simple linear progression pattern was applied in both the test and the examination scripts. Nevertheless, there were more instances of simple linear progression in the examination scripts where the question was argumentative than in the test scripts where the question was comparative. Examples 30 and 31 below are drawn from the test and the examination scripts respectively.

30. When sentence meaning has been said to someone by someone at a particular time with specific interviews, it becomes *an utterance*. This utterance has truth value that it may be true or false depending on the prevailing circumstance.

31. In the teaching of structure, pupils are exposed to a variety of *cohesive ties*. These cohesive ties are derived from components of discourse such as reference ellipsis, substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion.

In examples 30 and 31 above, part of the rheme of the first sentence, which is *an utterance* in 30 and *cohesive ties* in 31, has become the theme of the second sentence as *this utterance* and *these cohesive ties* respectively. Although there is a slight adjustment in the wording of the themes due to the inclusion of the demonstrative pronouns *this* and *these*, the two expressions relate to the same part of information in the rheme. This type of information organization where the rheme becomes the theme of the following sentence is particularly important in expanding and elaborating new information in the rheme as it becomes given information in the subsequent sentence. Fries (1983) supports the development of information from the rheme to the theme of the following sentence by indicating that the thematic progression of an academic text needs to have a high incidence of cross-referential links from the rheme of one clause to the theme of the next clause, as academic texts present complex arguments in which each successive idea is an expansion of the idea in the previous sentence.

4.1.3.1.2 Constant progression pattern

The constant progression pattern was used in both the test and the examination scripts. Examples 32 and 33 below constitute illustrations of how the students at academic level three applied the constant progression pattern in the test and examination scripts respectively.

32. An utterance is a physical event when something is being spoken. It is any stretch of talk before or after which there is silence on the part of the speaker. It is the use of language on particular occasion, by a particular speaker of a piece of language.

33. Discourse analysis is an important course to the students at the University of Zambia as well as the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia. Discourse analysis mainly deals with important things such as cohesion and coherence. It deals with important segments of speech and why they have been uttered, to whom and the kind of relationship between the speaker and the listener.

In example 32 above, the theme of the first clause, *an utterance*, which has been substituted by the pronoun *it*, has been used as the theme in a series of sentences. This is also true for example 33 where the pronoun *it* has been used in the third clause to refer to the same theme *Discourse analysis*. This kind of theme application in a number of sentences is one of the characteristics of the constant progression pattern. This pattern has proved particularly important in maintaining the theme of the initial sentence as students are helped to stick to the initial theme.

4.1.3.1.3 Split progression pattern

The split progression pattern was identified in the examination scripts only. Examples 34 and 35 below show how this pattern was implemented.

34. The teaching of English can be improved through the application of *cohesion and coherence*. Cohesion enhances the use of cohesive ties or semantic interpretation of a given text. It also helps one understand the sentence meaning of a given piece of discourse. Coherence helps the students to understand the meaning of a text even without the semantic interpretation.

35. Pupils are introduced to Concepts such as *cohesion and coherence* so as to help them understand what structure is. Cohesion links utterance or written discourse through the use of cohesive ties. Coherence on the other hand links utterance or sentences to make a unified whole.

In the first sentences of example 34 and 35, the expression '*cohesion and coherence*' has been introduced in the rheme. *Cohesion* which is the first idea in the rheme has been used as the theme in sentences two and three of example 34 and sentence two of example 35, while in sentence four of 34 and sentence three of 35, *coherence* which is the second idea in the rheme of the first sentence has been used as the theme. From the above examples, it is easy to deduce that ideas introduced in the rheme of one clause can be split and developed into themes of different subsequent sentences. Sometimes, instead of splitting ideas, the ideas are combined in two different patterns. At this level the patterns that were combined to corroborate ideas are simple linear progression pattern and constant progression pattern culminating into the linear constant progression pattern.

4.1.3.1.4 Linear constant progression pattern

The linear constant progression pattern was only identified in the examination scripts at academic level three. In this pattern, the idea in the rheme is developed into a theme in the sentences that follow as shown in example 36 below.

36. Discourse analysis is also a very important component in *composition writing*. For a composition to be coherent, the teacher has to teach the concepts of theme

and rheme. For any composition to be coherent, the teacher presents various kinds of compositions to the pupils.

In example 36, the phrase *composition writing* which is the rheme of the first sentence has been used as the theme of the subsequent sentences. This scenario shows a movement in progression from the simple linear progression pattern, to the constant progression pattern hence the name linear constant progression. This kind of theme-rheme application improves the concatenation of ideas in a paragraph by avoiding ruptures and brand-new themes thereby enhancing discourse coherence.

4.1.3.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns

Five patterns were identified as obscuring coherence at academic level three. These patterns include the brand new theme, the empty rheme, the empty use of *there*, the use of the dummy *it* and incomplete split progression.

4.1.3.2.1 Brand new theme

The problem of the brand new theme contributed significantly to incoherence in the written pieces of work among the students at this academic level, as illustrated in examples 37 and 38 below.

37. *Utterances* are physical events. *They* can either be loud or quiet. **The accent and voice quality** are some of the characteristics. *Utterance meaning* usually includes sentence meaning.

38. *Pupils* are taught the meaning of the structures, how they are used and when and where to apply them. *They* are taught how to use pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives. **By using cleftness**, there is a lot of exposure to a lot of alternatives in sentence transformation.

In examples 37 and 38 provided above, the first two sentences contain the same themes which are *utterances* and *pupils* respectively resulting in the ideas being

concatenated. The third sentence in each example, however, has introduced a new theme *the accent and voice quality* in 37 and by *using cleftness* in 38 which is different from the initial theme. This introduction has caused a breakdown in the logical flow of information because there is no relationship between the initial themes in the examples and the newly introduced themes in the third sentences. Instead of developing the newly introduced theme in example 37, the initial theme has been reintroduced creating a problem of ‘jump back’. This is an indication of poor organization skills.

4.1.3.2.2 Empty rheme

Use of the empty rheme was also identified in some of the students’ written pieces of discourse at this level of study as illustrated in 39 and 40 below.

39. Discourse analysis *is very useful*.

40. Discourse analysis *is also important in schools*.

In the examples presented in 39 and 40 above, the rhemes which comprise the phrases *is very useful* and *is also important* in 39 and 40 respectively, are considered empty of content because they do not provide any information about the *usefulness* and *importance* of the themes.

4.1.3.2.3 Empty use of *there*

The use of the empty adverbial *there* was also observed at academic level three regardless of the thematic development pattern coming either before or after this item as illustrated in 41 and 42 below.

41. *Composition* is another component that has shown that Discourse analysis is relevant to the teaching of English language. *This* is done by the use of cohesive tie. **There** is also the concept of organization of information in discourse analysis.

42. *Discourse analysis* helps in the interpretation of the syllabus. *The syllabus* is made of objectives. **There** are certain objectives such as the one which says that at the end of grade nine pupils should be able to manipulate the English language in order to be flexible in communication.

From examples 41 and 42 above, it will be observed that the theme of the third sentences of each example which is *there*, is meaningless because it does not refer to either the theme or the rheme of the previous sentences.

4.1.3.2.4 Use of the dummy *it*

The use of the dummy *it* was also identified at academic level three. The application of this pronoun created serious problems of ruptures in the presentation of ideas in some of the students' written pieces of discourse as shown in examples 43 and 44 below.

43. *Discourse analysis* is relevant to the teaching of English in secondary schools. **It** is only through utterances that one is able to understand meaning.

44. *One proposition* can be expressed by using several different sentences and each of these sentences could be uttered in infinite number of utterances. **It** is worthy noting that a proposition can be expressed in many languages.

From the examples cited above, it will be noticed that the pronoun *it*, as used in the second sentence of 43 and 44, is empty of content because it does not refer to a specific item in the previous sentence.

4.1.3.2.5 Incomplete split progression

The problem of incomplete split progression was quite evident at this level as shown in example 45 below:

45. *The teaching of structure* comprises sentence transformation and formation. *Sentence transformation* can be achieved through the knowledge of cleftness. **The knowledge of pragmatic inferencing** is also important in the teaching of comprehension.

In example 45 above, the information which has been captured in the rheme of the first sentence is *sentence transformation* and *formation*. Part of this information, which is *sentence transformation*, has become the theme of the second sentence. However, nothing has been discussed on sentence *formation*. Instead, a new theme *the knowledge of pragmatic inferencing* has been introduced disrupting the flow of information. This failure to develop the other information into the theme has created a rupture as nothing new about sentence *formation* has been provided.

4.1.4 Academic Level Four

4.1.4.1 Coherence-Enhancing Thematic Progression Patterns

At academic level four, five coherence-enhancing thematic progression patterns were identified. These included simple linear progression, constant progression, split progression, constant linear progression and linear constant progression. In the test scripts, three patterns were used: simple linear, constant and linear constant progression. The test question demanded that the students compare theory x and theory y as propounded by Douglass McGregor. In the examination scripts, four patterns were used: simple linear, constant, split and constant linear progression. The examination question required the students to discuss the relevance of Discourse Analysis to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia. The simple linear and constant progression patterns were the most frequently used patterns in both the test and the examination scripts. Others include split progression, constant linear progression and linear constant progression as discussed in the subsequent sections.

4.1.4.1.1 Simple linear progression pattern

The simple linear progression pattern was identified in both the test and the examination scripts. Examples 46 and 47 below represent the cross-referential links from the rheme of one clause to the theme of the following clause.

46. Theory X states that *man is a busy and dull creature*. He does not like to work.

47. The main aim of teaching English is to enable pupils to use the language *flexibly and coherently*. This can be done by exposing the pupils to *cohesive ties*. These ties are relevant in the teaching of structure to *the pupils*. They can also apply knowledge of the world especially bottom up for the purpose of word building.

In example 46 the segment *man is a busy and dull creature*, which is the rheme of the first clause, has become the theme of the next clause in *He does not like to work*. Instead of using the same noun *man*, the substitute pronoun *he* has been used in the second clause. The development of ideas in this manner is typical of the simple linear progression pattern. Further, in example 47, the phrase *flexible and coherent* which is part of the rheme has become the theme of the following sentence although it has been substituted by the demonstrative pronoun *this*. The rheme of the second sentence is *cohesive ties*. This has been substituted by the noun phrase *these ties* in the theme position of the following sentence. The rheme of this particular sentence has part of the information which is *the pupils* substituted by the pronoun *they* in the theme of the following sentence. This particular observance of theme-rheme usage is supported by Fries (1983) who suggests that the cross-referential links from the rheme of one clause to the theme of the next clause contribute massively to the expansion of ideas from the previous sentence to the next one which in most cases leads to sentence coherence. What Fries is suggesting is the definition of simple linear progression. The type of question asked leads to the application of this pattern. It was discovered that

the pattern was more prominent in the argumentative questions in the examination scripts than in the comparative questions in the test scripts.

4.1.4.1.2 Constant progression pattern

Like the simple linear progression pattern, the constant progression pattern was applied in both the test and the examination scripts at the fourth level of study as illustrated in examples 48 and 49 below.

48. Theory x states that man is lousy, lazy and doesn't want to work. It states that man is a cynical who wants to be told what to do or pushed to do something and wants to be rewarded for doing that thing. It argues that man does not like to work because he is a lazy creature.

49. Pupils can use the knowledge of pragmatic inferencing in comprehension exercises. They can infer the implied meaning of a text by using the context and co-text of a text. They can also apply knowledge of the world to understand a text.

In examples 48 and 49 above, it is observed that the theme of the first sentence has been selected as the theme of the following sentences. In example 48, the theme which is *theory x*, is used as the theme for the two subsequent sentences, though represented by the pronoun *it*. In example 49, the noun *pupils* which is the theme of the first clause has also been selected as the theme of the following clauses, though represented by the equivalent pronoun *they* in order to avoid repetition. From the examples, it can be concluded that the type of question asked plays a defining role on the type of pronouns used as substitute themes. This is because constant progression is characterized by the application of pronouns. At this level of study, however, more instances of the pattern were found in the test scripts than in the examination scripts.

4.1.4.1.3 Split progression pattern

At academic level four, the split progression pattern was only identified in the examination scripts. Examples 50 and 51 below illustrate how the fourth year students presented this pattern.

50. Discourse analysis is the study of language in use and this study predominantly deals with *cohesion and coherence effects*. Cohesion is the study that looks at the texture of discourse in relation to reference, substitution, conjunction, comparative and other similar variables applicable to the study. Coherence deals with meaning in a unified text or conversation.

51. Discourse analysis provides the pupils with the techniques to use when writing *narrative and descriptive compositions*. When writing narratives, ideas are organized as the event is unfolding. In descriptive writing, a pupil has to understand how to present ideas in his writing from general to specific.

Examples 50 and 51 above show that two ideas have been introduced in the rheme of the first clause. In the second clause one of the ideas from the previous rheme, that of *cohesion* in example 50, and *writing of narrative compositions* in example 51, respectively, has been chosen as the theme of the following clause. In the third clause, the theme is the second idea from the rheme of the first clause, which is *coherence* in 50 and *descriptive writing* in 51 respectively. It can be deduced, therefore, that the type of question determines the application of the split progression pattern in a given piece of discourse.

4.1.4.1.4 Constant linear progression pattern

The constant linear progression pattern was identified only in the examination scripts where the question was argumentative. In this pattern, the ideas are developed from Constant Progression to Simple Linear Progression as shown in example 52 below.

52. Discourse Analysis is relevant to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia. Its relevance will be seen in the way a teacher who has done discourse analysis will handle the situation by *the knowledge of cohesion and coherence*. This knowledge will make the teacher be able to use cohesive ties, such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, comparative and even lexical cohesion.

In example 52 above, the theme of the first clause is *discourse analysis* which is also the theme of the second clause. However, the theme of the third clause *this knowledge* has been derived from the rheme of the second clause which is *the knowledge of cohesion and coherence*. This type of organization of information results in the combination of constant and linear progression. The level of study and the type of question plays a determinant role in the application of this pattern.

4.1.4.1.5 Linear constant progression

Linear constant progression is achieved by combining ideas in such a way that the Simple Linear Progression leads to Constant Progression. This happens when the information in the rheme of a clause is developed into the theme of the following sentences. The pattern was only identified in the test scripts as shown in examples 53 and 54 below.

53. The x and y theory was propounded by *Douglaus Macgregory*. He argued that each manager in an organization deals with employees who have either the Y or X characteristics. He argued further that X are workers who do not like to work unless they are forced to do so.

54. Theory x advances *that human beings are naturally dull and lazy*. *They* do not want to work and given a chance, they would do nothing. *They* work to be pushed or forced to do anything.

In example 53, the rheme of the first sentence, which is *Douglaus Macgregory*, has become the theme of the two subsequent sentences. The pronoun *he* has been used in

the subsequent sentences as a substitute word for Douglass Macgregory. Additionally, in example 54, the rheme of the first sentence, which is *that human beings are naturally dull and lazy* has been substituted with the pronoun *they* and has been used as the theme in the following sentences. This is intended to avoid repetition. From the examples, it can be deduced that pronouns are a very important attribute in the application of this pattern as they help enhance coherence.

4.1.4.2 Coherence-Obscuring Thematic Progression Patterns

At academic level four, four patterns were identified as obscuring discourse coherence. These include the brand new theme, the empty rheme, the empty use of *there* and the use of the dummy *it*.

4.1.4.2.1 Brand new theme

Like other academic levels discussed above, the problem of the brand new theme was identified in a few scripts at academic level four. As in the other cases, the use of the brand new theme created ruptures in the logical flow of information as shown in example 55 and 56 below.

55. Pupils are taught the meaning of the structures, how they are used, when and where to apply them. *They* are taught how to use pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives. **The concept of cleftness** exposes the pupils to sentence transformation.

56. Pupils can use pragmatic inferencing in some comprehension exercises. *They* can infer the implied meaning of a text by using context and co-text. **Discourse analysis** is very important in the teaching of summary.

The themes of the first two sentences in examples 55 and 56 above are the same. However, instead of developing the information in the rheme of the second sentence, brand new themes which are, *the concept of cleftness* in example 55 and *discourse*

analysis in example 56 respectively, have been introduced in the third sentences creating a breakdown in the logical flow of information.

4.1.4.2.2 Empty rheme

Pieces of written discourse presented at academic level four also exhibited the problem of the empty rheme. This is shown in examples 57 and 58 below.

57. In the teaching of comprehension, frame, schemata, bottom-up and top-down processing of information *are aspects that are of great importance*.

58. The knowledge of discourse analysis *is the most important in schools*.

The information in the rhemes of examples 57 and 58 which are *are of great importance* and *is the most important in schools* respectively, are empty of content because they do not contain any new information.

4.1.4.2.3 Empty use of *there*

The use of the empty adverbial *there* was also observed at academic level four regardless of the thematic development pattern coming either before or after this item as illustrated in examples 59 and 60 below.

59. *Cohesive ties such as conjunctions, ellipsis, substitution and lexical cohesion* are helpful in teaching of English. *These* help the teacher to teach the pupils to avoid repetition and use of appropriate vocabulary. **There** has to be a link between all the sentences in the written composition.

60. *Discourse Analysis* helps the teacher in the sense that he/she having the knowledge of cohesive ties will enable him to teach the pupils how to avoid repetitions of the same words. **There** also is the aspect of thematic consistence in discourse analysis which is very important.

Examples 59 and 60 above show that the theme for the third sentence in 59 and that for the second in 60, which is *there*, is new and empty of content as it does not relate to any pieces of information presented in the previous sentences.

4.1.4.2.4 Use of the dummy *it*

The use of dummy *it* also created serious problems of ruptures in the presentation of ideas in some of the students' written pieces of discourse at academic level four because there was no clear reference to either the theme or the rheme of the previous sentence as shown in examples 61 and 62 below.

61. Teachers are advised to give meanings of words from the context of use and the knowledge of word building. **When it** comes to the actual teaching of the English language, content material and discourse analysis come in very handy.

62. *The English language* is the language for official communication and is used for official purposes in the government, the media, the judiciary and other important wings of the national interest. **It** is in this light that discourse analysis becomes relevant.

The pronoun *it* as used in the second sentences of example 61 and 62 above is meaningless because it does not refer to any idea mentioned in the preceding sentences. This application also creates ruptures in the flow of information resulting in discourse incoherence.

4.2 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the thematic progression patterns which enhance as well as those which obscure coherence at each level of study. The findings have revealed that the constant progression pattern was the most frequently used at all levels of study to enhance discourse coherence. It was followed by the simple linear progression pattern. The other patterns such as split progression, linear constant progression and constant linear progression were also used at certain levels depending on the type of

question asked. Further findings indicate that the most prominent patterns that obscured coherence at all levels of study included the introduction of the brand new theme, the use of the empty rheme, the empty use of the adverbial *there* and the use of the dummy *it*. Others which were unique to specific levels of study are split theme progression and the use of conversational personal pronouns at academic level one, and incomplete split progression at academic level three. The discussion of findings, conclusion, implications and recommendations are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 General

The previous chapter presented the findings of the study on coherence-enhancing and coherence-obscuring thematic progression patterns according to the research participants' academic levels. Under each academic level, the thematic progression patterns were identified as either enhancing or obscuring coherence. It was observed that the type of progression pattern applied varied according to both the participants' academic levels and the type of questions to which the scripts analysed were a response. It was also observed that more complex patterns such as linear constant progression, constant linear progression and split rheme progression were only used at the higher academic levels of either third or fourth year and that the application of both coherence-enhancing and coherence-obscuring patterns was common at all the four academic levels. The present chapter presents and discusses the two types of thematic progression patterns mentioned above with special reference to the last two research questions which sought to establish whether or not there was a relationship between thematic progression patterns and discourse coherence as well as whether or not there were any specific thematic progression patterns which could be recommended for application by University of Zambia students.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

5.1.1 Thematic Progression Patterns which Enhanced Coherence

This section of the dissertation discusses the thematic progression patterns which facilitated coherence in the examined scripts. From the findings presented in Chapter Four, there are five thematic progression patterns which ensured coherence. These are: the simple linear progression pattern, the constant progression pattern, the split progression pattern, the linear constant progression pattern and the constant linear progression pattern. The hyper-thematic progression pattern, though a possibility, was not displayed in any of the scripts at any of the academic levels of study. Table 13 shows the prevalence of these patterns at each level of study.

Table 13: Thematic progression patterns used by students by academic levels of study

Academic level of study	Thematic progression patterns					
	Constant progression	Simple linear progression	Split progression	Hyper-thematic progression	Constant linear progression	Linear constant progression
1	68	13	0	0	0	0
2	60	21	0	0	12	0
3	64	25	13	0	0	12
4	75	34	13	0	12	16
Total	267	93	26	0	24	28

The results presented in Table 13 show that the constant progression pattern was the most frequently used facility at all academic levels in all the scripts which were analysed. The simple linear progression was the second most preferred progression pattern, followed by the linear constant progression pattern though used only at the third and the fourth academic levels. The split progression pattern was the fourth preferred and was also used only at third and fourth academic levels. The constant linear progression pattern as used at second and fourth academic levels, was the least while the hyperthematic progression pattern was not used by any student at any academic level of study.

5.1.1.1 Constant progression pattern

The constant progression pattern was the most dominantly used pattern at all the levels of study. In this pattern, common themes appear in sequences in a series of sentences. Fries (2001) describes this as topically linked thematic progression pattern. At academic level one, the application of this pattern accounted for 92 percent in both the tests and the examination scripts while 80 percent of the pattern was used in the test scripts and 56 percent in the examination scripts at academic level two. At the third academic level, 88 percent was used in both the test and the examination scripts while at the fourth academic level there was 100 percent application of the pattern in both the test and the examination scripts. These results suggest that there is a strong relationship between the application of constant progression and discourse coherence

as indicated through the theme-rheme application in the essays at the different levels of study and as presented in Table 14 below:

Table 14: Frequency of constant progression pattern

Test scripts				Examination scripts		
Academic level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	23	92	25	23	92
2	25	20	80	25	14	56
3	25	22	88	25	22	87
4	25	25	100	25	25	100
TOTAL	100	90		100	84	

It will be observed from Table 14 above that there were more instances of the constant progression pattern at level four than at any other academic level. One of the reasons is that since the pattern takes the same element as the point of departure for all the clauses, it is easier to comprehend and makes it easier for the readers to find information. Another reason is that the type of questions that were asked at this academic level required students to be aware of the importance of sticking to the initial theme in a particular paragraph. However, there was more application of the constant progression pattern at academic level one than levels two and three. In a number of cases, the same theme was repeated several times in a series of sentences at this academic level. The reason for this is that the pattern is the easiest to use and that information is reiterated so that the beginners do not lose thread of the theme or the idea under discussion. The other reason is that the type of question asked at this level demanded that the students keep referring to the theme which was also the subject. Nicholas (1984) confirms the claim by stating that a single structural element can conflate various functions such as subject, theme and given information. Generally, it was observed that the comparative questions exhibited more instances of the constant progression pattern than the argumentative ones in both the test and the examination scripts at all the levels of study. The reason may be that in a comparative question it is easier to develop ideas because the writer sticks to the initial theme in the subsequent sentences. This style of theme-rheme presentation is supported by

Wang (2007) who states that starting a sentence with the same theme in both the initial and subsequent sentences is especially useful in helping students to communicate their ideas successfully.

One of the characteristics of the constant progression pattern was the substitution of the initial theme which was mostly a noun by personal pronouns in the subsequent sentences. Sade (2007:68) supports this observation by saying that “constant progression is realized mainly by pronouns and nouns that refer back to the initial theme.” These pronouns and nouns are mostly anaphorically used in the essays meaning that they refer to information presented in a stretch of preceding discourse (Francis, 1989). Although there were very few instances of pronouns used anaphorically in the sentences that followed at academic level one, the most dominant pronoun used in the test scripts was ‘*she*’ while in the examination scripts, only the pronoun ‘*it*’ was identified. The rest was a repetition of the same theme. At level two, three different pronouns were identified. The pronouns *he* and *it* were used in the examination scripts while the pronoun ‘*they*’ was used in the test scripts at academic level two. For academic level three only the pronoun ‘*it*’ was used in both the test and the examination scripts. At academic level four, the most dominant pronouns were ‘*they*’ and ‘*it*’ which were used in both the test and the examination scripts respectively. The variations in the type of substitute words or pronouns used to enhance the application of the constant progression pattern can be ascribed to the different questions that were asked at the different levels of study.

At level one the substitution of the theme with the pronouns mentioned above was so clumsy that the themes appeared as though they were a list of items as illustrated in 63 below.

63. Atalanta on the other hand is more than a woman. *She* cannot easily be changed. *She* wrestles with men. *She* even outraces them. *She* even defeated the hero Pelvis at the funeral games at one time.

In example 63 above, *Atalanta* is the initial theme of the paragraph which has been substituted by the pronoun *she* in the second clause and in all the other subsequent

clauses. Despite this repetition in the application of the theme in the subsequent sentences, the sentences are still correct except that they look monotonous. This type of theme application helps students at the first academic level to stick to the main theme of discussion.

Similar to academic level one, students at academic level two exhibited very few instances of substitute themes in the development of ideas using the constant progression pattern. Most of the themes were a repetition of the initial theme in a clause. Rarely were the personal pronouns used in the scripts analysed. Only 25 percent of the examination scripts exhibited the use of personal pronouns and 30 percent of the pronouns were used in the test scripts. Several themes at this level were just a repetition of the same initial theme in a series of sentences in a paragraph as in example 64 below.

64. Inflectional *morphemes* do not change the meaning of the word to which it has been added. *Inflectional morphemes* are fully productive. *Inflectional morphemes* have a grammatical form and are not opaque. *Inflectional morphemes* are placed outside the derivational morphemes and are also placed outside the world. *Inflectional morphemes* always come after the word to which they have been added.

In example 64 above the initial theme *inflectional morpheme*, which is theme in the initial sentence, is presented as theme in all the subsequent sentences. Even though they are repetitions, the sentences are still correct and coherent. The reason for the repetition of the theme especially at academic level two is due to the comparative type of question asked. In addition, this pattern is the easiest to use for one to maintain track of the idea under discussion.

It was also observed that the constant progression pattern was presented across paragraphs at levels two, three and four. Danes (1974) indicates that the theme sentence of a paragraph can be related to either the new parts of the preceding

paragraph or to some part of the initial theme of the sentence. The application of the same theme in the first clause in a series of paragraphs is referred to as macro theme (Mechura, valselob@hotmail.com). One of the examples where the same theme is used across paragraphs is shown in 65 below.

65. *Derivational morphemes unlike the inflectional morphemes* change the meaning of the word to which they have been added. When the derivational morpheme ‘un’ which has a negative connotation is added to the word comfortable, it changes the meaning of the word and it becomes ‘uncomfortable’.

Derivational morphemes are not productive. They are also opaque in that after an addition of derivational morpheme there is no clear or no relation between the formed word and the supposed meaning of the separate words.

Derivational morphemes have syntactic role. They also have a lexical form. Derivational morphemes can be placed either at the beginning of a word or at the end of the word.

In example 65 above ‘*derivational morphemes*’ which is the theme of the initial sentence of the first paragraph is also the theme of the two subsequent paragraphs. This type of presentation of the theme can be attributed to the type of questions that were asked at these levels of study. The questions were either comparative or argumentative. The application of constant progression to maintain the macro theme at paragraph level contributed greatly to thematic consistency. The reason for this type of theme application is to provide a clear insight on the theme of the whole text. Despite the various applications of this particular pattern at the mentioned academic levels, certain problems were identified.

One of the problems identified with this type of application of constant progression is that ideas are presented as though they were just lists of items. To avoid the monotony of using constant progression in this manner, it would be better to vary the

use of words while sticking to the same theme. For instance in example 63 above, Atalanta could have been substituted with such expressions as *a female hunter, wrestler or daughter of the wilderness*.

Another problem that was observed at academic level one and two, is the application of the empty personal pronouns *you* and the dummy *it*. Generally, this problem was noticed after application of the constant progression pattern as shown in examples 66 and 67 below.

66. *Fertility* is one of the components of demography that influences population growth. *It* is the number of births that occur in a population. *It* is very important to note that fertility can be measured through women and not men.

67. *Inflectional morphemes* are also very productive. *They* also inflect for tense. *You* can easily add other morphemes like *-ing, s* and *ly* to the stem.

The pronouns *it* and *you* in examples 66 and 67 above do not refer to anything mentioned earlier. Consequently, they do not give any extra meaning to the clauses in any way. Research has shown that the extensive use of the first/second person, especially in the initial thematic position, is typical of personal narratives and speech not formal essay writing (Thompson, 2003; Biber et al 1999; Brown & Yule 1983; Fries 1995). This problem contributes greatly to the ruptures in between sentences. The concept of ruptures was also used by Fontaine and Kodratoff (2003) when they compared texts for native and non-native writers of English. The problem of ruptures precipitates the introduction of new themes in most sentences resulting in discourse incoherence.

Arising from the analysis presented above, it can be deduced that the application of the constant progression pattern is neither question-specific nor level-of-study specific. The implication of this conclusion, therefore, is that the constant progression pattern can be used at any academic level and with any type of question. It is one of

the patterns that should be recommended for use by students at the University of Zambia because it is easier and helps students at all levels to stick to the theme introduced in the initial clause of the paragraph. Another pattern that was quite commonly used by the students is the simple linear progression pattern.

5.1.1.2 Simple linear progression pattern

The findings reveal that the simple linear progression pattern was applied at all academic levels of study, mostly after the application of the constant progression pattern. Academic level one recorded the lowest occurrence of this pattern. In the test scripts, the pattern was absent and only five instances of the pattern were identified in the end-of-semester examination scripts. This reflects 20 percent of the total exhibition of the pattern. One of the reasons for the absence of this pattern in the test scripts for students at academic level one can be accredited to poor organization skills and lack of information on the use of given and new information which resulted in most of the essays at this level being incoherent. Nwogu (1995) acknowledges this fact by indicating that knowledge of given and new information accounts for effective organization of information in a text.

The findings were different at second, third and fourth year levels. At second year level, 20 percent of the scripts demonstrated the application of the simple linear progression pattern in the test scripts and 60 percent in the examination scripts. The frequency in the use of the simple linear progression pattern at academic level three further improved by 48 percent in the test and 88 percent in the examination scripts. In the two academic levels, there is a significant increase in the use of the pattern from the tests to the examinations. The explanation is that by the time the students write their examinations, they would have written many assignments that might have required them to expand new information in the rheme position of an initial sentence to given information in the theme position of the subsequent sentences. The application of the pattern was so prevalent at academic level four that 100 percent was recorded in both the test and the examination scripts. This finding shows that students at academic level four are able to expand new information in the rheme of

the previous sentence by making it given information in the theme of the following sentence. Li and Liu (2005) confirm this by stating that the rheme of a particular sentence may introduce the new point of departure which further introduces a new theme. The information about the frequency of occurrence of the simple linear progression pattern at all academic levels is presented in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Frequency of simple linear progression pattern

Test scripts				Examination scripts		
Academic level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	0	0	25	5	20
2	25	5	20	25	15	60
3	25	12	48	25	22	88
4	25	25	100	25	25	100
TOTAL	100	42		100	67	

Table 15 shows that the frequency in the application of the simple linear progression pattern improved from the time the tests were administered to the time of writing the examinations. There was also a progressive increase in the application of the pattern from one level of study to the next. Students at academic level four dominated in the use of the pattern in both the test and the examination scripts because by the time they reach this level of study, they would have gained more experience in text organization and in handling complex questions which demand that ideas be developed from rheme to theme. Since only two types of questions were asked at all the levels of study, it would be erroneous to conclude that only the type of question determines the type of pattern to be used at a particular level of study. Instead, it would be safer to attribute the use of the simple linear progression pattern to both the level of study and the type of question as revealed from the scripts analysed.

Another observation made in the application of the simple linear progression pattern is that it was often restricted to two clauses at academic levels one and two. As a result, there was a rupture in the flow of ideas, as a new theme was randomly introduced which was different from the theme discussed previously. One possible reason for this

occurrence is that at these lower levels of study students have not yet mastered the correct application of such a complex pattern. However, for academic level four, most of the applications of the simple linear progression pattern exceeded two sentences. Consequently, the ideas flowed smoothly and coherently as information in the rheme of a particular clause automatically became given information in the subsequent clause in most of the scripts. For academic level two, it was noticed that most of the instances of the pattern in the test scripts were employed across paragraphs. Generally, this was shown in the connection between the rheme of the last sentence being developed into the theme of the first sentence of the following paragraph.

It was a common trend among students, at all academic levels, to repeat the element from the rheme to the theme of the following clause. However, only students at academic level two made fewer attempts to substitute the elements in the rheme with their pronoun equivalents in the theme of the following sentence as exemplified 68 below.

68. In some agencies they give a time frame for *the process to end*. *It* comes to an end when both the client and the case worker are satisfied.

In example 68 above, the phrase '*the process to end*' has been substituted by the pronoun '*it*'. The reason for the successful substitution of this phrase with the pronoun can be attributed to the type of question that was asked. For levels three and four the demonstratives '*this*' and '*these*' were used to refer to the information in the rheme. All this was done to avoid repetition and to achieve coherence.

The application of the simple linear progression pattern plays a critical role in achieving coherence in an essay or text. Firbas (1976) supports this observation by pointing out that the rheme represents the core of the utterance and 'pushes the communication forward'. In other words the rheme provides important information which is elaborated later in the theme position of the following sentence. The

application of this pattern is very important at all levels as new information in the rheme is expanded in the theme of the subsequent sentences.

The application of the simple linear progression pattern was also identified at all the academic levels of study. Academic level one was the least in the application of the pattern. The analysis reveals that the pattern was more dominant in the argumentative questions than in the comparative ones. Another observation is that the frequency in the application of the pattern increased with the level of study. The reason for the increase in the application of the pattern from one level to the next is attributed to the need to expand information from the rheme to the theme as the questions become more complex especially at levels three and four. The findings of the research reveal that the application of the simple linear progression pattern depended so much on both the type of question asked and the level of study. Because of this, it would be advisable for all students at all academic levels to be encouraged to use the pattern in their written pieces of discourse in order to enhance coherence

5.1.1.3 Split progression pattern

As already alluded to in the previous chapter, in split progression pattern, the rheme of the first clause is split into two items which are then presented as separate theme elements in the clauses that follow. In all the scripts that were analysed, only scripts produced by participants at academic levels three and four attempted to apply this pattern correctly. The pattern was displayed in 20 percent of the examination scripts at academic level three. Another 20 percent of the pattern was identified in the examination scripts at academic level four. Table 16 below shows the frequency of the pattern as applied by the students.

Table 16: Frequency of application of split progression pattern

Test scripts				Examination scripts		
Academic level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	0	0	25	0	0
2	25	0	0	25	0	0
3	25	0	0	25	5	20
4	25	0	0	25	5	20
TOTAL	100	0		100	10	

Table 16 reveals that only students at third and fourth academic levels used this pattern in the examination scripts but not in the test scripts. This development could be attributed to the fact that at these higher levels, students would have been sufficiently exposed to a variety of questions that required them to expand information from the rheme to the theme. The other reason is the type of question asked. Even though all the academic levels were asked both argumentative and comparative questions, the questions were not exactly the same. However, the third and fourth year students of Discourse Analysis wrote the same examination and were subjected to the same type of question since the course is offered to both third and fourth year students at the same time. Depending on the type of question, students at all levels may be encouraged to apply this pattern. Since the application of this pattern seems to be so dependent on the type of question asked, the knowledge of the pattern will help students at all levels to be particularly conscious in dealing with information in the rheme so that no information is left unattended to. Other patterns that were discovered during the analysis are constant linear progression and linear constant progression.

5.1.1.4 Constant linear progression pattern

The findings revealed that only students at academic levels two and four applied the constant linear progression pattern in their scripts. At both levels, 16 percent of the scripts displayed the pattern. The pattern was absent at academic levels one and three. The reason for the lower percentage and the lack of connectivity of the patterns from

constant to linear progression by the students is attributed to lack of knowledge on theme and rheme observances. This lack of knowledge caused a number of ruptures and the introduction of brand new themes in most of the sentences resulting in incoherence. Table 17 below shows the frequency of the pattern.

Table 17: Frequency of application of constant linear progression pattern

Test scripts				Examination scripts		
Academic level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	0	0	25	0	0
2	25	4	16	25	0	0
3	25	0	0	25	0	0
4	25	0	0	25	4	16
TOTAL	100	4		100	4	

Table 17 shows that the constant linear progression pattern was only used in the argumentative questions at both second and fourth academic levels. Despite being applied by students at the two levels, the constant linear progression pattern was the least utilized in the investigated corpus. The low application of the pattern by the students is linked to the complexity associated with the combination of constant and linear progression. However, the application of this pattern should be encouraged because it improves the flow of information and solves the problem of ruptures and introduction of brand new themes. Another combination like constant linear progression is linear constant progression.

5.1.1.5 Linear constant progression pattern

The findings indicate that only scripts produced by participants at academic levels three and four exhibited the presence of the linear constant progression pattern. At academic level three 16 percent of the scripts applied the pattern while at the fourth academic level 40 percent of the scripts displayed the application of the linear constant progression pattern. The frequencies are presented in Table 18 below:

Table 18: Frequency of the application of linear constant progression pattern

Test script results				Examination script results		
Academic level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	0	0	25	0	0
2	25	0	0	25	0	0
3	25	4	16	25	0	0
4	25	0	0	25	10	40
TOTAL	100	4		100	10	

From the results indicated in Table 18 above, the development of ideas from linear to constant progression was displayed more in the examination scripts produced by students at academic level 4 than in the test scripts produced by students at academic level three. The findings reveal that, despite the pattern being identified in both argumentative and comparative questions, there were more instances of the pattern in the argumentative question at level four than in the comparative question at level three. The conclusion is that the application of this pattern is dependant on both the type of question asked and the participants' academic level of study. This is so because only students at senior academic levels used the pattern despite the differences in the type of questions asked. The findings have also shown that the correct application of this pattern enhances coherence. Because of this, it would be advisable that all students at all academic levels use the pattern as it would definitely solve the problem of incoherence in their written pieces of discourse.

Inappropriate handling of the flow of information between theme and rheme in the scripts that were analysed resulted in the introduction of the brand new theme, the double rheme and the empty rheme. The application of these thematic progression patterns resulted in lack of logical flow of information and, consequently, lack of discourse coherence. Wang (2007) and Bloor and Bloor (1992) identify these strategies of thematic development as the most common problems that obscure coherence in the students' written discourse. The other problems identified in the scripts included: empty use of *there*, use of the dummy *it*, incomplete split progression, split (theme) progression and the use of the conversational personal

pronouns. However, the problem of the double rheme was not identified in any of the analysed scripts.

5.1.2 Thematic Progression Patterns which Obscured Coherence

5.1.2.0 General

This part of the dissertation discusses the thematic progression patterns which obscured coherence in the analysed written pieces of discourse produced by some University of Zambia students. They include: brand new theme, empty rheme, empty use of *there*, use of the dummy *it*, incomplete split progression, split (theme) progression and use of the conversational personal pronouns.

5.1.2.1 Brand new theme

The problem of the brand new theme has been noted at all academic levels. As stated earlier, it was observed that before an idea introduced in the initial theme of a sentence was exhaustively substantiated, a new theme was introduced. This was usually followed by a ‘jump back’ to the previous theme, in some of the scripts, with a view to providing further explanation. Among all the academic levels, academic level one displayed the highest occurrence of the pattern with 60 percent and 68 percent in the test and examination scripts respectively. However, the fourth academic level displayed the least application of the brand new theme with 12 percent in the test and 20 percent in the examination scripts. This is information is summarized in Table 19 below.

Table 19: Frequency of the application of brand new theme

Test scripts				Examination scripts		
Academic level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	15	60	25	17	68
2	25	10	40	25	12	48
3	25	8	32	25	10	40
4	25	3	12	25	5	20
TOTAL	100	36		100	44	

The information in Table 19 shows that the problem of the brand new theme was particularly prevalent in the scripts analysed at all levels of study especially in the argumentative questions. This approach to organization of information creates a sudden breakdown in the logical flow of information resulting in discourse incoherence. The problem can be solved by maintaining the application of the same theme in a series of sentences or by incorporating the rheme in the initial or the second sentence as the theme of the following sentences.

5.1.2.2 Empty rheme

The problem of the empty rheme was also identified at all academic levels with academic level one displaying the highest frequency. As observed earlier, the empty rheme is experienced when new information is presented in the theme position instead of the rheme position. At academic level one, 20 and 40 percent of the pattern was identified in the test and examination scripts respectively. At academic level two, 12 percent was identified in both the test and the examination scripts while 28 percent was identified at academic level three in both the test and the examination scripts. The least application of the pattern was identified at academic level four with 8 percent and 12 percent frequency in the test and examination scripts respectively. This is illustrated in Table 20 below:

Table 20: Frequency of the application of empty rheme

Test script results				Examination script results		
Academic level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	5	20	25	10	40
2	25	3	12	25	3	12
3	25	7	28	25	7	28
4	25	2	8	25	3	12
TOTAL	100	17		100	23	

Table 20 shows that the problem of the empty rheme was experienced by students at all the four academic levels. The empty rheme created a rupture in the flow of information as the participants failed to expand on the initial argument in the rheme

resulting in discourse incoherence. One way of overcoming this problem is to add new content to the rheme in order to complete it.

5.1.2.3 Empty use of *there*

The empty use of the adverbial *there* was observed at all academic levels regardless of the thematic development pattern coming either before or after this item. It was used haphazardly at all levels of study. The frequency of this application among the scripts analysed at different levels of study is shown in Table 21 below.

Table 21: Frequency of the application of empty use of *there*

Test Scripts				Examination Scripts		
Academic Levels of Study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	0	0	25	10	40
2	25	10	40	25	7	28
3	25	7	28	25	5	20
4	25	0	0	25	7	28
TOTAL	100	17		100	29	

The information presented in Table 21 shows that 40 percent application of this pattern was identified in the examination scripts at academic level one and test scripts at academic level two respectively. Examination scripts at academic levels two and four and test scripts at academic level three displayed 28 percent of the pattern. Examination scripts at academic level three showed 20 percent of the pattern while no application was identified in the test scripts at academic levels one and four. The introduction of the empty *there* caused a lot of ruptures within the sentences resulting in discourse incoherence. The problem of the empty use of *there* can be solved if the initial theme is repeated in a series of sentences or if part of the rheme is developed in to the theme of the following sentence.

5.1.2.4 Use of Dummy *it*

The use of the dummy *it* was also observed at all the levels of study. This usually happens when the pronoun *it* is used without reference to any specific entity in either the theme or the rheme of the previous sentences. Academic level one recorded 52 percent application of the pattern in the test scripts and nothing in the examination scripts. At academic level two, 28 percent and 12 percent of the pattern was used in the test and examination scripts while 12 and 28 percent application was identified at academic level three in the test and examination scripts respectively. At academic level four, 28 and 20 percent application of the dummy *it* was also identified in the test and examination scripts respectively. This piece of information is presented in Table 22 below.

Table 22: Frequency of the application of the dummy *it*

Test scripts				Examination scripts		
Academic Level of study	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%	Number of scripts	Frequency per level	%
1	25	13	52	25	0	0
2	25	7	28	25	3	12
3	25	3	12	25	7	28
4	25	7	28	25	5	20
TOTAL	100	30		100	15	

Table 22 shows that some of the participants at all academic levels applied the *dummy it* in the essays. The application of this personal pronoun created serious problems of ruptures in the presentation of ideas in the essays resulting in lack of discourse coherence. The problem of using the dummy *it* can be rectified by developing information in the rheme into the theme of the following sentences or by repeating the initial theme of the sentence in the subsequent sentences.

5.1.2.5 Incomplete split progression

The problem of incomplete split progression was only identified at academic level three. The pattern was displayed in 20 percent of the examination scripts. As stated

earlier, this problem is realized when the information in the rheme is not exhaustively elucidated in the subsequent sentences leaving the introduced idea incomplete of meaning. This problem can be solved by ensuring that every idea introduced in the rheme is exhaustively expanded separately in order to complete its meaning.

5.1.2.6 Split theme progression pattern

The split theme progression pattern was only displayed at academic level one in 13 percent of the scripts. This pattern occurs in instances where information is split in the theme rather than in the rheme as advised by Danes (1974). The application created ruptures as information in the rheme was not expanded. Ventola (1994; 1997) supports this observation by stating that when new information is used in the theme position it leaves the rheme empty of content. This problem can be solved by introducing new information in the rheme not in the theme as the case is in some of the written pieces of discourse analysed at academic level one.

5.1.2.7 Use of conversational personal pronouns

Most of the scripts produced by students at academic level one displayed themes which did not have clear reference due to use of personal pronouns such as *I*, *we*, and *you* in the theme position. These pronouns were used in 73 percent of the cases. The use of such personal pronouns, which are mostly used in conversation, compromised the effectiveness of thematic progression. There was general lack of concatenation of ideas in the essays. This problem can be solved by adherence to the effective application of theme-rheme patterns in the sentences.

5.2 Conclusion

This section concludes the investigation into the relationship between thematic progression patterns and discourse coherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by a sample of University of Zambia students under a controlled environment involving tests and examinations. This is done on the basis of the objectives of the study as set out in Chapter One. The section commences with a summary of the two categories of thematic progression patterns: those which enhance

coherence and those which obscure it. Thereafter, it highlights the implications of the findings and makes some recommendations.

The dissertation has discussed two types of thematic progression patterns displayed in the analysed scripts: those which enhanced discourse coherence and those which obscured it. This has been done with special reference to the last two research questions which sought to establish whether or not there was a relationship between thematic progression patterns and discourse coherence as well as whether or not there were any specific thematic progression patterns which could be recommended for application by University of Zambia students. Specific thematic progression patterns have been identified as either enhancing or obscuring discourse coherence. Among those that enhance discourse coherence, some were dominantly used by students at all the academic levels while others were found to be unique to specific questions and specific academic levels of study. The patterns which appeared common to at all the four academic levels included constant progression and simple linear progression. Those which appeared unique to specific questions and academic levels of study included split progression, linear constant progression and constant linear progression. From the findings, it has been revealed that the theme-rheme patterns play a significant role in achieving coherence in students' written discourse. As such, students should be encouraged to use all the approved patterns as these will help to enhance coherence in their written discourse.

Another important aspect that was highlighted is that of the patterns that obscure coherence. These include the introduction of the brand new theme, the empty rheme, the empty use of *there*, the use of the dummy *it*, incomplete split progression, split theme progression and the use of conversational personal pronouns. These problems arise from ineffective application of theme and rheme patterns. Through remedial work, students should be discouraged from using these patterns.

Through the analysis of selected scripts written by some University of Zambia undergraduate students, the study has provided evidence for the existence of specific

thematic progression patterns which students apply in their written pieces of discourse. It has also been established that some of the patterns enhance discourse coherence while others obscure it. The study has also made suggestions on the type of thematic progression patterns which should be used by the students at the University of Zambia in order to enhance coherence in their written pieces of discourse. The results have also confirmed that the level of study and the type of question being responded to play a significant role on the type of pattern that should be used in a particular essay. The findings seem to suggest that thematic progression plays an important role in enhancing discourse coherence in writing. With regard to the purpose of the present investigation, it can be conclusively stated that one of the sources of incoherence in the written pieces of discourse produced by University of Zambia undergraduate students is non-adherence to thematic progression patterns which enhance coherence. In this regard, the notion of theme-rheme patterns, if well applied by the students at the University of Zambia will definitely enhance the quality of their written pieces of discourse.

5.3 Implications

In order to communicate effectively in written pieces of discourse, students need to pay particular attention to the flow of given and new information which is equivalent to theme and rheme respectively. Downing (1991, 2001), Firbas (1986) and Nicholas (1984) also equated theme with given and rheme with new information. The application of theme-rheme patterns in the students' essays can have an incredible effect on the development and organization of information in written pieces of discourse. This can also apply to lecturers who, through the application of theme-rheme patterns, would find it easier to help develop students' proficiency on how to present and develop information from theme to rheme. This information, if developed through the application of appropriate thematic progression patterns, would definitely enhance coherence in students' written discourse. Downing (2001) consents that thematic organization of the text is closely connected with discourse coherence or text connectivity. By this, he means the choice and organization of themes and rhemes and the concatenation of ideas in the whole text. Appropriate presentation of the

relationship between theme and rheme is therefore essential in creating text coherence.

The knowledge of the application of these patterns will help minimize, or eliminate completely, the problem of ruptures and unclear presentation of ideas. It will also act as an assessment tool for both lecturers and students to determine whether the students' essays meet the required high quality of University writing standards. Through the knowledge of theme-rheme patterns, lecturers will be helped to determine the coherence of the students' written pieces of discourse by a mere identification of the repeated words in either the theme or rheme. Further, lecturers can use the knowledge of these patterns to address students' weaknesses in the presentation of ideas in their written pieces of discourse.

For the students, the knowledge of theme-rheme patterns can be used as a self assessment tool on the presentation of ideas in their written pieces of discourse. This will help them to be more critical in reading and writing as they will be able to distinguish a coherent piece of text from an incoherent one. It will also help students to use the skill of skimming to critically examine the coherence of other people's written pieces of discourse through the theme-rheme application.

5.4 Recommendations

Considering the overall study and conclusions drawn, the following are some of the recommendations made:

- (i) There is need to extend the study to include other schools at the University of Zambia beyond the School of Education and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences;
- (ii) Students should be introduced to the use of theme and rheme at the onset of their University education. This will help them write more

coherently and, at the same time, assess themselves on how effectively information should be presented in their essays; and

- (iii) There is also need to extend the study to high school level, which is supposed to prepare pupils sufficiently for further education, in order to establish the type of competencies which the students bring with them into the university.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1A

Tests Questions

1. Explain the difference in character between Mathilde and Atalanta.
2. Discuss the functions of the case work process and a case worker.
3. Explain the relationship between a proposition, sentence and utterance.
4. Compare theory x and theory y as propounded by Douglass McGregor.

Appendix 1B

Examination questions

1. Discuss some of the factors that affect fertility?
2. With examples, show the relationship between derivational morphemes and inflectional morphemes.
3. Discuss the relevance of Discourse Analysis to the teaching of English at secondary school in Zambia.

Appendix 2A

Samples of Patterns from Test Scripts

Appendix 2A (i)
First year test script samples.

Constant progression

1. *Atalanta* is one woman who was able to lead a solitary manless life. *She* is able to look after herself and provide food for herself. *Atalanta* is able to stand on amongst men and challenge them. *She* is able to do all things men can do. *She* had to set conditions for men who were interested in marrying her., like discouraging proposals of mortal men by stipulating that each suitor should complete with her in a race in which she should be armed with a spear.
2. *Mathilde* on the other hand is one person who always depended on her husband. *She* had no courage to go out there and help her husband in the day to day running of the house. *She* always waited for her husband to provide.
3. *Mathilde* is full of dreams. *Even though she* is just married to a simple clerk, she imagines herself among important women rather than rich women. *She* is just a house wife though and when a time comes when they invite for a party she looks up to her husband for a new dress. *When she loses Mrs. Forrestiers necklace*, again she looks up to her husband for a solution. *She* does not seem to have a capacity to settle anything for herself.
4. *Atalanta* on the other hand is more than a woman. *Like her name suggests*, *she* is one that cannot be changed. *She* even outraces them. At one time *she* even defeated the hero pelvis at the funeral games.
5. *Mathilde* is one person who wanted to get married to a rich man and always wanted expensive things and foods. *She* is also a woman who was always day dreaming of things which she could not afford and was one person who was not content with what they had.
6. *She* was also a very weak woman and could not do anything but depend on the husband.
7. *Atalanta* was a very strong woman though not married. *Atalanta* was a woman who could wrestle with men. *She* grew up to be a true daughter of the wilderness. *She* was a hunter. *She* killed the man-beast.
8. *Mathilde* on the other hand struggles with her fate. *Her pride in her womanhood* depended on her outlook and things she would own. *She* even regrets not marrying into a family of favoured fortune.
9. *Mathilde* was not an independent woman. *She* believed she needed a man in order for her to live well and have all the fine things she needed in her life. *Her*

ambition was to find a rich and wealthy man who would take care of all her needs. *Mathilde* was not content with what she had and probably even the man she married. *She* was one of those pretty and charming women, born as if by error of destiny, into a family of copyists. *She* had no dowry, no prospects, no way of getting known, courted loved, married by rich and distinguished man.

10. *Atalanta* grew up to be a true daughter of the wilderness, an incomparable hunter being instructed by the goddess of the hunt, Artemis herself. *Atalanta* was a runner who could outrace any man and a skillful wrestler. *Atalanta* was independent. *She* was able to do most of the things on her own without necessarily having to be married.
11. *Atalanta* was abandoned by her parents whilst she was a baby. *She* was suckled by an animal. *She* grew up in the woods lived unmarried because of the oracle at Delphi warning her not to marry.
12. *Mathilde* was born from a family of copyists and clerks. *She* had no hope of getting married to a rich and distinguished man. *She* decided to get married to a minor clerk in the ministry of education. *She* suffered so much because of her desire for delicacies and luxuries.
13. *Mathilde* can be said to be the exact opposite of what *Atalanta* is. *She* is highly dependant on her husband while *Atalanta* was not.
14. *Mathilde* is a dreamer. *She* craves the high life while *Atalanta* is an actor taker. *She* even leaves the home of her deceased husband who was a price for the forest. *She* does not crave for high life.
15. *Mathilde* is confined by her class and roles and duties of the society. *She* does as *she* pleases and when she does. *Mathilde* sees herself as being answerable for the answerable for the wrongs she does such as losing the necklace.
16. *Atalanta* engages in men's activities. She is a strong woman. **Sports and wrestling** are some of the things she does. *she* does not see herself as a man's helper but equal.
17. *Mathilde* is a very discontented woman leaving in a dream world. *She* does nothing of her own but waits for her husband to provide for her every day need. *Eventhough she* is displeased with the way her apartment looks, she nothing about it. She is completely dependant on her husband.
18. *Atalanta* on the other hand is a strong and independent woman who makes the most of her environment and exploits it as she should. *She* further does not set herself apart from men but does everything a man can do twice better. *She* can outrace any man and even wrestle men and beast at anytime. *She* is so focused as a woman and does not let anything including love stand in her way.

19. *Dee* is very beautiful and intelligent. *She* is hard working doing house chores. *She* made the yard so clean.
20. *Mathilde* always dreamed of expensive place settings. *She* admired her friend Mrs Forestie's lifestyle which is a more feminine attribute.
21. *Atalanta* looks very determined in her activities. *From the time she* was abandoned in the woods by her father, she has learnt to do the best. *She* can hunt, fight and defend herself. She is always doing something for her life.
22. *Mathilde* is very much dependant on her husband. *She* does not work and sits all day dreaming of all the fancy things life could have offered her had she been married to a wealthy man. *She* also enjoys self pit, sorrow and regret. *She* is full of wishes and never does much to help herself. ***She is weak.***
23. *However, Atalanta* is a true daughter of the wild being suckled by a she-bear and guided by the goodness of the hunt, Artemis. *She* is a wrestler and a good runner. *She* is able to dictate to men.
24. *She* does not believe or depend on any man to get things done. *She* is very tough and actually controls everything around her.
25. *Atalanta* is a very weak hard working woman. *Despite her orphaned up bringing Atalanta* strives hard to learn how to hunt from goddess.
26. *Atalanta* differs from Matilde because she does not only depend on herself for everything, but competes or equals herself to a man. **The evidence to this statement** is shown when *Atalanta* wants to go with the men to retrieve the Golden Fleece. Atalanta grew up to be a true daughter of the wilderness, an incomparable hunter.
27. *Maggie* to begin with is not beautiful. *She* has burn scars across her arms and legs. *She* also is not bright or intelligent and she can't see properly. **The writer** further compares her walking to that of a lame animal she also cannot appreciate beauty as in the case of the quilts.
28. *Maggie* also has some strong points. *She* is hard working doing house chores. **The yard** made so clean.
29. *Mathilde* is a woman who is always missing reality. *She* is a dreamer. **Delicacies and luxuries** are all what she dreams.
30. *Mathilde* is portrayed as a weak character. **It** seems she is very much reliant on her husband to provide for her. Mathilde only changes her character after she and her husband experience their financial downfall.

Appendix 2A (ii)
Second year test sample scripts.

Constant Progression

31. *Inflectional morphemes* inflect for tense in words while derivational morphemes are those that come along or combine with other morphemes to form new words. *Inflection morphemes* are basically inserted at the end of roots while derivation morphemes can be inserted either at the beginning of the root or at the end.
32. *Derivational morpheme -er* can be added to play to get player. *Another derivational morpheme* mate can be added to give rise to playmate.
33. *Inflectional morphemes* do not change the meaning of the word to which it has been added to. *Inflectional morphemes* are fully productive when it comes to productivity, they have a grammatical form and are not opaque. *Inflectional morphemes* are placed outside the derivational morpheme and are also placed outside the word. *Inflectional morphemes* always come after the word to which they have been added to.
34. *Derivational morphemes* unlike the inflectional morphemes change the meaning of the word to which they have been added. *When derivational morpheme 'un'* which means negative is added to it, it changes the meaning of the word forget as it becomes forget.
35. *Derivational morphemes* are not productive. *They* are also opaque. **There** is no clear or no relation between the formed word and the supposed meaning after the combination of words from the already existing meaning of the separate words.
36. *Derivational morphemes* have syntactic role. *They* also have a lexical form.
37. *Derivational morphemes* can be placed inside other derivational morphemes.
38. *Derivational morphemes* can be placed either at the beginning of a word or at the end of the word.
39. *Inflectional morphemes* inflect for tense while the derivational morpheme does not. *Inflectional morpheme* does not take the progressive form which is the 'ing' participle.
40. *Inflectional morphemes* can only be used as suffixes in the process of affixation.
41. *Inflectional morphemes* are always the last in a word in English language.
42. *Further, inflectional morphemes* are more productive than derivational morphemes. *Inflectional morphemes* are more productive in that they can be easily added to most of the words in English language.

43. Derivational morphemes when added to a word make up a whole new word. *If the derivational morpheme 'er' is added to teach, the whole word form changes and it becomes teacher.*
44. *Inflectional morphemes* are defined as morphemes that deal with a change of tense aspect or show plural. *Inflectional morphemes* in grammar **are crucial**.
45. *Derivational morphemes* have been defined as morphemes that deal with the creation of new word. *Derivational morphemes* deal with the change in word class. For example the word 'teach' which is a verb if the derivational 'er' added to make teacher, it becomes a noun.
46. *The similarities between inflectional and derivational morphemes* are that they are both morphemes. *They* can be suffixes. *They* both cause change in a word.
47. Derivational morphemes inflect for tense while inflectional morphemes do not inflect for tense. *Derivational morphemes* have semantic value and are opaque with good grammatical characteristics.
48. *Inflectional morphemes* do not inflect for tense and do not have any grammatical value. *Inflectional morphemes* have very little semantic value and are less opaque.
49. *A morpheme* is a smallest meaningful unit that one can get after the breaking down of word. *A morpheme* can also be defined as the smallest unit of word.
50. *Derivational morphemes* are morphemes that change the grammar of a word. *Derivational morphemes* are usually attached to a word at its beginning and at times after the root. *Derivational morphemes* would be morphemes like EX, PRE, EN, and MENT.
51. *Inflectional morphemes* are words of the same form. *Because they* are words of the same form, *they* cannot be used as entry words in the dictionary.
52. *Derivational morphemes*, like inflectional morphemes can take two positions.
53. *They* may be prefixes or suffixes. In each case they change the word class.
54. *Inflectional morphemes* encode grammatical categories. *They* inflect for tense and principles of grammar are followed. *They* do not change the word class and meaning of the words to which they are attached.
55. *Derivational and inflectional morphemes* both form meaningful units with roots or bases. *They* are both known to encode lexical elements.
56. *Inflectional morphemes* are syntactically relevant while derivational morphemes are not. *Inflectional morphemes* are not semantically opaque. *Inflectional*

morphemes do not occur within derivational morphemes. *Inflectional morphemes* come after all derivational morphemes have been added.

Simple Linear

57. The inflectional morpheme does not take the progressive form which is the 'ing' participle as in the word *walking*. *Walking* as a word comprises *walk* and the 'ing' which is a *derivational morpheme*.
58. *The derivational morpheme* is a morpheme that can be added to the root or the base to make up another word. For example the 'er' can be added to *teach* to come up with the word *teacher*.
59. Inflectional morphemes change the tense, aspect, number of a word among other things unlike *derivational morphemes*.
60. *Derivational morphemes* change the word class of a word once they are added to it. For example in the word *teach* if 'er' is added to it, the word class changes from a verb to a noun.
61. Firstly, inflectional morphemes and bound morphemes are compared by virtue of being morphemes. Both inflectional and derivational morphemes are *bound morphemes*.
62. *A Bound morpheme* is that morpheme which cannot stand on its own but require another morpheme.
63. *Inflectional morphemes* can be combined with almost any word especially verbs to show the 3rd person singular. *The plural maker (s)* has a wide variety of words it can be joined to.

Appendix 2A (iii)
Third year test sample scripts

Constant progression

64. *Propositions* are part of the meanings of a sentence which helps us to decide whether a statement in a particular situation is true or false. *It* is some sort of idea that can be specified with language where as a smallest grammatical unit that can be used in an act of telling.
65. *An utterance* is the superordinate term, while sentences and propositions are the hyponyms of the utterance. *An utterance* is a physical event produced by someone at a particular time and it may be a sentence or it may be a proposition or not.
66. *An utterance* is spoken. *It* is a physical event. *It* involves the use of a particular accession by a particular speaker of a piece of language. *It* may be a single sentence, a phrase or single word.
67. *Propositions* are concerned with truth and value in relation to the world and other experiences. *A proposition* helps us decide whether a statement is true or false. The same proposition may be expressed in different ways.
68. *Sentence* contains at least one independent clause and a predicate. *A sentence* may or may not have a proposition.
69. *A proposition* helps us to decide whether a statement in a particular situation is true or false. It also attributes some property to an entity.
70. *An utterance* is any stretch of talk, by one person before and after which there is silence on the part of that person. *Utterances* are physical events.
71. *An utterance* is any stretch of talk by a person before and after which there is silence on the part of the speaker. *An utterance* can also be a physical event by this, I mean it can be uttered randomly at any given time. *An utterance* can be a single sentence, a series of sentences, a phrase or a single word.
72. *A sentence* is a string of words put together by the grammatical rule of a given language. *It* starts with a full stop and or a period. *A sentence* can also contain questions and exclamation marks.
73. *A sentence* may be thought of as an idea or an ideal string of words behind the various utterances and in it there are various realizations of it in utterances. *A sentence* is put together by grammatical rules of a given language. *It* begins with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

74. *An utterance* is a physical event when something is being spoken. *It* is any stretch of talk before or after which there is silence on the part of the speaker. *It* is the use on a particular occasion, by a particular speaker of a piece of language.
75. *Propositional meaning* is that part of a simple declarative sentence which describes some state of affairs, declares, asserts a fact or gives information. *Propositional meaning* refers to the meaning that comes from an expression or utterance which can be true or false. **There** is also an act of expressing an opinion. *A propositional meaning* must also have an argument and a predicate.
76. *A sentence* is a string of words put together by grammatical rules of a given language. *It* begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark. *A sentence* may be thought of as an idea.
77. *An utterance* is a sentence or parts of a sentence spoken or written in real time by a particular person for specific purposes. *It* can be referred to as a stretch at talk before and after which there is silence on the part of the speaker.
78. *An utterance* is any stretch of talk by one person before and after which there is silence on the part of the person. *In other words, the utterance* is the use by a particular speaker on a particular occasion or piece of language an utterance is symbolized by quotation marks because they are always spoken or active event.
79. *So utterances* are physical events located in space and time. *An utterance* can be believed in as either completely, partly or at all.
80. *The two sentences* share identical content and whenever they are used they will have the same truth value. *They* make parts of meaning of a sentence which help us decide the value of a statement and these together make up the propositional content.

Simple linear progression

81. They make parts of meaning of *a sentence* which help us decide the value of a statement and these together make up the propositional content consists of an argument and predicate.
82. *A sentence* contains at least one independent *clause*. *A clause* contains at least one predicate that is saying something about an argument plus a predicator.
83. When a sentence meaning has been said to some body by someone at a particular time with specific interviews, it becomes *an utterance*. *This utterance* has truth value that is it may be true or false depending on the prevailing circumstance.
84. *The notion of proposition* refers to part of meaning a spoken sentence and this meaning is able to describe some of the affairs about what is been talked about. *A*

proposition holds the meaning a spoken sentence and this meaning is able to describe some state of affairs about what is been talked about. **Therefore with the notion of a sentence** that is string of word put together behind the various realizations of speech, it is evident that, since a single sentence can bring about different utterances.

85. *A sentence* is the smallest grammatical unit that can be used in an act of telling. *It* should have sentence meaning composed of individual word meaning that are found in a dictionary. **An utterance** is spoken or written in real time, by a particular speaker for a purpose. *Utterance meaning usually* includes sentence meaning and propositional meaning.

Appendix 2A (iv)
Fourth year test sample scripts

Constant Progression

86. *Trade kings* can buy rights to sponsor banja on Muvi T.V. *Trade kings* are thus the owner of the programme and can have their spots aired four times every 12 minutes.
87. *Since trade kings* are sponsoring the programme, they do not pay for their adverts that are running during the programme. *Trade kings* thus gets free spots and butter the remaining spots to MUVI T.V because they are not change for the adverts.
88. *Theory x* states that man is busy, lazy and does not want to work. *It* states that man is a cynical who wants to do something and wants to be rewarded for doing that thing. *It* argues that man does not like to work and is a big cynical, lazy and busy.
89. *Theory y* is however, the opposite of the theory x. **Work** is central to man as in this theory. *It* argues that man loves to work as much as man loves to play. *It* argues that man is able to make decisions and is independent, does not need to be punished in order to do something.
90. *Theory y* explains the opposite of theory x. *Theory y* says that work is man's play.
91. *Man* should be left a lone to do the work that pleases him. *He* should not be told what to do and should not be heavily supervised.
92. *The x theory* views human beings as lazy creatures who have no initiative and have to be told what to do. *The x theory* claims that humans feel that they have to be paid in order to do something.
93. *The y theory* says that work is central to play and as such in order to get work done humans must view work as play. *This theory* says that humans are self motivated and as such they simply need guidance.
94. *Theory x* explains that man is a dull and lousy creature who does not like to work. *It* further states that man is a cynic who must be told what to do and be rewarded at the end of the task.
95. *Theory x* states that man is a lousy creature that does not like work. *It* goes on to state that man is a big cynical who needs to be told what to do.
96. *Theory y* states that work is important to man just as is play. *It* says this is so because work uses the same elements as play.

97. *Theory x* argues that man as a dull rousing creature who does not want to work. *It further* contends that if man is to work, then he has to be told what to do. The theory further contends that if man does the work even after being reminded or forced to do so, he will definitely demand for a reward.
98. *Theory y* is however the opposite of theory x. *It* is on the other extreme as it contends that work is central to man it says that man is always read to work and therefore is a valuable asset to any organization.
99. *Theory y* views man as an intelligent and creative creature. *Theory y* states that work is central to man as it employs the same elements as play.
100. *Theory x and y* were advanced by Douglas Mcgregory. *These theories* rely on the human nature.
101. *Theory x and y* were discovered by Douglas McGregor. *It* is the theory that spells out the spitting human nature.
102. *Theory x* says that man is a dull and lazy creature. *It* further says that man wants to be told what to do and how to do it.
103. *Theory y* is the opposite of theory x. *Theory y* says that work **is very important**.
104. *Theory x* is the opposite of theory y. *Theory x* states that man is a louse dull man who does not want to work and if he does work he or she has to be told what to do.
105. *Theory x and y* state that every organization needs to have more x employees than y. *The theory* states that the 2 groups are there to balance up the working environment in an organization.
106. *Theory y* says that work is central to man as play. *It* says that any organization that was made up of people need worker to be self motivated and responsible.

Simple Linear Progression

107. *Theory y* says work is central to *man* as *his play*. *Man* is in control of work and workers are self motivated.
108. The audience is not static as *the programmes* appeal to all types of audiences. *The main programmes* are talk shows which are interactive.

109. Theory y advances that work is as natural *to human beings as play*. *Human beings* have to be treated the way you want them to be.
110. Theory x states that *human beings are lazy creatures that do not want to work*. *They* are dull and have to be forced to work.
111. Theory y stipulates that *human beings* enjoy working and it is part of them. *They* look at work as an activity that they must do.
112. Theory x and y was analyzed and suggested by *Douglas McGregor*. *He* states that in x man is dull and lazy.

Linear Constant Progression

113. Theory x states *that man is a lousy dull creature*. *He* does not like to work. *He* is a big cynical who needs to be controlled and told what to do. *If he* does it, he gets rewarded.
114. Theory x explains that *man* is a dull rouse creative who doesn't like to work. *He* is not creative and always waits to be told what to do and then paid after doing that particular work. *Man* should be big directed on what be should do and be supervised.
115. Theory x advances *that human being are naturally dull and lazy*. *They* do not want to work and given a chance, they would do nothing. *They* work to be pushed or forced to do anything.
116. *Theory y* states that workers are dedicated to their work and work extra hard. *It* observes that for the workers to be effective theirs is need for the company to motivate them. **Human beings** after all are hard working and self motivated.

Appendix 2B

Samples of Patterns from Examination Scripts

Appendix 2B (i)

1st year examination script samples

Constant progression

1. *Availability of contraceptives* also influences fertility in that the more contraceptives that can be accessed by women in their reproductive age, the fewer children they will have. Contraceptive have lower fertility levels.
2. *The time at which one married* is also an influence of level of fertility. *If one marries at a tender age*, there is a high chance of having many children while a person who marries at the age of 28, considering that there is also child spacing may have fewer children. *So if a person marries at a tender age*, levels of fertility increase
3. *Educated women* have a say to a number of children the couple will have. *Educated women* will tend to have fewer children as compared to less educated women.
4. *Education* has affected the level of fertility in many parts of the world. *Education* causes a woman of child bearing age to have fewer children as she spend most of her time in school
5. *Fecundity* and use of contraceptives affect the level of fertility. *Fecundity* is the physiological capability of a couple to have children.
6. *Educated women* have advantages and disadvantages of having more or fewer children. *Educated women* resort to having fewer children to cut on the costs.
7. *Fertility* is one of the components of demography that influence population growth. *It* is the number of births that occur in a population.
8. *A woman* is said to be in her reproductive years between the ages of 14-49 years old after which she will reach menopause. *So a woman who marries young* has a longer time to have children. **You** will find that these are the ones with most children.
9. *Fertility* is the actual reproductive performance. *It* can also be defined as the occurrence of births within a population.

10. *Fertility* is the actual reproductive performance. *Fertility* is simply the ability to give birth to live infants. *It* is actually one of the major three components of population.
11. *Fertility* is the actual reproductive performance of people based on the number of births that occur per 1000 population. *Fertility* is a positive force of continuity of life. **Many factors such as age, education and status** influence this.

Simple linear progression

12. Secondly, the status of *a woman*. *A woman* with an important role to play in a society such as being a manager will have little time to take care of the children.
13. This implies that fertility depends on or is affected by *fecundity*. *Fecundity* determines whether a couple is able to reproduce or not.
14. Fertility which can be defined as the process which leads to live births by women who are considered to be reproductive, usually in the range of 15-49 can be influenced by *several factors*. *Such factors* are *age at marriage*. *Age at marriage* is important that greatly influences fertility as if one marries at a young age have higher chances of having many children.
15. *Fertility* is the total number of live births time per thousand of population. *Fertility* is affected and influenced by many factors such as education. **Women** who are educated have less time to involve in fertility.
16. *Fertility* is one the major components to change. *It* contributes to population change by increasing the number of births. **Age** is believed to be one of the factors that affect the level of fertility. *A woman* is only active in terms of child bearing in a specific age.
17. *Fecundity* is the biological or physiological ability of a couple to reproduce. *Fecundity* influences the level of fertility. *Fecundity* can reduce or increase levels of fertility. *For example, fecundity* reduces the level of fertility if a couple decides to use contraceptives. **It** is said that a fertile woman can be found when she decides to use births control methods

Appendix 2B (ii)

Second year examination script samples

Constant progression pattern

18. *The case worker* has to study the case work first before doing anything else. *The case worker* studies the client's problems by interviewing the client. *The worker* does this in order to gain knowledge.
19. *The client* who is the trouble person presents the problem to the case worker in a case work agency. *He* should participant in the problem solution by giving ideas or deciding on how best he can be helped.
20. *Relationship* could also be between two groups in groups. *A dysfunction relationship* could be between a parent and a child or between spouses. *A dysfunctional relationship* could lead to conflict in society.
21. *When a case worker* is attending to a client who has a certain problem, his/her role is to create a professional relationship. *A case worker* is to consider a client as a person in need who has a problem.
22. *A good case worker* should listen with understanding. *The case worker* should just provide options to clients. *A case worker* should take a record of each conversation. *The case worker* operates under the laws and policies of the agency which he /she represents.
23. *A social case worker process* refers to the process in which the casework undergoes. *It* is the way in which there is interpersonal interaction between the case worker and client. *In this process*, a client comes to seek help to an agency and he/she is attended to by a case worker of the agency. *This process* starts just upon entering into rapport between a client and the case worker.
24. *A dysfunction social relationship* refers to a situation where there is a malfunction or rater a misunderstanding in a relationship among or between individuals in a society. *The dysfunction* could be among families or between the relationships of individuals.
25. In some agencies they give a time frame for *the process to end*. *It* comes to an end when both the client and the case worker are satisfied.
26. It is now up to the case worker to end *the process*. *The process* does no have an exactly true frame.

Simple linear progression

27. In a case work process, there are *certain principles* that a case worker is expected to adhere to. *Among such principles* are individuation, acceptance, controlled, emotional involved, non-judgmental attitude and confidentiality.

28. The case worker does not make decisions for the client but rather he /she helps *the clients* to be able to reach at a better solution for his problem. *Once the client* has found a solution to his problem that's when the termination stage comes in.
29. In a social case work relationship there are *principles* which must be followed in order for a process to go smoothly. *These principles* include individuality, acceptance, non- judgmental attitudes, confidentiality etc.
30. For example when a certain client has a problem with his wife and they want to divorce, this person goes to the case worker for help. The case worker is to adhere to professional principles of confidentiality, individualization, client self-determination, acceptance etc.
31. This social case worker represents *a social case work agency or social work agent*. *An agency* is a setting where social case work can be practiced.
32. This is why case work is known as *process*. *It's a process* because there is no one possible answer to the problem.
33. A social case work process is basically the dynamic and professional relationship between the social case worker and *the client*. *The client in the social casework process* is the person who presents a problem and the major task of the caseworker is to help him or herself.
34. *Case work* is a method of social work that deals with individuals, family and groups. *Case work* is a process by which an individual with a problem is helped. **The case worker** works with individuals who have problems that need to solve and need solutions.

Appendix 2B (iii)
Third year examination script samples

Constant progression

35. *Discourse analysis* is important course to the students at the University of Zambia as well as the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia. *Discourse analysis* mainly deals with important things such as cohesion, coherence and so on. *It* deals with important segments of speech in a given text and why they have been uttered, to whom and the kind of relationship between the speaker/ writer or listener/reader.
36. *Students who have done discourse analysis* are also able to show better writing skills. *For example, they* are able to use cohesive ties perfectly well when writing. *Discourse analysis* is important to the teaching of English because it improves writing skills and the capacity to understand a given text.
37. *Discourse* is relevant to the teaching of English in secondary schools. *It* is not only through utterances that one is able to understand meaning through the environment but even in written texts.
38. *However, the title* is aimed at drawing attention of the people sometimes. *It* can be used to get people anxious but does not necessarily summarize the passage.
39. *Discourse* is defined as language in use. *It* can be written or spoken.
40. *Discourse analysis* is a naturally occurring language or language in use. *Its* central principle is that it is communicative and should be meaningful to both the receiver and the sender.
41. *To begin with, discourse analysis* is said to be the study of naturally occurring language or language in use. *It* involves the analysis of cohesion of language and the coherence.
42. *Discourse analysis* is important in the formulation and interpretation of the syllabus by the curriculum development centre (CDC). *The knowledge of discourse analysis* will enhance good interpretation of the junior secondary school syllabus (JSSLS).
43. *Discourse analysis* is relevant to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia because it enables the pupils to effectively presents their written work and also to conversation. *It* also enables teachers of English language to effectively meet the objectives of the curriculum which stipulates that pupils at the end of the course should be able to manipulate English language in order to effectively communicate.

44. *Discourse analysis* is important when it comes to the teacher of the English language at secondary school level in Zambia. *It* enables a teacher to elaborate the necessary concept needed for the pupils in question to apply in the both written and spoken discourse. *Its relevance* is clearly seen in components that are making up the whole syllabus.
45. *Pupils* should be taught how to effectively use reference, substitution, ellipsis and lexical cohesion. *They* should be able to refer to the theme or part of the theme and to the rheme or part of the rheme. *Pupils* in conversation or debates the use of cohesive ties enable them to avoid repetition.
46. *Discourse analysis* is basically defined as the study of language in use. *It* involves the interpretation of ant stretch of discourse with regards to the surface structure of a text in that particular language. *It* is about the relationship of that a piece that a piece of discourse has with regards to the choice we make about words and language structures to convey meaning or interpret the meaning of a text.
47. *Further discourse analysis* also encompasses the relationship between the use of language the context in which it is used and the knowledge of the world in general which the interlocutors share in the processing of information and deciphering of meaning. *Generally speaking, discourse analysis* as a branch of linguistics enables three important aspects in the processing of information namely; the structural ties connecting the piece of discourse, the realization of meaning regarding choice made by the influence of the knowledge the participates in a stretch of discourse share about the world.
48. *Discourse analysis* **is indeed very relevant.**
49. *Discourse analysis as a course* exposes a teacher to interpret the meaning in more than one dimension (CP at paragraph level 124-126).
50. *Discourse analysis* is the study of any stretch of language in use. *Discourse analysis* **is important.** *It* helps curriculum development to package information that will be relevant to pupils. *It* also helps in the preparation of English learning materials that is suitable for each grade at secondary school level.
51. *Discourse analysis* is important in the teaching of structure at secondary school level
52. *The relevance of discourse analysis* **is also important in spoken discourse.** *It* is used by the pupils when they are engaged in school debates. *It* is also important in conversations and discussions.
53. *Discourse analysis* is the study of natural concurrent of language and in use. *It* is necessary in the teaching of English at secondary school syllabus when we look at the components of English.

54. *The pupils* will know how to apply simple linear progression, constant progression, derive hyperthematic progression and split progression. *They* may for example start with theme and rheme and in the next sentence start with the rheme.
55. *Discourse analysis* is an aspect of linguistics that studies discourse. *Discourse analysis* has many components that are of great importance to the teaching of English in secondary schools in Zambia.
56. *Discourse analysis* can be said to be the study of naturally occurring language. *Discourse analysis* is an important aspect in everyday life. *It* helps in comprehending texts or speech even helps in picking sense out of what ones says or writes that is not asserted in the surface structure of text or speech through coherence.
57. *Discourse analysis* is the analysis of language in use. *It* is the analysis of naturally occurring language.
58. *Discourse analysis* also takes into consideration spoken. *It* analyzes the way people use language in order to come up with the intended meaning.
59. *Pupils* are taught how to use English language cohesive and coherently. *Pupils* are taught how to use the cohesive ties such as reference, substitution, conjunction, ellipsis and lexical cohesive ties

Simple linear progression

60. This is achieved through the use of cohesive ties which are *reference, substitution ellipsis and conjunction*. *These elements* are used in order for a sentence or rather utterance to have meaning.
61. The main aim of this study is to discuss the relevance of discourse analysis to the teaching of English at *secondary school in Zambia*. *The secondary schools in Zambia* have objectives that need to be achieved by a pupil. These objectives require the pupils to construct correct sentences by the end of grade nine.
62. During the teaching of structure, pupils are exposed to the use of *cohesive ties*. *The ties* include *reference, substitution, conjunction, ellipsis and lexical cohesion*. *These elements* are taught to pupils in order for them to avoid repetition in their work.
63. Apart from cohesive ties, pupils are taught the concept of *cleftness*. *Cleftness* involves the switching of themes and focus depending on what the sender wants to communicate.
64. These are also referred to as *cohesive ties*. *These cohesive ties* operate mainly at sentence and as such are relevant in connecting the themes in a text.

65. The components relevant to this aspect are *cohesion, coherence, pragmatic inferencing, cleftness, staging organization of information title theme and topic*. These are applied to the secondary school syllabus when we look at the *components of English*. The components are the teaching of structure, comprehension, summary and reading.
66. In teaching of structure, pupils are exposed to *a variety of cohesive ties*. These *cohesive ties* are derived from components of discourse such as reference, ellipsis substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion.
67. The teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia is relevant in *all areas of the components of English language*. These areas include structure, oral, composition and summary.
68. In the structure component it can be applied starting *at junior level*. At this level it is taught as conjunction, composition demonstrative and pronouns.
69. Discourse analysis is also a very important component *in composition*. For *composition to be coherent*, the teacher will teach the theme and rheme.
70. In the writing of structure, there is also need for the knowledge of *cohesive ties and frames*. Frames will help in an aspect of structure called a close.
71. The curriculum development centre takes in account a *lot of variable* in its interpretation and formulation of the English syllabus. These variables are: age of pupils, social background, size of the classroom and many others.
72. Designers of the text books need to have the knowledge of discourse analysis to come up with tasks and works that suit *the pupils*. The pupils in grade one cannot be given comprehension because it does not suit them unless they were in grade eight to grade twelve.

Linear Constant Progression

73. These are referred to as *cohesive ties*. These elements operate mainly at sentence level and as such are relevant in connecting the themes in a text. Among the *cohesive ties* we have reference.
74. Discourse analysis is also a very important in *composition writing*. For a *composition to be coherent*, the teacher has to teach the concept of theme and rheme. For any *composition to be coherent*, the teacher presents various kinds of compositions to pupils.

Split Progression

75. Pupils are introduced to Concepts such as *cohesion and coherence* so as to help them understand what structure is. *Cohesion* links utterance or written discourse through the use of cohesive ties. *Coherence* on the other hand links utterance or sentences to make a unified whole.
76. This can be achieved through *cohesion and coherence*. *In cohesion*, it enhances the use of cohesive ties or semantic interpretation of a given text. *It* also helps one understand the sentence meaning of a given piece of discourse. *In coherence*, it helps the students to understand the meaning of a text even without the semantic interpretation.
77. To begin with, discourse analysis is said to be the study of naturally occurring language in use. It involves the analysis of *cohesion of language and coherence*. *Cohesion* is said to be formal grammatical and lexical relations of two or more linguistic units in a piece of discourse or text. *Coherence* refers to the relationship which links the meaning of utterance in spoken and written discourse.

Appendix 2B (iv)

Fourth year examination script samples

Simple linear progression

78. The main aim of teaching English is to enable the pupils to use the language *flexibly and coherently*. This can be done by exposing the pupils to *cohesive ties*. These ties are relevant in the teaching of structure to *the pupils*. They can also apply knowledge of the world especially bottom up for the purpose of word building.
79. Discourse analysis is very important *in the teaching of summary*. In summary, pupils can apply the *knowledge of theme*, topic and title from a passage. By using *theme*, the pupils can give a little to the text.
80. The syllabus designers take into account *various variables* when designing the secondary school syllabus at any level or grade when choosing what discourse to apply in the packaging of English learning materials. These variables include the age of pupils' intelligence, social background, topic and type of activity.
81. The people who are in charge of developing the curriculum use *the knowledge of discourse analysis to interpret and formulate the syllabus*. Through this knowledge, they are able to determine what kind of learning materials are for purposes of emphasis.
82. It is applicable to the use of spoken and written English by *the pupils*. The pupils will tend to appreciate the use of cohesive feature such as reference, conjunctions comparatives, ellipsis and substitution to avoid repetition.
83. It is important to mention that discourse analysis as a component of linguistics plays an important role in formulating or *designing the syllabus in Zambia*. For the syllabus designers to design the secondary school English syllabus, they have to choose a particular type of discourse that will suit the intended learners.
84. The formulating of English learning materials would only be possible with the knowledge of *Discourse Analysis*. Discourse analysis helps the teacher to interpret the syllabus so that it fits the classroom environment.
85. Discourse Analysis influences syllabus design by primarily influencing *teachers to be educated*. Teachers who are the major implementers of the syllabus will need to understand the English language first in order to teach effectively.
86. When designing the syllabus of a particular class, the curriculum development center puts in to consideration the age of the pupils, the size of the class and the background of the pupils. The age, size and back ground of the pupils will help the curriculum development center to package the learning materials relevant for that level.

87. Pupils are able to manipulate and use cohesive ties such as *reference conjunctions ellipsis and substitution*. *These elements of discourse when used at secondary school level* help pupils to derive meaning by connecting sentences and their meaning.
88. The teaching of structure, composition and comprehension are all components that are found in *discourse analysis*. *Discourse analysis* is important to both the teacher and the pupils.
89. In the teaching and writing of composition the use of *cohesive ties* very is important. *These ties* help the teacher in the sense that he/she having the knowledge of the cohesive ties will enable him/her to avoid repetitions of the same words.
90. Discourse analysis also has aspects like staging, which is part of the organization of information, thematic fronting and coherence which involves *a lot of factors*. *These* are very helpful to the teaching of English in secondary schools.
91. Discourse analysis refers to *the analysis of language in use*. *This analysis* can either be in words or utterances.
92. Writers of pupils text books need to pick out appropriate *texts for the pupils*. *Usually texts for pupils in English*, have words that are a bit above the pupils understanding.
93. In the teaching of comprehension aspects that are of great importance include: *frame, schemata, bottom up and top-down processing of information are (empty rheme)*. *These* help the teachers and the pupils to understand the context of the given text.

Constant progression

94. *Pupils* can use the knowledge of pragmatic inferencing to infer the implied meaning in a text. *Pupils* can use pragmatic inferencing in comprehension exercises. *They* can infer the implied meaning of a text by using the context and co-text of a text. *They* can also apply knowledge of the world to understand a text.
95. *Discourse analysis* is defined as the critical analysis of language in use beyond a sentence in real life situations. *Discourse analysis* should be applied in the teaching of English language at secondary school level in Zambia because it enhances both the writing and reading skills.
96. *The text book designers* also make use of the discourse analysis knowledge. *They* take in to account the appropriate language that would fit the abilities of a particular level.

97. *Discourse analysis* is relevant to the syllabus objectives of the junior secondary school language. *It* is applicable to the use of spoken English by the pupils.
98. *Pupils* are likely to construct meaningful sentences with reference, conjunctions, substitution, ellipsis and lexical cohesion features. *They* will learn different ways of constructing sentences that are well connected.
99. *The use of cleftness in sentence transformation* can be realized. *The use of cleftness from discourse analysis* can produce a great deal of sentences that helps students to manipulate their cognitive skills.
100. *Discourse analysis* is one of the most important components in linguistics. *It* deals with the study of language in use or naturally occurring language. *Discourse analysis* has to do with the analysis of language in real life situation.
101. *Discourse analysis* is the critical analysis of language in use in real life situations. *It* is concerned with the examination of how language in real conversations is used. *Discourse analysis* is very important and relevant to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia. *It* helps the teaching of grammar, composition, reading and listening comprehension.
102. *Discourse analysis* helps in the interpretation of the syllabus. *Discourse analysis* also helps in the formulation of the syllabus. *Discourse* also helps in the formulation of learning materials.
103. *Discourse analysis* refers to the study of naturally occurring language or language in use beyond a sentence level in real life. *It* is the next level of linguistic analysis after the sentence (syntax) and studies closely the meaning of language in both spoken and written discourse. *Discourse analysis* in this sense is understood as having a transactional function where the receiver interprets the meaning of what is spoken/ written. *Thus discourse analysis* is based on the sender and the receiver's assumptions about the nature of language and the extent of success/failure of communication is dependant upon both their shared knowledge of language rules in relation to their social relationship and knowledge of the world. *Discourse analysis therefore* studies the importance of language as a communicative and social tool vital for conveying meaning and information.
104. *English* is recognized as the official language and this is enshrined in the constitution of the country. *English language* is therefore the language for official communication and is used for official purposes in the government, the media judiciary and other important wings of national interest.
105. *Discourse analysis* is occurring language or language in use. *It* aims at examining the use of language to make it useful and meaningful in some particular occasions in life or real life situations. *It* covers two components which are cohesion which involves the grammatical and lexical relationship of two or

more linguistic units. *So discourse analysis* critically looks at how these meanings are arrived at to make a unified whole.

106. *Discourse analysis* is the study of language in use. It can be looked at from two perspectives. *It* involves a sender and receivers of a piece of language for communication purposes.
107. *Discourse analysis* helps students construct formal grammatical correct units of language and help them derive meaning from the lexical and grammatical relationships that sentences might share. This is the process of cohesion.
108. *Discourse analysis* is said to be the critical examination of language in use. *It* is a very important and relevant aspect to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia because the teaching of structure, composition and comprehension are all components that are found in discourse analysis. *Discourse analysis* to the teaching of English at secondary school is important to both the teacher and the pupil. (CL-SL)
109. *Cleftness* is of great importance when it comes to rewrites. *It* enables the pupils to create several other sentences from one main sentence without losing the meaning of the sentence.
110. *Discourse analysis* is the study of naturally occurring language or language in use. *Discourse analysis* is of great importance to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia.
111. *Discourse analysis* plays a major role in the formulation and interpretation of the syllabus itself. *Discourse analysis* contributes a great deal to the designing of the syllabus.
112. *Pupils* are exposed to various cohesive ties which are learnt in discourse analysis. *They* are told how to use personal, demonstrative and comparative forms of reference.
113. *Discourse analysis* plays even a more vital role in the actual teaching of the English language at secondary school level. *Discourse analysis* makes it easier for the teacher especially with the knowledge of cohesive ties and cleftness to teach structure to pupils.
114. *The curriculum development centre* puts into consideration a number of factors when planning the secondary school language syllabus. *It* considers the availability of teaching and learning materials and the level of intelligence of the learners among others.

Split Progression

115. Discourse analysis is the study of language in use. *This study* predominately deals with *cohesion and coherence effects*. *Cohesion* is the study that looks at the texture of discourse in relation to reference, substitution, conjunctions comparatives and other similar variables applicable to the study. *Coherence* deals with the meaning in a unified text or conversation.
116. Discourse analysis has two major components these include *cohesion* and *coherence*. *Cohesion* deals with lexical and formal grammatical relations that exist between two or more given pieces of discourse. This is where the semantic meaning of one linguistic unit is dependant on that of another. Cohesion is purely textual. *Coherence*, however, deals with the interrelatedness of ideas to make a unified whole.
117. Discourse analysis provides the pupils with the techniques to use when writing *narrative and descriptive compositions*. *When writing narratives*, ideas are organized as the event is unfolding. *In the descriptive writing*. A pupil has to understand how to present ideas in his writing from general to specific.

Constant Linear Progression

118. *Discourse analysis* is relevant to the teaching of English at secondary school level in Zambia. *Its relevance* will be seen in the way a teacher who has done discourse analysis will handle the situation by *the knowledge of cohesion and coherence*. *This knowledge* will make the teacher be able to use cohesive ties, such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, comparative and even lexical cohesion.
119. *Discourse analysis* is relevant to the syllabus objectives of the junior secondary school language (JSSL). *It* is applicable to the use of spoken English by *the pupils*. *Pupils* tend to appreciate the use of cohesive features such as reference, conjunctions comparatives, ellipsis and substitution.
120. Pupils are taught the meaning of the structures, how they are used and when and where to apply them. *They* are taught how to use pronouns, demonstratives and comparatives. **By using cleftness** the pupils are exposed to a lot of alternatives in sentence transformation