

ANALYZING THEMATIC STRUCTURE IN INDONESIAN FOLKTALES IN ENGLISH VERSION: A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR (SFG)

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Abstract

This research is entitled “Analyzing Thematic Structure in Indonesian Folktales in English Version: A Systemic Functional Grammar Study (SFG)”. The objectives of this study are analyzing and describing the themes, their elements and thematic progressions of Indonesian Folktales in English Version. The collected data, in this research were taken from the book entitled “Indonesian Folktales” published in 1981 by Pustaka Media Publisher. One data, *Princess Sumur Bandung* which consists of 50 paragraphs and 221 clauses was chosen to be analyzed based on the theory of Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) of Gerot and Wignell (1994). The method and technique used in this study are descriptive qualitative method. The results of this research reveals that (1) there are two kinds of theme-rheme patterns are found; they are *simple theme-rheme patterns* and *multiple theme-rheme patterns*. In details, the simple theme-rheme patterns contain constant theme-rheme pattern, linear theme-rheme pattern, and derived theme-rheme pattern, while multiple ones contain combination of constant and linear theme, combination of linear and derived theme, and combination of constant, linear and derived theme-rheme pattern. Besides, the combination of constant and linear theme-rheme pattern are the most frequently distributed. While the elements of themes which found are textual, interpersonal and ideational elements. Textual elements cover continuative, structural conjunction, wh-relative and conjunctive adjunct. Interpersonal elements cover modal adjunct, vocative, wh-interrogative and finite verbal operator. Ideational elements cover nominal group, noun, adverbial group, prepositional phrase, process, complement, group complex and adverb.

Keywords: Theme, Elements, Indonesian Folktales.

INTRODUCTION

As a tool of communication, Language plays important role for people to deliver a message. By a language, people can express their wish, understand each other, and even unites societies, tribes, countries and many others. It is hard to think, how people send a message without a language to express their feeling, or to get a target language as they create their needs by using it.

According to Gerot and Wignell (1994:7) language is a resource for meaning making. It means that when anyone speak by using a language, she or he constructs or produces a meaning. Furthermore, Bloor and Bloor (2004), states that there are three kinds of meaning. They are (1) Ideational meaning of a language is used to organize, understand and express our perception of the world and of our consciousness. (2) Interpersonal language is used to enable us to participate in communicative acts to one each other, to take roles, to express and to understand feelings, attitude, and judgement. (3) Textual meaning of a language is used to relate what is said or written to the rest of the text and to other linguistic events. This means

that textual text concerned with how the clausal elements are organized to create a meaning in textual function which indicates the way the text is structure or organized.

The textual meaning of a language (clause) in its functions as a message is realized by the theme system of a language. The theme system of the clause consists of two major elements namely theme and rheme. Theme structure in English is the idea represented by constituent at the starting point of a clause. In other words, a clause begins with a realization of the theme. After that, it is followed by the realization of the rheme, which can be said as being a rest of the message. For example:

(1) Malim Dewa went forward to stop the Prime Minister.

Table 1 Realization of Theme and Rheme.

Malim Dewa	went forward to stop the Prime Minister
Theme	Rheme

The example above shows that the theme of the clause is “Malim Dewa” as it is a starting point of a clause, while the rheme is went forward to stop the Prime Minister which is the rest of the clause. In addition, it talks more or give information about the theme.

According to three systems of meanings above mentioned, the researcher is interested to discuss language function as textual meaning, especially thematic structure in Indonesian Folktales in English Version. The first reasons why the researcher chose the Indonesian Folktales as data source is because many researchers have conducted the theme in under varieties of labeling including speech, campaign, debate, press conference and many others, but, no one has conducted it in Indonesian Folktales which is involved in narrative genre.

Narrative was the genre investigated in this study. It was chosen because it is often considered to be “the macro genre” (Knapp and Watkins, 2005: 221). It means that this genre can easily accommodate other types of genres and still remain dominant.

According to Anderson and Anderson (1997:3) narrative is a text that tells a story and, in doing so, it entertains the readers or audiences. Based on social function, the narrative aims “to amuse, entertain and to deal with actual or vicarious experience in different ways” (Gerot and Wignell, 1994: 204).

Related to its language features, narrative text is commonly expressed by focus on the specific and usually individualized participants, the use of material process, the use of relational process and the use of temporal conjunction and circumstances and the use of verb past tense. (Gerrot and Wignell, 1994: 204).

In line with this, the writer is interested to analyze them because Indonesia is a country which has a variety of cultures. Each region of the country show its characteristic traditional forms. It is not only art, dance, theatre, folktales and many others. There are many popular folktales spread out in every region of Indonesia, but only some which have collected in a book and written in English version. In this research, the writer focused on the ones which had written in English and collected in a book to support the validity of this research data.

The researcher analyzed Malim Dewa Indonesian folktales which found in a book entitled “*Indonesian Folk Tales*” published in 1981 by Pustaka Media publisher. In that book collects some regional folktales which come from West Java, Aceh and Bali. The West Java folktales were put into written form by Haksan Wirasutisna and the Acehnese ones by M.J. Melalatoa. They show styles of the respective writers, meanwhile the folktale which come from Bali is loosely based on historical events in Java towards the end of the reign of King Erlangga (1019-1042). This story was originally recorded on lontar-leaves manuscripts in old Javanese, and was translated by the late prof. Dr. Poerbatjaraka. The simple narrative style of

the original is maintained in this edition. As a data, this will be analyzed based on systemic functional grammar theory.

There are many theories of language related to grammar, namely: traditional grammar, formal grammar, transformational grammar, and functional grammar that we have already known. When they are used, it will be depended on our perspective. As Gerot and Wignell (1994:4) stated that grammar are validated by their usefulness in describing and explaining the phenomenon called language. For example, traditional grammar divorced from meaning and use. And it focuses on the rules for producing the correct sentences. In so doing, it has two main weaknesses. Firstly, the rules it prescribes are based on the language of very small group of middle-class English speakers. Secondly, the rules deals only with the most superficial aspects of writing. Following the rules in no way guarantees that written communication will be affective, for the rules say nothing about purpose or intended audiences for writing.

Conversely, in this study, the researcher will apply Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). From its perspective, grammar is as the resource of meaning and concerns with it use. Gerot & Wignell (1994:6) say, “Functional grammar view a language as a resource for making a meaning”. This grammars attempt to describe language in actual use and so focus on text and their contexts. Furthermore, they are not only concerned with structure but also how those structure construct meaning. Along the same, Bloor & Bloor (2004) states that for SFL, a language is a system of meaning. In other word, when people use language, their language acts produce or more technically, construct meaning. From this point of view, grammar become a study how meanings are built up through the choice of words and other grammatical resources such as singular or plural, negative or positive, and other linguistic forms such as tone and emphasis. Briefly, it can described with two following example:

- (2) Time flies like an arrow
- (3) Tim told of a tragic case

Table 2 Analysis of clause based on traditional grammar and formal Grammar

Time	Flies	Like an arrow
Noun	Verb	Prepositional phrase
Tim	Told	Of a tragic case

Table 3 Analysis of clause based on functional grammar

Time	Flies	Like an arrow
Participant	Process	Circumstance
Actor	Material	Manner
Tim	Told	Of a tragic case
Participant	Process	Circumstance
Sayer	Verbal	Matter

(Gerot & Wignell, 1994:6)

SFG holds the principles that all languages have three main function namely, experiential, interpersonal and textual metafunction (Eggins, 2004, Thompson, 2004, Butt et al., 2000). The experiential metafunction is realized in the Transitivity system. Interpersonal metafunction is a message comes from and where it leads to (Gerot and Wignell. 1994:102). In analyzing the textual meaning, the constituents to be considered are the Theme and Rheme (Gerot & Wignell, 1994, Eggins, 2004, Thompson, 2004).

Thematic Structure

In the background of the study, the researcher has explained that he will only focus on the textual meaning which organized the text itself. Regarding its function, (Halliday 1994:37) states that textual meaning look at how we structure information in English, what we put where and how. In addition, (Bloor & Bloor, 2004) defines that thematic structures operates at the level of clause and all full clauses have thematic structure.

Also, Halliday (1994:37) states that the Prague school of Linguist use the term “Theme” as the label for this function. The theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message, it is that which the clause in concerned. The reminder of the message, the part in which the theme is developed, is called the rheme in Prague school terminology, for example:

- (4) The duke has given my aunt that teapot.
- (5) My aunt has given the teapot by the duke

Table 4 Theme – Rheme Structure

The duke	has given my aunt that teapot
My aunt	has given the teapot by the duke
Theme	Rheme

According to the example above, the theme can be identified as element which come in the first position in the clause. Moreover, Bloor & Bloor (2004:71) mention the theme in English is to think of it as the idea, represented by constituent at the starting point of the clause. Therefore, *the duke*, *my aunt* and *that teapot* are the theme of the clauses.

Theme-Rheme Pattern

Since a message should be convey in clause contextually and co-textually, a text should have a texture or the quality of being a text. As Bloor & Bloor (2004:84) state that a stretch of a language which is coherence and makes a sense is said to have a texture. Texture is simple the quality of being a text, rather than a set of unconnected bits of a language such as one might find in a collection of independence sentences used as exercise in a language text book. This is illustrated in the following examples:

- (6) Give it to me, not to him.
- (7) Those two men with the oxen will arrive tomorrow
- (8) I met them in town, this morning, but I did not see her
- (9) That book was written by him.

Table 5 Analysis a text which has no texture

Give it to me, not to him. Those two men with the oxen will arrive tomorrow I met them in town, this morning, but I did not see her That book was written by him.
--

According to the example above, the pronoun (*me*, *him*, *them*, *her*) do not have any common referents with any other nouns or pronouns in the extract. The reader does not know who the pronouns refers to in any sense. Furthermore, the reader do not have any basis on which to decide whether or not *him* in sentence (1) refers to the same person as the *him* in sentence (4). This kinds of link between the sentences is not necessary since each one is separate entity within the context of the larger actual text.

By conducting this study, we will know what kinds of the Theme-Rheme patterns employed in Indonesian Folktales in English Version. Regarding their types, Bloor and Bloor (2004) classify the Theme-Rheme patterns which occurs in English text into four. They are constant theme pattern, linear theme pattern (zig-zag pattern), split rheme pattern and derived themes. They can be explained details, as follow:

Constant Theme pattern

In this type, the topic for the paragraph is introduced as the theme of the first clause. The theme of one clause is share as the theme of the clauses following it. This types also represents the reader with the given information acts as the theme throughout the clauses, while rheme presents a new information which is not further discussed in the following clauses. This pattern can be drawn as follows:

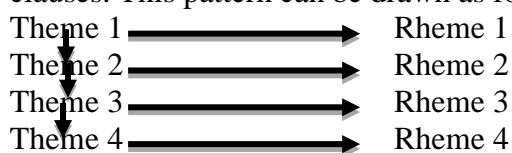


Figure 2.1 Constant Theme Pattern

Linear Theme Pattern

The second types of linear themes pattern, in this types the idea introduce in the rhemes of each clauses or the rhemes becomes the theme of the text utterances. In other words, the rheme of one clause is taken up as the themes of the subsequent clause. In addition, Eggin (2004:324) called it as zig-zag pattern. She states that in this pattern, an element which is introduce in the rheme in clause 1 gets promoted to become the theme of clause 2. This types of pattern is represented graphically below:



Figure 2.2 Linear Theme Pattern.

Split Rhemes Pattern.

In cases of complex text structure, the thematic pattern can be combined and manifested in organization of the text. This types of combination of both constant and linear pattern. It occurs when the rhemes of a clause has two or more components, each of which is taken in turn as the theme of subsequence clause. It can be represented in the pattern as follow:

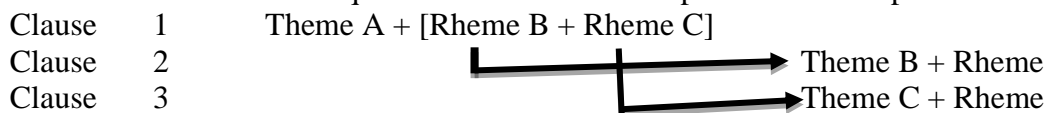
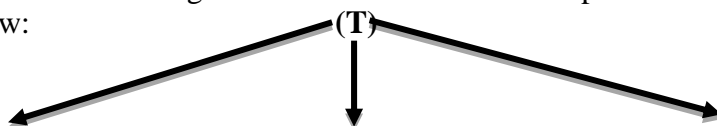


Figure 2.3 Split Rheme Pattern.

Derived Theme

Bloor and Bloor (2004:91) mention that the term derived theme is used to describe expressions in the position of theme which are cohesively linked in meaning, but not necessarily in form to a topic which has been stated earlier in the text. To sum up, the theme of a clause is not stated explicitly in the theme-rheme of the previous clause by the form, but it relates in meaning to the theme or rheme of the previous clause. It is represented graphically below:



Theme 1 → Rheme 1 Theme 2 → Rheme 2 Theme 3 → Rheme 3

Figure 2.4 Derived Themes pattern.

Kinds, Types and Elements of the Themes.

As the research explained that we can notice the theme in starting point of the message. In other words, it is where the information put. Furthermore, Gerot & Wegnell (1994:104) states that the theme can be divided into a number of categories such as the simple theme which consist of (*ideational*) and multiple themes which consist of (*ideational, interpersonal*) and it also can consist of three elements of them (*ideational, interpersonal and textual*) and marked and unmarked themes.

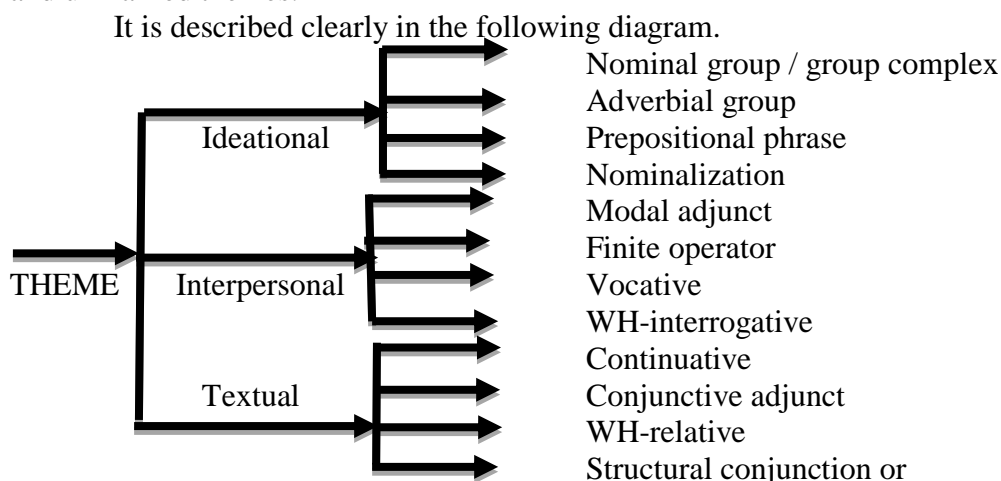


Figure 3.5 Types and Element of Themes.

Simple Theme

Simple theme is realized by a single element in the clause. This theme indicates an ideational meaning. The ideational theme can be recognized as the first element in the clause that express some kind of representational meaning.

For example:

(11) I manage a hotel.

Table 6 Simple Theme

I	Manage a hotel
Nominal group/pronoun	
Theme	Rheme

Multiple Theme

A multiple theme, on the other hand, consists of more than one element, expressing to the ideational, interpersonal and/or textual meanings. As Bloor & Bloor (2004:77) stated that some clauses have more than one theme or what is known as multiple thematic structures. Furthermore, discussing about multiple themes means that it relates to the three metafunctions discussed in the previous chapter such as ideational (experiential), interpersonal and textual.

METHOD

In order to find the objectives of this research, the writer used qualitative method. According to Taylor (1984) “qualitative method makes the researcher develop concepts, insight and understanding from pattern in the data rather than assess preconceived models, hypothesis or theories”. In collecting and analyzing the data, the writer used the procedures as follows:

(1) Finding the Indonesian folktales which are written in English and collected in a book and finally (2) Classifying the data based on the theory used. The writer chooses some of data which represent each category of the theme, element, and thematic progression pattern. (3) Data collection is identified by each clause in selected paragraph of Indonesian Folktales. In this stage, each clause is identified based on its theme and rheme, their elements, and thematic progression pattern, also their contribution to the textual cohesion of Indonesian Folktales in English Version. (4) The writer make diagram of each clause in order to recognize the theme and rheme pattern, their elements and thematic progression pattern easily. (5) And finally The researcher analyzes the kinds of themes, its elements and thematic progression patterns then glosses them by paraphrasing them based on their proposition.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 7 Finding of the Research

No	Types of Thematic Progression Patterns	Selected Paragraph	Total
Simple			
1	Constant	Paragraph [6, 11, 14, 16, 19, 27, 41, 42, 43, 48, 49, 52, and 54].	13
2	Linear	Paragraph [3, 15, 22, 29, 34, 37, 39, 40, 45, 47, and 53].	11
3	Derived	Paragraph [1, 2, 20, and 50]	4
Multiple			
1	Constant and Linear	Paragraph [4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, 33, 36, 46, and 51].	18
2	Constant and Derived	Paragraph [32].	2
3	Constant, Linear and Derived	Paragraph [5, 31, and 44].	2
Total Selected Data in each Paragraph			50

Discussion

The writer chose one representative data of each thematic progression in Princess Sumur Bandung Indonesian Folktales to be analyzed as follow:

1. Simple Theme Rheme Pattern

1. 1 Constant Theme Rheme Pattern

Data 1 (Paragraph 11) [Clauses 51, 52 and 53]

(51)So the king’s work was often hindered by his wife isn’t surprising **(52)Then that things** began to go badly in the kingdom **(53)it** got worse and worse until the wheels of the government stopped turning altogether.

The data above are included in constant theme which organized by theme and rhemes, and they will be mapped as follow:

Theme

Rheme

So the king's work
Then that things
It

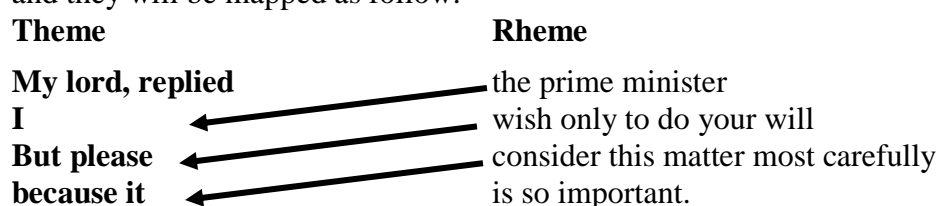
was often hindered by his wife isn't surprising
began to go badly in the kingdom
got worse and worse until the wheels of the
government stopped turning altogether.

1. 2 Linear Theme RhemePattern

Data 2(Paragraph (15) [Clauses 70, 71, 72 and 73])

(70) **My lord, replied** the prime minister(71) **I**wish only to do your will (72) **But please** consider this matter most carefully (73) **because it** is so important.

The data above are included in linear theme which organized by theme and rhemes, and they will be mapped as follow:

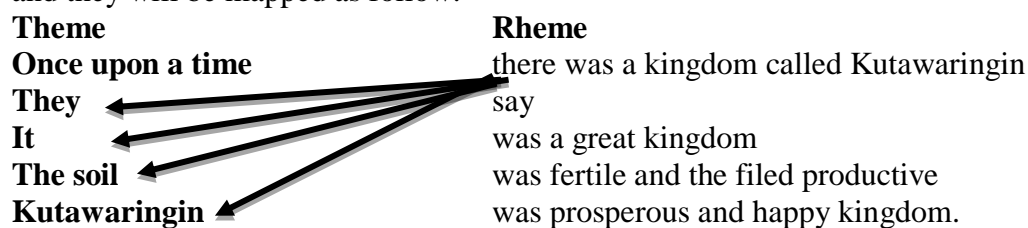


1. 3 Derived Theme RhemePattern

Data 3 (Paragraph (1) [Clause 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5])

(1) **Once upon a time** there was a kingdom called Kutawaringin (2) **They** say (3) **It** was a great kingdom (4) **The soil** was fertile and the filed productive (5) **Kutawaringin** was prosperous and happy kingdom.

The data above are included in linear theme which organized by theme and rhemes, and they will be mapped as follow:



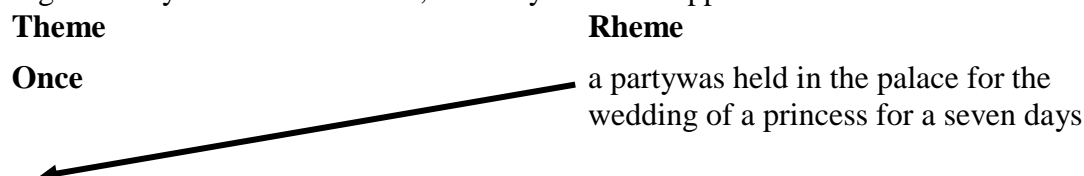
2. Multiple Theme Rheme Pattern

2.1 Combination of Constant and Linear

Data 4 (Paragraph (7) [Clauses33, 34 and 35])

(33) **Once** a partywas held in the palace for the wedding of a princess for a seven days and seven nights. (34) **As usual all the minister and noblemen**in the country came with their wives(35) **the guests** were greeted warmly and joyfully by his Majesty Munding Kaling Puspa Mantri and Queen Nimbang Waringin.

The data above are included in combination between constant and linear theme which organized by theme and rhemes, and they will be mapped as follow:



As usual all the minister and noblemen the guests

and seven nights.
in the country came with their wives were greeted warmly and joyfully by his Majesty Munding Kaling Puspa Mantri and Queen Nimbang Waringin.

2.2 Combination of Constant and Derived

Data 5 (Paragraph (32) [Clauses 140, 141, 142, 143, 144 and 145])

(140) suddenly the buffalo turned, seeming to catch the scent of the humans (141) But Princess Sumur Bandung was not in the least afraid (142) the buffalo sensed the danger (143) that threatened it (144) it lowered its head, snorting (145) Princess Sumur Bandung, who was only a few steps away suddenly jumped forward.

The data above are included in combination between constant and derived theme which organized by theme and rhemes, and they will be mapped as follow:

Theme	Rheme
Suddenly the buffalo	turned, seeming to catch the scent of the humans
But Princess Sumur Bandung the buffalo it	was not in the least afraid sensed the danger that threatened lowered its head, snorting
Princess Sumur Bandung, who was only a few steps away	suddenly jumped forward.

2.3 Combination of Constant, Linear and Derived

Data 6 (Paragraph (5) [Clauses 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30])

(26) But there has never been a perfect creature on this earth (27) The brave, wise and praise worthy Munding Kaling Puspa Mantri had as his consort Queen Nimbang Waringin (28) in all the country there was no one so beautiful, like a single star shining brighter than all the others (29) everyone who saw her felt (30) how beautiful is the flower of Kutawaringin.

The data above are included in combination among constant, linear and derived theme which organized by theme and rhemes, and they will be mapped as follow:

Theme	Rheme
But there	has never been a perfect creature on this earth
The brave, wise and praise worthy Munding Kaling Puspa Mantri in all the country	had as his consort Queen Nimbang Waringin there was no one so beautiful, like a single star shining brighter than all the others
everyone who saw her how beautiful	felt is the flower of Kutawaringin.

CONCLUSION

From the data analysis, the writer found that (1) there are two kinds of theme-rheme patterns which are structured in Indonesian Folktales in English version. The themes-rhemes patterns

are simple theme-rheme patterns and multiple theme-rheme patterns. Simple theme-rheme patterns consist of constant theme-rheme patterns using ideational and using both textual and ideational. The second one is linear theme-rheme patterns using ideational, using textual ideational, and using interpersonal ideational. And the last is derived theme-rheme patterns using ideational, using textual ideational and using textual, interpersonal and ideational. While multiple theme-rheme patterns consist of three combinations. The first is combination of constant and linear theme-rheme patterns using ideational, textual ideational, interpersonal ideational and using textual interpersonal and ideational. The second one is combination of linear and derived theme-rheme patterns using textual and ideational. And the last is combination of constant, linear and derived theme-rheme pattern using ideational, textual ideational, and textual, interpersonal and ideational. (2) Related to the elements of theme which appear in textual, interpersonal and ideational theme, the writer found that there are some elements which are structured in Indonesian Folktales in English version. They are classified as followed: Textual elements cover continuative, structural conjunction, wh-relative and conjunctive adjunct. Interpersonal elements cover modal adjunct, vocative, wh-interrogative and finite verbal operator. Ideational elements cover nominal group, noun, adverbial group, prepositional phrase, process, complement, group complex and adverb. (3) And thematic progressions are found in Indonesian Folktales in English Version were simple theme-rheme patterns and multiple theme-rheme pattern. Simple theme-rhemes patterns are identified as constant theme-rheme pattern, linear theme-rheme pattern, and derived theme-rheme pattern. While multiple theme-rheme patterns are identified as combination of constant and linear theme, combination of linear and derived and combination of constant, linear and derived theme.

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