

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

English as the first foreign language is taught in the public schools in Indonesia from the Secondary up to the University levels. This is to point out that it is an important language to be taught in schools. And it is a fact that because it is an international language, in this globalization era, some private schools start introducing it beginning from the Elementary School or even The Playgroup. The other evidence of its importance is shown by the opening of some Playgroup institutions and Kindergarten Schools focusing on English as a means of communication among the teachers and children.

Being able to communicate effectively in English does not only mean to be proficient in the various language skills involved in the communication progress, but also mean to be able to use it effectively. In the various communications depending on the nature of interaction, knowledge about English grammar is believed to be the basis for the skills. When one is explaining something to another person, whether in speech or writing, s/he instinctively tries to organize what she/he says in a way that will make it easier for the hearer or the reader to understand. Therefore, it needs an exchange of experience by human beings.

Speech function is used to fulfill human needs in exchange of experience which is oriented to System Functional Linguistics (SFL). It is also used to give the respond in delivering some information from the speaker. Getting some

information needs more explicit analysis of English grammar to improve the knowledge and understand language use in context. The needed of description of English starts out from a social and interactive perspective on language as discourse and shows in a consistent way how lexicogrammar acts to enable encoding purposeful message appropriately in text. Halliday (1994:34) states that language is simultaneously used as representation, exchange and organization of experience. It means that that human can not live in isolation. They need to interact with others in order to fulfill their needs. In this case, Rheme and theme is very interesting to be understood to message of the text.

Theme and Rheme are derived mainly from textual function. Halliday (1985:45) states that the textual function of the clause are that of constructing a message' and the Theme/Rheme structure is the 'basic form of the organization of the clause as message. It means that Theme and Rheme, on which the clause depends for its orientation within the context, takes initial position in the clause.

Theme is viewed as "the starting point of the message" and as "an orienter to the text" providing a framework for the interpretation of the message (Fries 1995:318). These two characteristics of Theme have led to the formulation of hypotheses concerning its usefulness as a guide to the understanding of the text.

As a device for organizing meanings, theme does not only operate at the local level, indicating how the writer has chosen to order information within the clause, but also helps to structure the flow of information in ways that shape interpretation of the text as a whole (Martin 1992:45). While Wang (2007:166) states that Rheme is simply defined as the remaining part that develops the

Theme. It describes what the writer is writing about the Theme. It typically contains unfamiliar or new information, what the writers want to tell their readers.

Theme and Rheme are two terms which represent the way in which information is distributed in a sentence. The definition of Theme given by Halliday (1985:38) is that Theme is given information serving as “the point of departure” of a message. The given information is the information which has already been mentioned somewhere in the text, or it is shared or mutual knowledge from the immediate context. In other words, Theme typically contains familiar, old or given information.

Theme provides the settings for the remainder of the sentence is Rheme. It is called as remainder of the message in a clause in which Theme is developed. It typically contains unfamiliar or new information because it is knowledge that a writer assumes the reader does not know, but needs to have in order to follow the progression of the argument. The boundary between Theme and Rheme is simple: Theme is the first element occurring in a clause; the remainder clause is Rheme.

For example:

- 1). The commitment of Sudan’s government to the CPA has always been equivocal.
Theme **Rheme**
- 2). The negative stigma attached to IMF financing is a thing of the past.
Theme **Rheme**

(The text is adapted from News Story of *The Jakarta Post*, September 17th 2015)

Studying Theme and Rheme can be found in news story texts which it contains some interesting information. It includes accounts of eyewitnesses to the happening event through photographs, accounts, statistics, graphs, recollections,

interviews, polls, and debates on the topic. Usually, news story can be used to focus the reader's attention on a particular (or main) part of the article by giving facts and detailed information. Therefore, most of the readers always pay attention through the news story to get the message.

When read the news story of *the Jakarta Post*, it is difficult to understand the meaning of the text, for example, *Lack of qualified insurance is a serious problem*. (News Story of *The Jakarta Post*, September 25th 2015). In this text, Rheme 'a serious problem' is not clear to explain any information for the reader because some information is not written to explain the Rheme. The question arises toward Rheme, what means of a serious problem? It is agent, the company, the system or the services of the insurance. In this case, Rheme should be described the initial place because it has an enormous importance in a clause. Whatever is chosen to be in the first place will influence a reader's interpretation of everything that comes next. In cohesive writing, 'given' information in a clause needs be presented in Theme position, which acts like a signpost signaling a reader where the meanings have come from and where they are going to. The new information needs to be located in Rheme position. The balance and movement of a clause between Theme and Rheme is an essential component in composing a cohesive text. If a writer fails to control the flow of information from Theme to Rheme, his or her text is difficult for a reader to follow, because there is no clear signpost directing the reader, who therefore cannot easily follow the progression of an idea or argument.

So, the writer is very much interested in searching closely about the Theme and Rheme in news story texts of *the Jakarta Post* which are directed to the importance of exchange experience. It can guide the readers to understand the texts easily.

1.2 The Problem of the Study

In line with the background of the study, the problems are formulated as the following.

1. What are the uses of Theme and Rheme found in news story text of *The Jakarta Post*?
2. How are the Theme and Rheme developed in the news story texts of *The Jakarta Post* ?
3. Why are the Theme and Rheme developed the way they are?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Theme and Rheme is constituted by the element(s) of sentence carrying the lowest level(s) of communicative dynamism within the sentence. They are identified through clauses in the sentences. It should be very interesting and motivating when it is realized thematic structure and progression. In the line with the problems, the objectives of this study are.

1. to describe the uses of Theme and Rheme found in the news story texts of *The Jakarta Post*

2. to describe the Theme and Rheme developed in the news story texts of *The Jakarta Post*.
3. to investigate the reasons for the development of Theme and Rheme.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

In this study, the writer discusses only on Theme and Rheme on the news story texts of *The Jakarta Post*. It is important to describe the information in a sentence from Theme to Rheme which is crucial in achieving communicative effectiveness in a message. It means that the uses of Theme-Rheme are to examine the Thematic structures and the Thematic progressions.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

A research that is conducted should show some applicable results, so that it can contribute some ideas that can enhance the quality of the knowledge. The study is expected to improve the teaching - learning process, especially in this case to identify the Theme and Rheme in news story texts of *the Jakarta Post*. It is also hoped that the findings of the study will enrich the readers' knowledge of the SFL. It is also intended to show that they can understand the text in a natural setting when function of language is developed through a text.

Therefore, the findings of this study are important to provide some information about Theme and Rheme in the news story texts of *The Jakarta Post*.

In this case, the findings of this study are expected to offer both theoretical and practical significance.

1. Theoretically, findings of the study potentially enlarge and enrich linguistics theories.
2. Practically, the readers and writers realize that the demands on news are not only give entertainment, but also to understand the information which can improve their interaction and bring them into positive thinking. In addition, the findings of this research are expected to gain benefit because it provides some valuable information particularly to another researcher who would like to conduct an in-depth study on Theme and Rheme.