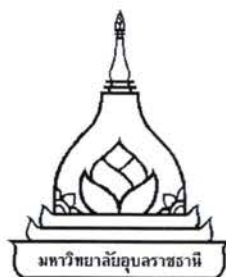


**A TOPICAL PROGRESSION ANALYSIS OF 4th YEAR
TOURISM MAJORS' ESSAYS, WRITING, FACULTY OF
LIBERAL ARTS, UBON RATCHATHANI UNIVERSITY**

METHAWEE ROMYEN

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
MAJOR IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS
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**INDEPENDENT STUDY APPROVAL
UBON RATCHATHANI UNIVERSITY**

MASTER OF ARTS

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TITLE A TOPICAL PROGRESSION ANALYSIS OF 4TH YEAR TOURISM
MAJORS' ESSAYS, WRITING, FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS,
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ชื่อเรื่อง : การวิเคราะห์การพัฒนาของแก่นประโยคของนักศึกษา วิชาเอกสาขาการ
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ศัพท์สำคัญ : ทฤษฎีการวิเคราะห์การพัฒนาของแก่นประโยค ความต่อเนื่องในงานเขียน
คุณภาพในงานเขียน หัวข้อใหม่

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อตรวจสอบความต่อเนื่องในงานเขียนโดยใช้ทฤษฎีการวิเคราะห์การพัฒนาของแก่นประโยคของนักศึกษาสาขาการท่องเที่ยว คณะศิลปศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยอุบลราชธานี กลุ่มประชากรคือ นักศึกษาชั้นปีที่ 4 สาขาวิชาการท่องเที่ยว ที่กำลังศึกษาในภาคเรียนที่ 1 ปีการศึกษา 2556 ในงานเขียนภาษาอังกฤษแบบแสดงความคิดเห็น จำนวน 20 คน โดยแบ่งเป็น 2 กลุ่มคือ กลุ่มที่มีความสามารถในการเขียนระดับดี และกลุ่มที่มีความสามารถในการเขียนระดับไม่ดี ข้อมูลที่ได้ถูกนำมาหาค่าเฉลี่ยจากค่าที่ปรากฏทั้งหมด

ผู้วิจัยใช้ทฤษฎีการวิเคราะห์แก่นประโยคที่คิดค้นโดย Lautamatti (1978) และ Simpson (2000) จากการศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นว่า นักศึกษาสาขาวิชาการท่องเที่ยว ที่อยู่ในกลุ่ม ที่มีความสามารถในการเขียนดี จะใช้ รูปแบบ Parallel Progression มากที่สุด ร้อยละ 31 ตามมาด้วย รูปแบบ Extended Parallel Progression ร้อยละ 26 และหัวข้อใหม่ ร้อยละ 24 รูปแบบ Sequential Progression ร้อยละ 18 รูปแบบ Extended Parallel Progression ใช้น้อยที่สุด ร้อยละ 8 ในขณะที่กลุ่มที่มีความสามารถในการเขียนไม่ดี จะใช้รูปแบบ Parallel Progression มากที่สุด ร้อยละ 33 ตามมาด้วย หัวข้อใหม่ ร้อยละ 27 รูปแบบ Sequential Progression ร้อยละ 26 รูปแบบ Extended Parallel Progression ร้อยละ 21 และรูปแบบ Extended Sequential Progression ใช้น้อยที่สุด ร้อยละ 9

สรุปผลการศึกษานี้ คือ เมื่อใช้ทฤษฎีวิเคราะห์การพัฒนาของแก่นประโยค ผลที่ได้ ออกมาคือ การใช้หัวข้อใหม่ และ รูปแบบ Parallel progression จำนวนมาก จะนำไปสู่ การเขียนที่มีคุณภาพที่ไม่ดี ในทางตรงกันข้าม การใช้รูปแบบ Extended Parallel Progression ที่มาก และการใช้หัวข้อใหม่ทีน้อย จะนำไปสู่การเขียนที่มีคุณภาพที่ดี

ABSTRACT

TITLE : A TOPICAL PROGRESSION ANALYSIS OF 4TH YEAR
TOURISM MAJORS ESSAY, WRITING, FACULTY OF LIBERAL
ARTS, UBON RATCHATHANI UNIVERSITY

BY : METHAWEE ROMYEN

DEGREE : MASTER OF ARTS

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CHAIR : LUGSAMEE NUAMTHANOM KIMURA, Ph.D.

KEYWORDS : TOPICAL STRUCTURE ANALYSIS / COHEARANCE /
WRITING QUALITY / NEW TOPIC

This study examined Tourism students' opinion paragraph writing by using a framework known as a Topical Structure Analysis to investigate writing quality of 20 students who enrolled in the Paragraph Writing Course offered at the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Ubon Ratchathani University. The topic of writing was "The Ministry of Education recently the opening of its program English Speaking Year 2012." They studied in the first semester of the academic year 2013.

The researcher focused the Topical Structure Analysis framework developed by Lautammatti (1978) and Simpson (2000). Results obtained from the analysis of 20 students showed that in the good writing group, the parallel progression occurred 31% followed by the extended parallel progression 26 %, 24 % of the new topic, 18 % of sequential progression and 8 % of extended sequential progression. In contrast, in the bad writing group, the parallel progression occurred 33 %, followed by the new topic 27 %, 26 % of sequential progression, 21 % of extended parallel progression, and 9 % of extended sequential progression.

These results seem to indicate that the higher number of new topic and parallel progression may lead to low quality writing. In contrast, the larger number of extended parallel progression and a fewer number of new topic could result in good quality writing.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	I
THAI ABSTRACT	II
ENGLISH ABSTRACT	III
CONTENTS	IV
LIST OF TABLE	VI
LIST OF FIGURES	VII
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Rationale	1
1.2 Purpose of the study	5
1.3 Significance of the study	5
1.4 Research question	5
1.5 Scope of the study	5
1.6 Definition of key terms	6
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Cultural influences on Composition	7
2.2 What is Topical Progression Analysis (TPA)?	10
2.3 Related studies on the application of Topical Structure Analysis to students' writing	15
3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Data Collection	19
3.2 Data Analysis	19
3.3 Duration	21
3.4 Data Framework	21
4 FINDING	
4.1 Research Question	23

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1	Raters' scores on Ubon Ratchathani University students' writing	24
2	The percentage of each topical progression type	27
3	Different Types of topical progression found in each essay	29
4	Comparative results on the relationship between the topical progression type and the participants' writing quality	31

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
1	Robert Kaplan's Diagrams	9
2	Comparative results of the topical progression	28
3	Comparison percentage of progressions in both good and bad writing groups	32

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

English has been widely used around the world mainly because it is a universal or an international language. As Chrystal (1997) noted, English is used and developed in every country to achieve its truly global language status. Evidently, many countries require English to be taught in schools of different educational levels, including such countries in Asia as India, Singapore and Philippines. In these countries, English is proclaimed as one of the national languages, making it a mandatory course offered at all school levels (Bolton, 2008).

To acquire English, an individual is basically required to master all four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among these skills, nonetheless, writing appears to be the most complicated and difficult. According to Langan (1987) and Gunning (1998), writing is difficult, especially for those who start to write because it is more complicated and more abstract than talking. This view is consistent with Parker (1993), who acknowledged that when students began to write, they would face a lot of torment. More specifically, writing is the most difficult language skill because writers need to have a lot of lexical and syntactic knowledge as well as principles of rhetorical organization to accomplish a goal of producing one piece of work (Tangpermpoon, 2008). Despite its complicated and abstract nature, writing has received a tremendous amount of attention and been approached from different perspectives. Moutaka (2010), for instance, stated that writing is a mechanism in which students use to improve various kinds of language skills, ranging from spelling, reading, to letter sound matching. In a different manner, writing is viewed as a process through which meaning is created (Zamel, 1982) and a process of discovering through language (Murray, 1972). In addition, writing is carried out to perform many purposes, including to inform, to persuade, to narrate, and to describe.

Fundamentally, writing consists of five major parts: (1) introduction, (2) body, (3), (Nunnally, 1991). To be competent in writing, however, one may need to move beyond these major components. That is, a good writer may also have to take into account some other aspects such as coherence to produce a logically connected text.

Lee (2002) described in her study that coherence is a primary device to connect and link ideas to create meanings in writing. Similarly, Dane (1974) and Firbas (1986) posited that coherence can be referred to as an information structure that guides readers to understand how information is organized and how a topic is developed in a paragraph. Coherence also leads to connectivity of the underlying content which can be recognized through a relationship among different propositions (Kinsch and van Dijk 1978; van Dijk 1980). The term coherence may also be viewed in a more specific way. On the one hand, text-based coherence could be defined as various features at an internal structure of the text, which has two forms: cohesion and coherence (Hodges and Whitten, 1972). On the other hand, reader- based coherence refers to coherence, which is associated with the meaningful aspects of reader-writer interaction (John, 1986). One of these aspects may include how writers present information that proceeds from *old /known/ familiar* to *new / unknown/ unfamiliar*.

In English, a variety of approaches can be employed to promote coherence in writing, and one of them has been known as a topical progression. Cited in Connor and Farmer (1990), one prominent strategy that can improve a writing performance could be related to as a Topical Structure Analysis (TSA), which is inextricably interwoven with the previously mentioned term a topic progression. As Schneider and Connor (1991) explained, there are at least three main types of topical progression: parallel progression, sequential progression and extended parallel progression, and these topical variations have been found to be closely linked to a writing quality (Schneider & Connor 1991; Witte, 1983a; 1983b).

As previously suggested, a topical progression reveals its great tendency to promote coherence in writing. In particular, a topical structure or topical progression is useful for connecting ideas in written texts (Almanden, 2006). In her study, Almanden used a topical structure analysis to investigate a paragraph writing of Filipino English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students by analyzing their internal

Based on the researcher's observation as a language learner, writing seems to be one of the most problematic skills, and writing problems can be of various types, ranging from subject-verb agreements, articles, tenses, to prepositions. For Thai learners, specifically, a number of research studies have led to 2 major categories of writing problems: grammatical and lexical ones (Bennui, 2008 ; Lukanavanich, 1988 ; Torut, 1993 ; Ubol, 1979). For the grammatical part, Thai students are likely to show incompetency in using grammatical devices such as articles, singular/plural markers, and prepositions. For the lexical area, Thai learners tend to demonstrate their limited knowledge of vocabulary (Boonpattaranon, 2008). Besides these two prominent writing problems, the researcher also believes that there are other factors that could be responsible for Thai students' low quality writing. That is, students may not yet be aware of how each sentence topic (what is said in a sentence) should be related to one another, leading to an incoherent essay where various pieces of information do not flow smoothly to promote a well-connected paragraph.

In addition, it has been observed that the ability in writing of Thais depends largely on their ability to control a topical progression in an essay. When students write a paragraph, they seem to lack knowledge of how to link a topic of one sentence to that of others in the same paragraph. Therefore, acquiring several types of topical progression techniques should increase learners' competence in English writing because when students are competent in controlling their topics, they can move forward or return to the same topic in a more effective way. If each topic in a paragraph is well connected to one another, that particular piece of writing will contain a good quality since it carries unity or coherence. Furthermore, a good control over the topic is found to encourage a reader's understanding of the text because it helps generate a good flow of information.

As a result, the present study was one of the first attempts to make a systematic investigation of topical progression appearing in the opinion paragraph writing of tourism major students who took different English courses as their required subjects. These students were not English majors who were most likely to take more English courses more than others. The analysis hopefully reveals a relationship between the preferred patterns of topical progression and opinion writing. The results

will also prove useful as a guideline for developing materials for a university writing course.

1.2 The purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate the use of topical progressions of fourth year Tourism majors who enrolled in Paragraph Writing in the 1st semester of the academic year 2013 to see whether they have demonstrated an awareness of topical progression and how it can be connected to a quality of writing. And if this is the case, which type of progression is prominent in their writing.

1.3 Significance of the study

The significance of study is as follows. Results obtained from the current study will probably help offer a plan for university English teachers to manage a writing course, which also incorporates a more global aspect (coherence) of writing into their classroom materials. This will in turn help ensure students' competency in writing in a more communicative manner.

1.4 Research question

1.4.1 What type of topical progression is most used in the Tourism students' opinion paragraphs?

1.4.2 How do good or bad writings differ in terms of topical progression used?

1.5 Scope of the study

This study aims to investigate the written essays of 4th year Tourism students who enrolled in the Paragraph Writing course, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Ubon Ratchathani University. The focus was placed on the type(s) of topical progression in their writing and its relationship to the quality of writing.

1.6 Definitions of key terms

1.6.1 Topical progression refers to the framework which was developed by Lautamatti (1978) to check the coherence in writing. In this study, three types of progression which developed by Lautamatti and one another kind from Simpson (2000). Then, in this study, there are four kinds of progression will be used to analyzed which consists of parallel progression, sequential progression, extended parallel progression and extended sequential progression

1.6.2 New Topic refers to the topic which is not related to the topic in writing but participants in this study create by themselves.

1.6.3 Tourism students refer to the students who learned in Tourism majors and they are enrolled in a paragraph writing course. They learned English as a required course and they are in the same Faculty with English major students.

1.6.4 Writing quality refers to quality of writing which linked and connected to coherence quality of writing.

1.6.5 Opinion paragraph refers to the paragraph writing that students have to use personal opinions to write the essays.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main purpose of this chapter is to offer a review of literature on important issues related to this research. In this chapter, cultural influences on English writing of Thai and ESL students, Topical Progression Analysis and related studies will be reviewed.

2.1 Cultural influences on Composition

English and other languages of the world (e.g. Chinese, French and Thai) are different in many aspects, which could in turn result in a number of critical problems for those who study English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL or EFL). Responding to this demand, many researchers have developed different approaches to explore the differences and similarities between English and other languages to help learners from around the world achieve their goals of studying English either as a second or a foreign language and some examples of these methods include Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis and Inter-language Analysis.

Contrastive Analysis or (CA) aims at developing a method of comparison of linguistic systems of two languages (Richard & Schmidt, 2002). Through this approach, the analysis of sound and grammatical system in the first and the second languages is carried out to find an effective means of solution concerning second language instructions. Specifically, researchers in this area have looked into ways in which successful language learning and teaching and structural linguistics can work together.

On the other hand, Error Analysis (EA), introduced in the 1960s, has been offered as an alternative to CA to assert the influence of native language on second language learners. Errors, according to EA, are viewed as a more complex phenomenon since L2 learners' errors could be caused by many factors such as a target language itself, a communicative strategy, and a quality of second language

instruction (Hashim, 1999). Different types of errors made by L2 learners may range from overgeneralizations, simplifications, developmental errors, communication-based errors, avoidance, to overproduction errors (Richard & Schmidt, 2002).

By the late 1960s, the attention on EA was shifted to Inter-language Analysis (IA) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Inter-language is the type of language produced by second or foreign language learners, which occurs during the process of target language learning (Selinker, 1972 cited in Connor, 1996). As a result of this, Inter-language Analysis concentrates on “the analysis of linguistic system of L1 and L2 in relation to transitional competence of second language learners and a continuum system of second language learner’s linguistic development” (Connor, 1996: 12 -14).

Indeed, the first three approaches, CA, EA and IA, seem to give a lot of emphases on a structural view of language that mainly focuses on phonology, syntax, morphology and semantics to improve second language instructions. All of these approaches, nonetheless, seem to de-emphasize other important aspects of the language. Particularly, Krashen (1977) was among the first scholars to acknowledge the importance of other elements such as the role of culture in the achievement of a second language learning. The close connection between L1 culture and L2 achievement had brought into a language study a new perspective known as Contrastive Rhetoric (CR) in the 1990s (Kaplan, 1966).

CR refers to a means of enhancing the awareness of a cultural background of native language and its effects on the second language produced. It was developed to expand research in the field of second language acquisition, where a focus was shifted from grammatical features to a discourse level across cultures (Kaplan). In particular, Kaplan asserted that there were some factors affecting L2 writing. He specifically argued that a rhetorical organization of overall discourse could vary from culture to culture and even from time to time within a given culture. Complementing this view, Connor (1996) stressed that contrastive rhetoric was linked to L2 compositions in the sense that L2 writing could be influenced by L1 rhetorical patterns.

Moreover, in his notable article published in 1966, *Cultural Thought Patterns in Inter-Cultural Education*, Kaplan stated that “logic (in the popular, rather

than logical sense of the word), which is the basis of rhetoric, is evolved out of a culture, which is not universal (p. 2)". The following is his diagram of logical thinking found in different cultures.

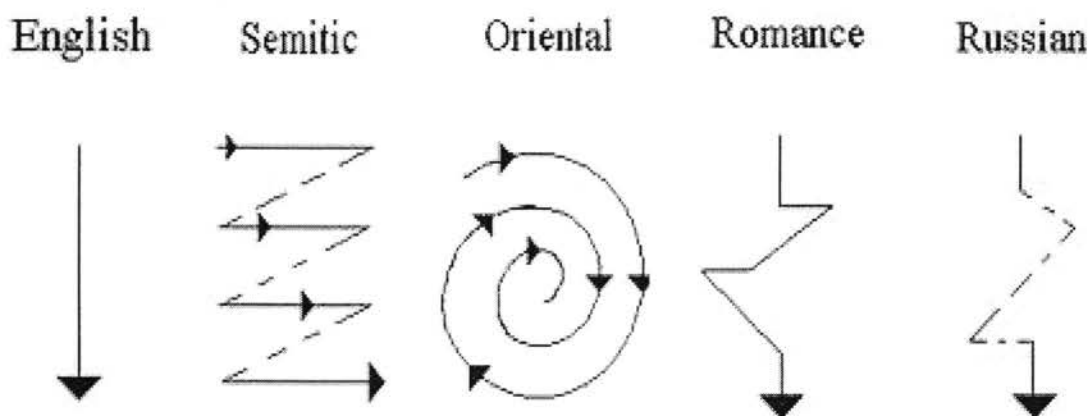


Figure 1 Robert Kaplan's Diagrams.

Based on Kaplan's rhetorical concept, the logic of each student is different because it depends on his or her native culture brought with them into a language classroom. He proposed that a foreign language learner who was an expert in syntax of English may still produce a bad paragraph unless he or she also mastered the logic of English. Along this "logic" notion, Chan (1992), for example, summarized a communication style of Western and Asian cultures as the two groups tended to employ different logical thinking system. While western learners were likely to be direct, explicit, informal, spontaneous, emotionally expressive and egocentric, Asian learners were indirect, nonverbal, formal, goal oriented, emotionally controlled and modest. Throughout the world, there have been a number of research studies which applied CR to the analysis of composition. Specific to a Thai context, Indrasutra (1988) was among scholars who studied a narrative writing of Thai and American students and found that Thais tended to focus more on a mental status than the American students did. Indrasutra explained that Thais were more influenced by a religious belief. The mental states of Thais may be influenced by a Buddhist philosophy and a didactic purpose of narrative in their culture. In contrast, American students seemed to entertain and saw themselves in control of many events in their stories.

Responding to a close relationship between L1 culture and L2 compositions, researchers around the world have been in search for any language devices which play a crucial role in identifying this relationship. They ultimately came up with several tools and suggested that Topical Progression Analysis could be one of the promising means to achieve this goal.

2.2 What is Topical Progression Analysis (TPA)?

Topical Progression Analysis or Topical Structure Analysis (TSA) can be defined by scholars in a variety of ways. For example, Kaplan (1966) posited that Topical Progression Analysis can be referred to as an internal structure which represents culturally distinct characteristics. In a different manner, Connor and Farmer (1990) looked at TPA as a linguistic-based revising strategy, which determines coherence in writing. Similarly, Simpson (2000) added that TPA is an analysis of coherence (the unified whole) that is derived from the identification of internal topical structure of each paragraph by relying on a repetition of key words and phrases.

Among different conceptual frameworks of TPA, Lautamatti (1978) seemed to be among the first to provide a systematic way of identifying how topics repeat, shift and return to earlier topics at a discourse level. She developed an analysis of topic-comment based on a linguistic theory of Prague School of Linguistics by dividing a sentence into two major elements. The first element is called a topic (what a sentence is about, usually corresponding to a subject of the sentence) while another part is named a comment (a segment that talks about the topic, normally corresponding to a predicate of the sentence). According to this framework, a development of textual coherence is usually determined by a semantic relationship within an overall discourse by investigating the repetition, shift and reoccurrence of the topic. To this base, a writer could easily see how topics in every sentence work through the text to create an overall meaning of the whole paragraph.

According to Lautamatti, three patterns of topical structure were proposed, which consist of Parallel progression, sequential progression and extended parallel progression. Simpson (2000) later introduced one more possible type of topical

progression into the framework known as extended sequential progression.

The following will illustrate the 4 patterns of topical progressions:

(1) Parallel progression means a progression in which the topic of the next successive sentences (e.g. their level of English) is the same, or they are semantically co-inferential. The below paragraph will illustrate this point:

The teachers were academically well-qualified, with wide-ranging experience of teaching at the university. Their level of English was high, as one might, and showed evidence of extensive reading and interest in the language.

In this example, “their level of English” is considered a semantically co-inferential topic because it is part of a teacher’s ability, already introduced in the 1st sentence. Training across cultures: content, process and dialogue, ELT journal Volume 55/3 July 2001, p. 229.

(2) Sequential progression means a progression in which the topic of the next sentence (e.g. the pedagogy) is different from the previous one and derived from the comment of the preceding sentence.

The article describes (a genre-based literacy pedagogy) which can be used with English language learners. The pedagogy discussed involved s combination of two explicit teaching methodologies.

In this case, the topic “pedagogy” is developed from information introduced in the comment of the 1st sentence. Teaching writing to low proficiency EFL student, ELT Journal volume 61/4 October 2007, p. 341.

(3) Extended parallel progression means a situation in which a parallel progression (e.g. I and I) is temporarily interrupted by a sequential progression:

I gave (them) a notebook to keep a diary at the beginning of the course. They did it dutifully, not really knowing, I think, why they were doing it. I feel that wasn't very successful.

As seen here, the 1st and the 2nd “I” are interrupted by a sequential progression observed in the 2nd sentence. Training across culture: content, process, and dialogue, *ELT Journal* Volume 55/3 July 2001, p. 235.

(4) Extended sequential progression means a progression in which the comment (e.g. issues, these aspects of language) of one clause becomes the topic of the non-consecutive clause. In other words, a sequential pattern is contemporarily interrupted by a parallel progression.

In addition, culture involves (issues) such as how anxiety or excitement are expressed, or how culturally accepted intonation is used to deliver humor or anger. These aspects of language are very suitable for learners grasp, let alone learn to use.

In this paragraph, the topic “these aspects” developed from the comment in sentence 1 is interrupted by a parallel progression in the 2nd sentence. English through drama for oral skills development, *ELT Journal* Volume 57/2, April 2003, p. 123.

To compliment Lautammatti and Simson, Vande Kopple (1989), in his book “Clear and Coherent Prose: A Functional Approach to topical progressions in essays, demonstrated six patterns of TSA, some of which are similar to Lautammatti: (1) parallel progression, (2) split topic progression, (3) hypertopic progression, (4) chaining progression, (5) split comment progression and (6) hypercomment progression. All of them will be explained as follows:

(1) Parallel Progression refers to a situation in which a topic of the following sentence is closely linked to the previous one.

*Lautammatti (1987) described three basic sentence elements that play a role in TSA. She identifies the initial sentence element (ISE), which is what comes first in sentence. (Topical Structure Analysis of Academic Paragraph in English and Spanish, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, p. 300).*

(2) Split Topic Progression refers to a situation where a topic of the 1st sentence (e.g. Two versions) can be spitted or separated into two or more. Then, one

part of the 1st topic becomes a subject in the second sentence and another part will be a subject of the third sentence. Look at the sample below:

Two visions of each tale were prepared . The first contained the following linguistic simplification: short utterances (MLU: 4.3 words per utterance), simple syntactic structures (simple present, imperatives, comparatives, etc), few subordinate clause (but, so), and simple and basic vocabulary. The second version contained the following numbers of interactional modifications: of 68 new utterances added to the first version, 48 were repetitions and 20 comprehension checks. (The effects of repetition, comprehension checks and gestures, on primary school children in an EFL situation, EFL Journal Volume 55/3 July 2001, p. 283).

(3) Hypertopic Progression refers to a topic of the 1st sentence, which is a general term (e.g. The initial attempt...), is followed by topics of the next sentences (e.g. teacher, a good deal of teacher time and energy), which expresses specific correspondents to that general term.

The initial attempt at promoting student contributions to the SAC was not an unqualified success. First of all, teachers couldn't find the time to make model worksheets for all the 'blueprints' I had selected, so there were few for students to follow. In addition, a good deal of teacher time and energy was expended in nagging some students until a worksheet was finally produced, then revised until accompanied by an error-free answer key. (Why should learners contribute to the self-access centre? EFL Journal Volume 58/4 October 2004, p. 348)

(4) Chaining Progression refers to a progression in which a comment (e.g. topical structure analysis) of one sentence becomes a topic of the next sentence (e.g. This framework.

To describe coherence in text, Lautamatti (1987) developed (topical structure analysis) which can be traced back to Prague School of Linguistics' theory of theme-rhythm or topic comment. This framework inspects the semantic relationship between sentence topics and overall discourse topics by looking at the repetitions, shift and reoccurrences of topic. (Physical and Topical Structure Analysis of

Professional Writing in Inner, Outer, and Expanding circle of English, TESOL journal, P. 98).

In other times, a chaining progression may govern more than one sentence, and the chain-like linkage (e.g. activities, such activities) becomes even more apparent as seen here:

Whole-group activities: Several contributors described whole-group activities that enable all children to participate successfully in a shared experience but allowing for a range of different outcomes. Activities often focused on practical work (including arts and crafts) around a central theme to which all children contribute to the best of their individual interests, abilities, and talents. Such activities readily accommodate individual differences. 'Hands on' experiences also stimulate valuable language interaction in a natural text. Meeting individual needs with young learners, ELT Journal. 376: 58(4).

(5) Split Comment Progression refers to a progression which splits similarly to the chaining progression. A comment of the first sentence (e.g. First and Second) can be split into two or more parts. Then, one of these becomes a topic of the next sentence while the others become a topic of the third or later sentences.

In summary, based on subject of study, there are two important generalizations that can be drawn. First, the total number of words in Inner is much greater than the outer and the expanding circle. This finding coincides with Simpson' (2000) in her comparison between English and Spanish academic text. Second, the total number of sentence and the total number of clause in the Expanding circle is much greater than two circles. (Physical and Topical Structure Analysis of Professional Writing in Inner, Outer, and Expanding circle of English, TESOL journal, P, 103).

(6) Hypercomment Progression refers to a progression, which is similar to a hypertopic progression, but this type of progression refers to a comment of the first topic (e.g. a lot of important things), which is presented in a general term. Then, a comment of the later sentences (e.g. Firstly, I learned to organize the article) will be explained in a more specific way.

I obtained a lot of important things by these essays. Firstly, I learned how to organize the article. Usual, I have some confused opinions about one topic, and now I can separate them in correct paragraph. Secondly, I knew how to write the structure. Such as I wrote Introduction, Description, Explanation . . . I think it is very clear to reader what you will talk about and how many ideas you want express.

(Scaffolding for second language writer: producing an academic essay, ELT Journal Volume 57/2 April 2003, p. 163).

Among several frameworks presented earlier (e.g. Lautamatti, Simpson and Vande Kopple), Lautamatti's seems to be the most influential one since it is mostly cited in a number of studies concerning the topical progression analysis and compositions.

2.3 Related studies on the application of Topical Structure Analysis to students' writing.

The importance of Topical Structure Analysis (TSA) has been well received in the learning and teaching of English, both in ESL and EFL environments. In Thailand, TSA also draws a lot of attention from scholars, linguists, and language teachers, resulting in a number of studies using this approach to analyze a coherent quality and an organization of essays.

First, Buacomecote (2003), based on Lautamatti's topical structure analysis, analyzed the topical progressions, which occurred in three sample groups of different essay qualities. The three essay groups were labeled as high, medium and low quality essays written by third year English majors at Srinakarinwirot University under the topic named "The person I love most," which was a descriptive style of writing. The patterns of topical structure analysis proposed by Lautamatti were employed as a major research framework. The findings of this study showed that high rated essays showed a potential of carrying a parallel progression, which was used most extensively, followed by an extended parallel progression and sequential progression. In moderated essays, the same order of patterns was observed. Similarly, in a low-rated quality essay, a parallel progression also came first on the list, followed by an approximately equal number of sequential progression and extended parallel. The

study concluded that the students of high and moderate rated essays employed the same pattern of topical progression, but this was not the case with the students who wrote a low-rated essay.

In a similar manner, Phuwichit (2004) used Lautammatti's Topical Structure Analysis to examine the essays of fourth year English Majors at Srinakharinwirot University in his thesis "A Topical Structure Analysis of essays written by fourth year English Major Students". The investigation focused on identifying the topical structure of Thai students' writing and exploring how well they organized their essays. The corpus of 34 student essays were analyzed to find out a topical structure at a sentence and discourse level. The kind of writing analyzed in this study fell into a comparison and contrast topic: "Which is more important between knowledge and experience? Why?"

At a sentence level, the analysis emphasized how the three sentence elements (the initial sentence element (ISE), the mood subject and the topical structure subject) were combined. On the other hand, at a discourse level, the analysis concentrated on how those sentences formed a sequence. The topical structures at both levels were then classified into six patterns, five of which were from Lautammatti while the 6th type referred to the ISE, in which the mood subjects may or may not coincide. The findings showed that the participants organized their essays using extended parallel progression most, followed by parallel and sequential progression. The obtained results further revealed that the participants did not build long sequences of sequential and parallel progressions.

Along the same line, Khaokoasai (2003) employed a topical structure analysis to identify a subject or topic repetition of secondary students' writing at a demonstration school of Ramkhamhang University, Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhang University. The study aimed to improve coherence and general quality of students' writing by asking students to respond to the topic "The importance of English for Thai students, which is a descriptive style of writing. According to Khaokoasai, the significant discrepancy between the pretest and posttest scores showed that the student-writers participated in the study could improve their performance in writing after they had learned TSA as a tool to organize and check the coherent quality of their writing. The study also provided an interesting comment that

Lautammatti's approach was very beneficial for students who learned to improve a quality of writing by using a topical structure analysis as a revision strategy.

In other parts of the world, TSA also received a lot of attention. For instance, Burneikaite and Zabaliute (2003) investigated the information structure of language learners' texts in Lithuania to find a possible relationship between the topical structure and holistic evaluation of learners' essays. This study aimed to explore coherence in a descriptive writing of Lithuanian English learners under two topics, which were related to the history of their country or family and hobbies. The essays were analyzed to find a relationship between the holistic evaluation of the essay and the types of information structure. Topical Structure Analysis (parallel progression, sequential progression and extended parallel progression) was mainly used to examine the types of information structuring in 3 essay groups: high rated, medium rated, and low rated essays.

Results obtained from this study revealed that in low- rated essays, a sequential progression occurred in the highest proportion (40%). In medium rated essays, a sequential progression also occurred most often (44 %), followed by an extended parallel progression occurred (16 %). In high rated essays, sequential progression scored 53 %, extended parallel progression occurred 27%, and parallel progression occurred 20%. The researchers then concluded that sequential progressions were predominantly used in both high-rated and low rated essays, but they did not have a direct impact on the holistic scores of the essay. The results also suggested that the use of extended parallel progression contributed to the high rating of essay while the over extensive use of parallel progression contributed to the low rating of essay.

Also interesting is Glabanchi and ZahedAlavi's work (2011), which used Lautammatti's framework to examine a paragraph writing of Iranian students. In this research, the emphasis was placed on a comparison and contrast, a cause and effect, and a chronological type of writing. To test a relationship between the three types of paragraph and topical progression, the researchers employed the Chi-Square test to examine a correlation between the types of paragraph and topical progression in the writing of students. The obtained results showed that the topical progression types were closely linked to different kinds of paragraphs. Particularly, in a comparison and

contrast essay, the sequential progression was mostly evident, and this was the case with a cause and effect type. In a chronological writing, nonetheless, the extended sequential progression was mostly observed.

Lastly, Hoenisch (2009) used a topical structure analysis in his work titled "Topical Structure Analysis of Accomplished English Prose". The study aimed at comparing the results to the previous explored essays reported in the work of Schneider and Connor, 1991). The analysis focused on a comparison between the students' essays of the previous study and 3 groups of editorial newspaper. In this work, the parallel, sequential and extended parallel progressions were used as a research framework. The results obtained showed that the high rated essay contained a higher number of sequential progression and a small number of parallel progressions. In a low rated essay, on the contrary, a large number of parallel progressions were observed. In the previous work, the similar tendency was seen where the high rated essay contained a large number of sequential progressions and a few amount of parallel progression.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology of this study. The description of data, research instruments, and research procedures, data collection, and data analysis are presented.

3.1 Data Collection

The corpus of this study was 20 pieces of essay written by all students who were 4th year Tourism majors enrolling in the Paragraph Writing course, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Ubon Ratchathani University in the first semester of the academic year 2013. The total number of essays was compiled from all students in the classroom. This written assignment was in the part of the final exam. The type of writing was categorized into an opinion paragraph in which students were required to express their opinion on the topic “Opening the English Speaking Program in the 2015 AEC.” Each essay revealed 3 main parts: introduction, body, and conclusion with the average length of 12 sentences per essay.

3.2 Data Analysis

As an initial step, all of the written essays were rated by the three raters who are English lecturers in the English and Communication program, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Ubon Ratchathani University. All of them hold a PhD degree in Applied Linguistics and English respectively. Whereas the two of them have experienced teaching writing for 5 years, the rest has done it for 3 years. Prior to the rating, the 3 lecturers were provided with the TOEFL 5-scale holistic score, which focuses mainly on the linguistic and discourse aspects of writing. (www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/Writing_Rubrics.pdf). Later, all of the 20 compositions were divided into two groups: a high rated essay (good writing) and a low rated essay (bad writing). While the former refers to a piece of writing which receives a score of 4 to 5, the latter

demonstrates a score of 1 to 3. These score ranges were chosen mainly because while the 4-5 illustrates sufficient writing proficiency, the 1-3 suggests insufficient ability in writing.

After the rating of all 20 essays were complete, they were analyzed based on Lautamatti's Topical Progression, which includes 4 patterns of topical developments: a parallel progression, a sequential progression, an extended parallel progression, and an extended sequential progression. However, in the current study, one additional category-the new topic-was added since the actual analysis have shown that the student-writers' work revealed a number of new topic which is not related to any topic or comment parts in their preceding sentences. For example, when discussing their reasons to support the opening of an English Speaking program, one student introduced the word 'tourists' in their topic position, which could not be recovered in any previous discourse. Therefore, the readers will find, in this research, the total of 5 categories of topical progression.

To start the analysis, every sentence was numbered and then divided into two parts: the topic and the comment. On the one hand, the topic refers to a segment in a sentence that is spoken about, and corresponds to the subject position in a sentence. On the other hand, the comment refers to what is talked about the topic, and it usually appears in the predicate slot in a sentence. In this study, the information unit chosen for the analysis was at an independent clause level. As Rosaki (2003) pointed out, an independent clause seems to be the most complete information unit since it can stand alone and understood without relying on any other part of the sentence just like its dependent counterpart. As a consequence, in any dependent clauses, which appear after a subordinate conjunction (e.g. because, when), their topics were not taken into consideration, instead the whole clause was treated as part of the comment.

In contrast, in case of an independent clause, the subjects appearing after a coordinating conjunction (e.g. so, and) were included in the analysis. At this point, it should also be worth mentioning that in case of the expletive-*there*, the topic analyzed was found in the predicate position, and for the dummy-it (e.g. it is raining), the topic 'it' was put under the new topic group because it carried empty information and could not be recoverable in any previous context. The fragment sentences were also

analyzed. However, they were turned into a complete expected version before the analysis.

Finally, for any noun clause appearing after a meta discourse (e.g. I believe that) where the writer provides a direction on how the text should be read, the subject in the *that*-clause was not taken into account since it was considered as part of the noun clause which functioned as the object of the sentence. Later on, the researcher counted the frequency of occurrence of each topical progression pattern and calculated the percentage of all types by multiplying the total number of each topical progression by 100 and then divided its sum by the total number of every combined topics, which occurred in all of the participants' work. After all types of topical progression were counted, they were overall calculated into percentage to show what types or topical progression were associated to the kind of opinion paragraph writing and the different writing quality. At this point, it is also worth mentioning that the analysis of topical progression, which was primarily carried out by the researchers was double checked by the researcher's advisor.

Finally, the average score of each piece of students' writing resulted from the combined scores of the two raters, which were divided by two so as to arrive at the average final score for each piece of composition. In this study, the scores of 1- 3 were classified as papers belonging to a low quality group whilst the score of 4-5 were considered as good quality writing. This division was pursued on the ground that while the former illustrated insufficient idea developments and grammatical and lexical correctness, the latter revealed the opposite direction.

3.3 Duration

The study was conducted during the 1st semester of the academic year 2013.

3.4 Data Framework

As already mentioned, the framework of Lautamatti (1978) combined with Simpson (2000) was be used in the analysis of the opinion paragraph in the current work and they are described below:

3.4.1 Parallel progression refers to the topic of the first sentence, which becomes the topic of the next sentence.

3.4.2 Sequential progression refers to the comment of the first sentence, which becomes topic of the second sentence.

3.4.3 Extended Parallel progression refers to the progression that is very similar to parallel progression, but topic is interrupted by some or at least one sequential progression.

3.4.4 Extended sequential progression refers to the comment in the first sentence, which becomes the topic of a non-consecutive clause.

The additional category was added, which was labeled as a new topic. This type of topic also coincides with Almanden's (2006) work on the analysis of topical progression of Filipino students.

3.4.5 New topic refers to the topic of the sentence, which is not linked or connected to any topic or comment in the preceding sentences.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter reports the results of the present study in relation to the research question.

4.1 Research Question

This research aims at exploring a relationship between students' patterns of topical progression, and the writing quality. To achieve this goal, the following research question was answered:

4.1.1 What type of topical progression is most used in the Tourism students' opinion paragraphs?

4.1.2 How do good or bad writings differ in terms of topical progression used?

As already stated in the previous chapter, all 20 pieces of essay were initially graded by 2 raters who are English language lecturers at a department of western languages and literature, Ubon Ratchathani University. All of them hold a PhD degree in Applied Linguistics. While one of them has been teaching writing for about five years, the rest has had approximately four and a half years of teaching writing experiences. Prior to grading the students' papers, the 2 raters were provided with a 5 level holistic scale developed by TOEFL iBT. (www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/Writing_Rubrics.pdf). Generally, this writing holistic criterion looks at writing from two major perspectives: linguistic and discourse. While the former focuses on grammar and word choice, the latter emphasizes how ideas develop throughout a paragraph and its effect on a reader's comprehension of the text. The following table will present how the two raters scored each paper. The highlighted parts represent the high rated essays whereas the rest represents the low rated ones:

Table 1 Raters' scores on Ubon Ratchathani University students' writing

Essay Number	Rater 1 Score	Rater2 Score	Average Score
1.(good)	4	4	4
2.	3	3	3
3.	2	3	2
4.(good)	4	4	4
5.	2	2	2
6.	2	2	2
7.	2	2	2
8.	2	2	2
9.(good)	4	4	4
10.(good)	3	4	4
11.	3	2	2
12.(good)	4	4	4
13.	2	2	2
14.	3	2	2
15.	2	2	2
16.	2	1	1
17.	2	2	2
18.(good)	4	4	4
19.	2	2	2
20.	2	2	2

As found in the above table, more than half of the essays were classified into the low rated writing whereas a small number was placed into the high rated group. The following will provide examples from both groups of essays:

Low quality writing

Student's work (number 13)

In my opinion, the opening of its program English Speaking Year 2012 is good for students. First of all, the opening program English Speaking of Year 2012 is good for students. First of all, the opening program English Speaking help students has skilled speak English. If students to practice speak English one day a week. Make a course to skilled speak English.

According to Woravat Auapinyakul, that one day a week teachers and student should do academic activities together by speaking in English.

Second, build confidence speak English. When students has skilled speak English, it is build confidence. For example, sometime students to meet foreigners to make confidence speak with them.

As seen here, one may recognize various problems in this writing. First of all, the participants tended to show different grammatical problems including a subject and verb agreement. The sentence below will illustrate this point:

(4.1) First of all, the opening program English Speaking help students has skilled speak English.

In (4.1), the student left out the 's' at the end of the verb "help." In addition, it was found that the same student revealed another error by adding the *to*-infinitive as found in 'to practice' in front of the verb 'to speak' as seen below:

(4.2) If students to practice speak English one day a week. Make a course to skilled speak English.

More interestingly, this student produced fragments in their writing. Here is the example:

(4.3) Second, build confidence speak English.

In (4.3), this is fragment and it will be added to analyzed by expecting to make a complete sentence.

For a discourse element, it could also be pointed out here that the essay written by this student-writer did not show enough coherence. For example, as seen in the 1st reason addressed in the 1st paragraph above, the student changed the topic quite abruptly from ‘students’ practicing English’ in the 4th line to ‘make a course’ in the last line of the 1st paragraph. As a result of this, the readers hardly found a connection between the two sentences.

On the contrary, the second example below will demonstrate the paper classified as good quality writing:

Good Quality writing

Student’s work (Number 1)

In my opinion, I agree with the opening of the program English Speaking Year 2012. First of all, opening of its program English Speaking can make teachers in teaching English better. According to Dr. Sasithara, the ministry has to improve teachers’ skills in using English, both in communicating and teaching English effectively. So, student will be get knowledge from quality teachers effectively, they can use English better. Also, The program will help teacher to cuase confident in teaching and share kwonledge to students better.

A second reason that I agree with the opening of its program English Speaking Year 2012. Is that it can build student and teacher’s confidence in speaking and using English. According to Woravat, is that one day a week teacher and students should do academic activities to getter by speaking in English. “ I agree with Woravat said that”. Because, academic activities will be opening opportunity to teachers and students can speak English better and it will make their confidence in using and speaking better.

As found in this example, the writing received a score of 4, meaning that there were only few mistakes in terms of grammar and idea developments. According to the TOEFL iBT, the score of 4 refers to a writer’s ability to well address the topic

(i.e. this essay was written with the clear major ideas in each paragraph, introducing reasons to support the idea of “opening the English program”), show minor supporting details (i.e. the student provided a supporting detail on different reasons to support the main idea of why the program should be opened), and a few mistakes of grammar (e.g. Student will be get* knowledge from quality teachers effectively.).

Unfortunately, the high rated essay as shown above made up only a small proportion in the corpus of the present study.

Another important step for data analysis in this work, regardless of the writing quality, was concerned with a frequency of occurrence of different types of topical progression. Interestingly, it was found that a parallel progression was mostly observed in the writing of Ubon Ratchathani University students under study. Table 2 will reveal these results:

Table 2 The percentage of each topical progression type

Kind of topical progression	Frequency count of progression	Percentages (%)
Parallel Progression	90	31
Sequential Progression	44	15
Extended Parallel Progression	64	22
Extended Sequential Progression	21	7
New Topic	71	25
Total	290	100

Based on Table 2, All kinds of topical progression proposed by Lautamatti occurred in this study with one additional category labeled as a new topic group in which the topic of a sentence carries new information which is not relevant to the topic or comment previously discussed. The bar chart below will give a better view on a different proportion of topical progression type appeared in this work:

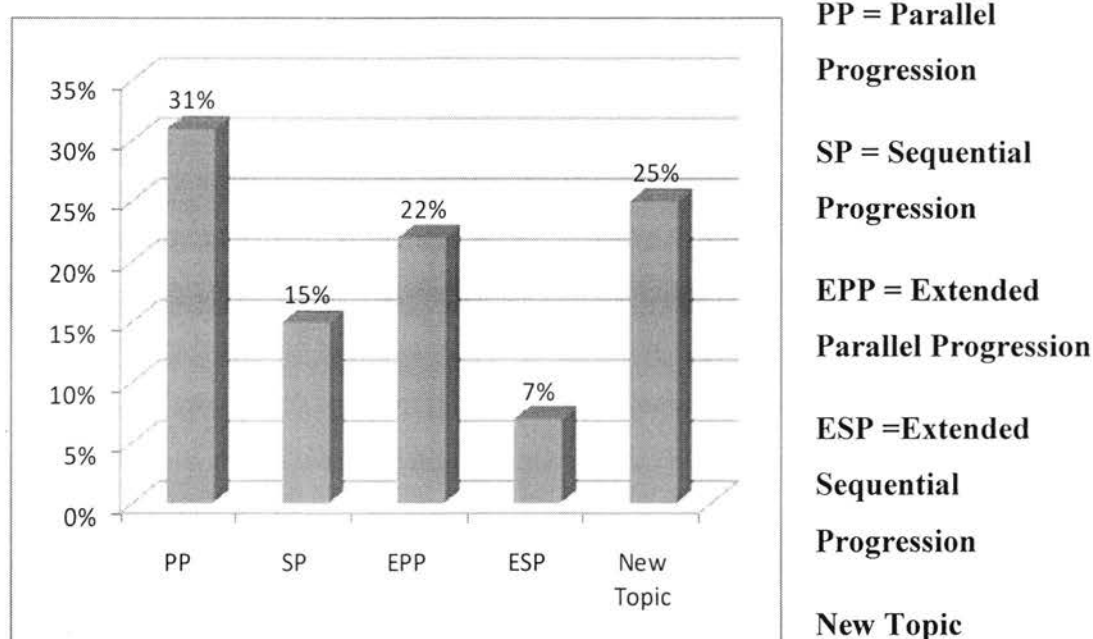


Figure 2 Comparative results of the topical progression

As seen from Figure 2, a parallel progression was found in the highest proportion (31%), followed by the new topic (25%) and extended parallel progression (22%), sequential progression (15%), and extended sequential progression (7%) respectively.

The below table will reveal a more detailed analysis of each essay with its variety of topical development.

Table 3 Different Types of topical progression found in each essay

No of student's essays	Frequency of the occurrence of Essay Types					New Topic
	Parallel Progression	Sequential Progression	Extended Parallel Progression	Extended Sequential Progression	Total	
1.	1	0	1	1	3	5
2.	1	6	3	0	10	5
3.	8	3	4	3	18	6
4.	5	2	6	0	13	5
5.	2	0	1	1	4	4
6.	3	1	2	1	7	3
7.	9	0	1	1	11	3
8.	8	3	3	3	17	3
9.	8	2	3	0	13	2
10.	2	1	2	1	6	4
11.	4	0	2	0	6	4
12.	5	2	6	1	14	4
13.	5	0	3	0	8	3
14.	7	1	1	1	10	4
15.	4	5	2	2	13	3
16.	0	4	6	0	10	3
17.	4	3	1	0	8	1
18.	7	3	6	4	20	2
19.	7	4	6	1	18	2
20.	1	4	5	1	11	5
Total	90	44	64	21	219	71

Based on Table 3, all of the student-writers employed a mixed pattern of topical progression in their writing. For instance, Student's work (number 2) suggested a combination of all 4 patterns of progression except the extended sequential one in her work.

To remind the readers about the types of topical progression observed in this study, the following section will present the actual example of the students' writing that represents each topical development type found in this work:

Parallel Progression refers to a situation in which the topic of the first sentence becomes the topic of the next sentence.

(4.4) In my opinion, ①opening of its program "English Speaking Year 2012" is good for students. First of all, ②the opening program English Speaking help students has skilled speak. (S13)

Sequential Progression refers to a situation where the comment of the first sentence will become the topic of the second sentence.

(4.5) In my opinion, Thai people should speak ①English. In present time, ②English language has very important in lifestyle. (S10)

Extended Parallel Progression refers to a progression that the topics of the first and the last sentence are the same but are interrupted with some sequential progression.

(4.6) ①Thai universities and Thai schools focus on teaching grammare more than conversation. Most thai Student cannot communicate in ②English. Nowadays, ③English is internation language and important for speaking with foreigner. So, ④Thai universities and school should focus teaching listening, writtining, speaking skills more than grammar. (S4)

Extended Sequential Progression refers to the topic of one clause became the topic of non consecutive clause.

(4.7) In my view, ①the Ministry of Education should open program English speaking in school and university. There are ②3 reasons that support my opinion. First of all Education should open program English, ③English language is a formal language that used to communicate with ASEAN member countries and other countries around the world (S1)

New topic refers to topic of the sentence, which is not linked or connected to any topic or comment in the preceding sentences.

(4.8) (NT) The Ministry of Education should the opening of its program English Speaking. In my opinion, ① the ministry of education should the opening of its program English Speaking. First of all, (NT) most people in Thailand has a communication with another by speak English ass well. (S7)

Upon completing a topical progression analysis, a further investigation was also conducted to see if any specific types of topical progression can be linked to students' writing quality. Table 4 will reveal this relationship:

Table 4 Comparative results on the relationship between the tropical progression type and the participants' writing quality

No of student's essay	Parallel Progression	Sequential Progression	Extended Parallel Progression	Extended Sequential Progression	Total tropical progression	Average score of essay	New topic
1.(good)	1	0	1	1	4	4	5
2.(poor)	1	6	3	0	10	3	5
3.(poor)	8	3	4	3	18	2	6
4.(good)	5	2	6	0	13	4	5
5.(poor)	2	0	1	1	4	2	4
6.(poor)	3	1	2	1	7	2	3
7.(poor)	9	0	1	1	11	2	3
8.(poor)	8	3	3	3	14	2	3
9.(good)	8	2	3	0	13	4	2
10.(good)	2	1	2	1	6	4	4
11.(poor)	4	0	2	0	10	2	4
12.(good)	5	2	6	1	4	4	4
13.(poor)	5	0	3	0	8	2	3
14.(poor)	7	1	1	1	10	2	4
15.(poor)	4	5	2	2	13	2	3
16.(poor)	0	4	6	0	10	1	3
17.(poor)	4	3	1	0	8	2	1
18.(good)	7	3	6	4	20	4	2

Table 4 Comparative results on the relationship between the tropical progression type and the participants' writing quality (Continued)

No of student's essay	Parallel Progression	Sequential Progression	Extended Parallel Progression	Extended Sequential Progression	Total tropical progression	Average score of essay	New topic
19.(poor)	7	4	6	1	18	2	2
20. (poor)	1	4	5	1	11	2	5
Total	90	44	64	21	219		71

As illustrated in Table 4, there was a similar tendency of the co-occurrence of particular types of topical progression in the two groups of writing quality. In particular, both groups demonstrated a preference for the parallel progression while keeping the extended sequential progression in the smallest number. However, the differences were also witnessed. Figure 3 will illustrate a better view on this point. Particularly, as seen in Figure 3, a possible relationship between good quality writing and bad quality writing.

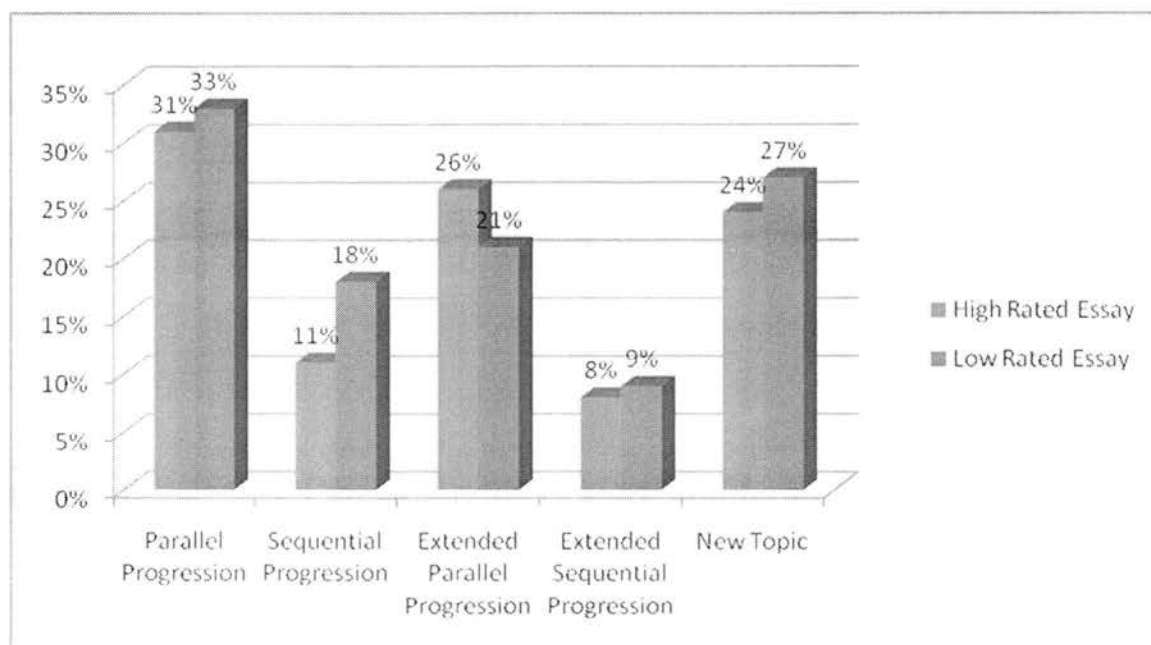


Figure 3 Comparison percentages of progressions in both good and bad writing groups

As seen here, the parallel progression in bad writing (33%) outnumbered the same pattern in good writing (31%). In contrast, for the extended parallel progression, the higher percentage of this pattern fell into the good writing quality (25% vs. 21%). Also interesting is the fact that, the number of new topic found in the low rated essay was higher than that found in the high rated group.

In the next chapter, the researcher would like to explain the major tendencies reported earlier.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the findings reported in the previous chapter. Answers to the research questions are briefly presented. Then, possible theoretical implications of the findings are described.

5.1 Research Question

5.1.1 Summary of the Results

Results in the previous chapter showed that the participants in this study employed all four types of topical progression in their writing: parallel, sequential, extended parallel and extended sequential progressions. More specifically, the parallel progression occurred most often (31%), followed by extended sequential progression (22%), and the sequential progression (15%) and extended sequential progression (7%) respectively. Also important is the fact that the findings from the two raters suggested that high rated and low rated essays may contain a different number of combined topical progressions. As previously stated, the new topic group was added in this study to cover the topics which are not related to the progressions previously found. In this work, the new topic occurred (25%).

More specifically, in the good writing group, the parallel progression appeared most frequently (31%), followed by 26 % of extended parallel progression, 24 % of new topics, 11% of sequential progression and 8 % of extended sequential progression. Nevertheless, in the bad writing group, the parallel progression occurred in a large number at 33 %, followed by 27 % of new topic, 21 % of extended parallel progression, 18 % of sequential progression and 9 % of extended sequential progression. In other words, good writing tended to show the around 20%-gap among the four patterns. Bad writing, on the other hand, contained a large quantity of parallel progression and new topic, a small number of sequential progressions, and few extended parallel progressions.

5.1.2 Discussion

To explain the major results of this study, the frequency of usage of the topical progression will first be focused. As Dita (2009) 's analysis of the Inner, Outer, and Expanding circles of English showed, the most common type of topical progression is the parallel progression, in which the thematic development is usually done through the repetition of key words. In the current study, the parallel progression was also mostly evident in both high rated and low rated essays. Similar to Dita, the participants in this study were likely to repeat the same topics throughout their paragraphs. The following excerpt will illustrate this point:

Student3: First of all, English language is a formal language in the world which the people use to communication. Now, English language used by every country in the world, though in the school, newspaper, magazine. English language has important to everyone.

As seen above, the topic "English language" was repeated throughout the whole passage. Also interesting is the fact that both Dita's and the current findings were similar in terms of the least frequently employed pattern. In other words, it was found that the extended sequential pattern was least evident in both studies. The same tendency of having a large quantity of parallel progression and a small number of sequential progression in this work seems to also support Simpson (2000)'s study which found that in the English editorials which expressed the opinions of both English and Spanish editors. The results showed that the parallel progression was employed most (17.7%), followed by the sequential progression (16.8%). The extended parallel progression appeared around 8.4% and the extended sequential progression occurred least (2.5%). In the Spanish editorials, parallel progression appeared (12.2%) followed by the extended parallel progression (8.8%). The sequential progression occurred third (6.6%), and the extended sequential progression revealed the smallest quantity (4.4%).

As already mentioned, the results also suggested that all kinds of topical progression were observed in both good and bad writing groups. However, the amount

of each progression varied. When comparing the number of topical developments in both groups, the parallel progression and new topic in the bad writing were higher than those found in the good writing one. In a different manner, the extended parallel progression in the high rated essays outnumbered the same pattern in the low rated essay group. As Simpson (2000) explained, the parallel progression occurred most frequently partly because writers may lack knowledge about the topic under discussion, and thus they tended to write the essays by repeating the subject or theme. Sometimes, they used pronouns to replace the same noun phrase entity. However, when the extended parallel progression was employed, the writers could return to the same topic after provide more information in their predicate parts.

Also important is the work of Hoenish (2009), who provided a similar view on the possible relationship between the parallel progression and bad quality writing. In his study, Hoenish categorized editorial newspapers into 3 different groups. Whereas the high rated essay was the editorial of The New York Time, the medium rated essay referred to the editorials of The New York Daily News. Finally, the low rated essay in his work was the editorials of New York Post. The results of Hoenisch' analysis showed that high rated essays carried the lower amount of parallel progression but the higher use of sequential progression. Hoenisch then emphasized that the extensive use of parallel progression could lead to a low quality of essay. He ultimately concluded that the results of his work supported the work of Schneider and Connor (1990), in which the high rated essays contained a much smaller percentage of parallel progression (6 %) and larger percentage of sequential progression (80 %).

This possibility tends to be harmonious to the Burneikaite and Zabilute (2009), who stated that the over extensive use of parallel progression leads to the overall lower rate of writing quality because many writers seemed to repeat the first topic by using the same parallel progression. By so doing, coherence may appear, but the writers could not generate some new ideas or new information, resulting in a boring style of writing. This is because the writers appeared to explain the same topics in the whole paragraph. This is similar to Lautammatti (1987), Witte (1983b) and, Witte (1983a), who claimed that if the parallel progression was semantically identical with the preceding topic, the writers would commonly use a repetition,

a pronominalized form, or synonymous of a preceding topic. In fact, the parallel progression may be made different from the preceding topic in several ways such as in number (singular and plural), in popularity (affirmative or negative), or in post modifiers that follow the head noun in a noun phrase.

In a different manner, if writers use the extended parallel progression, they can generate new information because they have to elaborate more ideas on the comment parts, and returned to the earlier discussed topic. In fact, a topic should be one, but the comment can be several. As Schneider and Connor (1990) pointed out, the extended parallel progression is different from the parallel progression. It may include word derivation (creativity, creation), part-whole relation (natural science, biology, chemistry) and repetition of part but not the entire preceding topic (Jazz and Blue, Jazz, Blue). As a result, these can help explain why the extended parallel progression may lead to a higher rate of writing because at least, writers can generate more on specific ideas or reasons.

Here, it could be implied that the low quality writing possibly shows a great tendency of having a large number of parallel progression simply because writers seemed to repeat the same word or topic again and again without generating new information or ideas in their passage. In contrast, the more extended parallel progression could probably lead to a the good quality writing partly because writers seem competent in incorporating new topics into their essay through the sequential pattern and later on returned to their earlier discussed topics already introduced in the passage. When the extended parallel progression is used, coherence can be maintained through a development of new information in the comment position, which can be recoverable in the previous context. Moreover, the other tendency observed in the current work may be in line with other previous studies such as that of Buacomecoate (2003), who pointed out that, in the low rated essays, the extended parallel progression and sequential progressions were employed in an equal number. In contrast, in high rated essay, parallel progression and extended parallel progression were employed most. However, it was found in this research that the extended parallel progression is nearly equal to the parallel progression in high rated essays.

Finally, it was also found that the new topics were largely evident in both writing quality groups, but seemed larger in the low rated essay group. In producing

the new topic, the student-writers introduced new information in the subject slot and violated the given-new contract (Clark and Haviland, 1977). This contract assumes that the readers read more easily if each sentence starts with (or at least contains) what readers have already been introduced to in the text (what they know) and proceeds on what they do not know (what is new). And violations of this given-new strategy decrease the readability of a text. These violations occur when writers place given and new information improperly in related sentences or when they attempt to combine unrelated, frequently undeveloped ideas in the same paragraph. As a consequence, the passage containing a lot of new topics will be likely to receive a negative review. Connor (1996) suggested that L1 influence has played important role when L1 students learn the second language because there are many things which affected the quality of their writing especially cultural background. The study of Connor revealed that native language and culture will influence L1 literacy when they learn second language. This possibly leads many writing papers of participants had problems and these outnumbered in low rated essays.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Conclusions

This chapter concludes the results of this study that lead to some limitations and recommendations for teaching English writing and further research in the related field. The results showed that the analysis of topical progression could help teachers identify the quality of essay writing. As the major findings revealed, most of the participants in this study were likely to be limited language proficiency writers as their essays which carried a number of parallel progression were low-rated by the three raters in this study. Based on the analysis, the parallel progression occurred extensively, followed by the new topics and the extended parallel progression.

Indeed, the topical progression should be considered as a valuable tool to connect and link ideas in one or another paragraph. As a writer, it can be used as an equipment to create coherence in written discourse. As a teacher, the topical progression is a useful strategy that can help check coherence and used as a revision technique to improve a writing quality. According to Almaiden (2006), the topical progression is a worthwhile approach to determine the continuous and connected series of thinking in a written text. Its pedagogical bearing makes its as valuable tools at disposal of the classroom teacher.

6.2 Limitations of this study

There are some limitations in this study. First of all, a small number of corpuses seemed to be a major concerned problem because there has been only 20 pieces of paper for the analysis. The results that were obtained maybe impossible for the generalization of the research findings, or they cannot be applied to other groups of populations. Second, due to the fact that writers were Thai English learners, they seemed to be very limited in many aspects of their English knowledge. Their essays were most likely to reveal low quality writing, resulting in a number of errors on top

of a problem relating to an organization of idea. Examples include the grammatical errors such as the verb-test misuse, wrong word choices, invented grammatical structure.

Third, the topic used in this study may be difficult for low language proficiency English writers because it may consist of difficult vocabulary and is new to the writers. As a result, it is quite clear from the raters' views that most essays under study represent the work of inexperienced writers. Sometimes, they used the same sentences in a required source of information that the teacher gave in the final test. Finally, the student-writers tended to use the same words introduced as the writing prompt in their work. This could be an indication that the writers' knowledge of vocabulary is quite limited. To explain the writing prompt, prior to writing an essay, the students were provided with a short article so that some of its information could be useful for students to generate ideas in their essays.

6.3 Suggestion for Further Study

As suggested by the results of this study, the knowledge of topical progression to improve coherence in writing seems to have potential for helping students at a university level. However, for further research, more pieces of writing should be included to ensure a reliability and generalizability of the research findings. Moreover, a control over the student-writers' ability in writing should contribute a great deal to a more accuracy of the research findings. This is because an inability to produce a grammatically correct sentence and wrong word choice make it harder to find out what the writers what to say or communicate. Therefore, in many occasions, the line between topics and comments are not explicit. Or even identifying the topic of the sentence could be problematic. That is, the researcher had to deal with a lot of fragments by creating the expected complete sentences, predicting which ideas were referred to or which meanings the writers wanted to convey. Finally, if the writing topic is made familiar to the writers' background, the better readability of the text should result and thus be easier for an investigation of the topical development.

6.4 Implication for classroom study

Results from this study should be beneficial for teachers who teach writing in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environment. They should introduce the four types of progression, which included parallel progression, sequential progression, extended parallel progression and extended sequential progression into their writing course. These progressions are thought of as being able to lead to coherence in a written discourse. Moreover, for the sequential to extended parallel patterns, it was evident in other previous research that they allow more opportunities for student-writers to explain more in minor and important details, which in turn can be linked and support the previous topics. Then, information will flow smoothly, and coherence appears with a more development of new ideas into a passage. However, writers may use a large number extended parallel progression to increase the coherence in writing because this can lead writers to the new of old topic. This is different from sequential progression because it can develop coherence but it is not return to the old topic and it lead to boring paper. Moreover, extended parallel progression may be used to teach in many kinds of writing. Most importantly, a new topic may be avoid to used in a higher rate because it is not related to the topics in which topical progression occurred because it lead to low quality writing.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
GOOD PROFICIENCY WRITING GROUP

Student's work 1

In my view, the Ministry of Education should open program English Speaking in school and University. There are 3 reasons that support my opinion. First of all, English language is a formal language that use to communicate with ASEAN member countries and other countries around the world. For example, If foreigner travel to Pattaya and tourism from Singapore needs some help that how to go to Koh Lan, students will can give the information for the tourism. Second reason is getting opportunities for work. If you can use English both of writing and speaking fluently, you will get a special chance for work than other. Third reason is Thai English using ability can urge foreign businessman to come to invest money. This reason will help Thailand has a good economic system. For these 3 reasons, I think that the Ministry of Education should encourage program English Speaking in school and university.

Student's work 4

In my opinion, the Ministry of Education should be open of program English Speaking Year 2012. First of all, teacher should improve teaching before ASEAN community. Thai Universities and Thai schools focus on teaching grammare more than conversation. Most thai Student can not communicate in English. Nowadays, English is internation language and important for speaking with foreigner. So, Thai universities and school should focus teaching listening, writtining, speaking skills more than grammar. A second reason The Ministry of Education should be open program English Speaking in 2012. If open program English speaking in 2012 is that it easy to get job in ASEAN community in the future. Most of businesses use English to communicate in organization., So, Thai student and people should be able to communicate in English.

Student's work 9

In my opinion, Ministry of Education should open program English Speaking year 2012 because the English language is important for communication in the future, the English Language is important for the job and important for life today. First of all, the English language is important for communication in the future because in 2015 years English Language using for communication among ASEAN . The government should opening the program English Speaking foand support using English language more on communication. For example, the government will be initiated in schools and university for their skills in using English. So, the English language can hlpe about communication for in ASEAN. IN addition, English language can help speaking and listeni with foreigner and listen Second, the English language is important for work to look for a job because. The English language is considered a formal language for communication on the world. English language is use for business with people such as work, business document, import documents etc.

Student's work 10

In my opinion, Thai people should speak English. In present time English language has very important in lifestyle. First, Thai people should speak English because English language is basic language used around the world. For example If you can speak English, you can travel around the world, or study abroad every country you want to go. Second, although Thai people used to study English language since they was child, but it is not good. If the Ministry of Education in Thailand to support student used English language in lifestyle, In the futher Thailand can to participate and can use English language in the ASEAN Community in 2015. To sum up, I agree with the news shouldel have program English Speaking in 2012. The Ministry should support student about English language, because It is very advantage for them and Country For example, study abroad, travel around the world, and have a good job.

Student's work 12

In my opinion, I agree with program English Speaking Year 2012 because It make Thailand have to progress about communication. First of all, Children can often to learn and practice English language. When the children have often to learn and practice. The children can remember if the children like to express it will be good to learn English language. The children can talk to foreigners came to travel in Thailand by English language. Thailand will be devebp in the future about communication in English. A second reason program English Speaking Year 2012 it make Thailand have to progress about communication. Is that in the future Thai children will can give knowledge about Thailand for foreigners. When the children can speak English language it will be good for communication between Siamese and foreigner. It east to take a trip in Thailand because the foreigner can talk with Siamese, so in the future Thailand will have foreigners more than present time.

Student's work number 18

In my opinion, I agree with the Ministry of Education about opening the program "English Speaking Year 2012" because the English language is important for Thai people. And the English language is a formal language for communication. And, I have many reasons to support my opinion. The first reason is, program can help Thai people improve English skills. The program can help Thais improve English skills, speaking. If we know and learn about this skill, it will help us speak with foreigners. So, we should learn about that because it can help improve our speaking English skill. He second reason is Thai will become a part of the ASEAN community in 2015. According to Woravat Auapinyakul, Minister of Education, Thailand will become a part of the ASEAN community in 2015. So, the program is a very important for Thailand because it shows the potential of Thailand. And she said that one day a week teacher and students should do academic activities together by speaking in English. The third reason is the program can help us to use English Speaking for our job.

APPENDIX B
BAD PROFICIENCY WRITING GROUP

Student's work 2

In my opinion, I agree with the opening of the program English speaking Year 2012. First of all, opening of its program English Speaking can make teachers in teaching English better. According to Dr.Sasithara, the ministry has to improve teachers, skills in using English, both in communicating and teaching English effectively. So, students will be get knowledge from quality teacher effectively, they can use English better. Also, the program will help teacher to cause confident in teaching and share knowledge to students better. A second reason that I agree with the opening of its program English Speaking Year 2012. Is that it can build student and teacher's confidence in speaking and using English. According to Worawat, is that one day a week teachers and students should do academic activities to getter by speaking in English. "I agree with worawat said that" Because, academic activities will be opening opportunity to teachers and students.

Student's work 3

In my opinion, we should have the program "English Speaking Year 201." First of all, English language is a formal language in the world which the people use to communication. Now, English language used by every country in the world though in the school, newspaper, magazine. English language has important to everyone. According to company of newspapers which is Bangkok Post, writing the English newspaper. For, example, the Chinese visitors come to Thailand. they have problems about something. They can use English language for get information from thai people. Second, Thailand have several teacher's who do not good of skills in using English. The government school do not give important of English language for student. but privat school give important of English language for them students. It have influence for student in the city take a refresher course. The teacher do not have knowledge about language because the university do not have academic activities together by speaking in English.

Student's work 5

Thailand opening of its program English speaking year 2012 have importance for populacies. First of all, Thailand into the ASEAN in 2015. Therefore, populations should be inform language for communication. Because English language has importance in communication. Second, Thailand should be to be dispersed in reason of Education. Because in schools now rural area have a teachers do not skilled in matter English communication. If should an English preparation course for teachers as well. finally, Thailand should to stress English language for students. Because for new students do not to pay attention to learn and read books. Since students to adhere facebook more than to learning and read books. In conclusion, I think should be its program English speaking year 2012.

Student's work 6

In my opinion, the program "English Speaking Year 2012" are very good for Thailand. First of all, the program "English Speaking Year 2012" is that economy of Thailand. There are many foreigner travel to Thailand because the English language is a formal language for communication. A second reason that, the program "English Speaking Year" is that is the most efficiency for education. Thai people is not understand the English language. There are not English language for communication among person. The program "English speaking Year 2012" will help Thailand to community of world. A Third. Reason that, the program "English Speaking Year 2012" is that tourist of Thailand And this program to support about development communication in English There for three seasons, I believe that program English speaking have benefit for country about development communication for to be a part of the ASEAN. And This program is development skills in using English for Thai people.

Student's work 7

The Ministry of Education Should the opening of its program English Speaking In my opinions,. The ministry of education should the opening of its program English speaking. First of all, most people in Thailand has a communication with another by speak English as well. Because people in Thailand can learn English. When the ministry of education open its program English speaking people in Thailand has opportunity to learn English to easy. And they can development country to ASEAN. Moreover, program English speaking it make the student in Thailand speak English as well. Because they can learn This program in school: Third reason is Thais English using ability can urge foreign businessman to come to invest money. This reason will help Thailand has a good economic system. For these 3 reasons, I think that the Ministry of Education should encourage program English Speaking in school and university

Student's work 8

In my opinion, English Speaking Year 2012 has prepare to be Asean community in 2015. First of all, English program started from the schools. And base on education of central or the big provinces in Thailand. A second reason that English Speaking Year 2012 have prepare to be Asean Community in 2015. According to Minister of Education Thailand, English Speaking are build opportunities for Thai people for Asean community in 2015. Asean community has a good result with Thai people but Asean Community has a bat result too. For example, Thai people can speak English have opportunities in works and succeed to occupation. As soon as. Thai people can not speak English not receive that opportunities. English will become a middle language for trade, so who can speak English have good opportunities more than who can not speak English. Furthermore, if you know the second language will be build opportunities, such as Chinese, Japanese and etc.

Student's work 9

In my opinion, Ministry of Education should open program English Speaking year 2012 because the English language is important for communication in the future, the English Language is important for the job and important for life today. First of all, the English language is important for communication in the future because in 2015 years English Language using for communication among ASEAN . The government should opening the program English Speaking foand support using English language more on communication. For example, the government will be initiated in schools and university for their skills in using English. So, the English language can hlpe about communication for in ASEAN. IN addition, English language can help speaking and listeni with foreigner and listen Second, the English language is important for work to look for a job because. The English language is considered a formal language for communication on the world. English language is use for business with people such as work, business document, import documents etc.

Student's work 11

In my opinion, I agree with program "English Speaking Year 2012. First of all, I think English language most important. Because new English is formal language everything in life about English. For example, when we go shopping product is English language. So, we must know about English Language. A second reason that I agree with program English Speaking. Because that is practice if use English everyday we will not shy. And self-confident when speak English or communication in English with friend and other people. A third reason that I agree with program English language. So school and universities should most English Language for support in the future when Thailand come to ASEN. Population in Thailand can use well English language. For these three reason why I agree with program English Speaking Year 2012. Because English language important for life, practice use English and for come to ASEN.

Student's work number 13

In my opinion, the opening of its program "English Speaking Year 2012 is good for students. First of all, the opening program English Speaking help students has skilled speak. English. If students to practise speak English one day a week. Make a course to skilled speak English. According to Woravat Auapinyakul, that one a week teachers and students should do academic activities together by speaking in English. Second, build confidence speak English when students has skilled speak English, it is build confidence. For example, sometime students to meet foreigners to make confidence speak with theme. Third, make opportunities for rural students. The opening program English Speaking make opportunities for rural students. Because who can skill speak English and learn English in schools. For these three reasons, I feel that the opening of its program English Speaking Year 2012 is good for students.

Student's work number 14

In my opinion, I agree with that about the program "English Speaking Year 2012". I have two reason for this topic. First of all, Thais student have more knowledge and they can speak English is well. And finally reason, it is development to potential of Thais teacher. Thais will have teachers as well and has intelligent, knowledge and potential as well. The first reason is that, Thais student have more knowledge and they can speak English is well. Because one day a week teachers and students should do academic activities together by speaking in English. Which, the students will have enjoy from activities by speaking English. In addition the students have enjoy and they still have knowledge and more ability oral and communication For build their confidence in using it.

The finally reason is that, it is development to potential of Thais teachers. Because The Ministry of Education will provide and English preparation course for teachers as well and The ministry has to improve teacher's skills in using English, both in communicating and teaching English effectively. Thai is a good idea for Thai teachers.

Student's work number 15

In my opinion, I agree with "English Speaking Year 2012." This program result good speak English of teachers and students in Thailand. First of all, English language is considered a formal language for global communication especially in ASEAN. Thais can know about ASEAN pass language other, culture, traditional, tourism spot and relation for business. All of thing must learn by ASEAN community in 2015. According to article Worarat Auapinyakul, Minister of Education, said Thailand will become a apart of the ASEAN Community in 2015 So, this program has important to communiton for Thais because it will cause development of Thailand. Third reason that initiated speaking English in schools and extended to many places. English Speaking is opportunities and build their confidence in using communication with other countries. Teachers and students has improve skills using English language.

Student's Work Number 16

In my opinion, English language is important for Thais communication. Because it is the international language in the world now. And, future the people will use it of speak in every country too. English speaking year 2012 is grate for Thais. There are three reason of my opinion, which English speaking year 2012 is good for Thais. First of All, it is he language to develop communication of Thailand. English make the confident to Thai people when they speaking with people in other country, And, to train of English skills to Thai people who study in school and university. Second, it make to enjoy for teacher with student.

In the past, Student in university or school will shy and fear to ask and answer when they study English Subject. It make the teacher cannot to prepair the defective of student, So this project make teacher to understand student and prepair skills of person wher they teach or speak english with student.

Student's work number 17

In my opinion, The Ministry of Education annourend opening of its program English Speaking Year 2012 is the best of program. Because program English Speaking is the foundation of communication among ASEAN member countries and development children thai of people First of all, Program English Speaking is the foundation of communication among ASEAN member countries and development children thai of people First of all, Program English Speaking is the foundation of communication among ASEAN. It has of opportunities to speak English and build their confidence. It has advance English separking will suggest Thailand with ASEAN member countries.

Second, Program English Speaking is the development children thai of people . the program English Speaking will help children thai of people to know about ASEAN. And will be initiated in schools. In conclusion, for two reason program English Speaking is the best of program because its has benefits to communication among ASEAN member countries and development children Thai of people.

Student's work number 19

In my opinion, I agree with The Ministry of Education about aims to make Thailand ready to be a part of the ASEAN by teacher teaches student speaking in English one day a week in classroom. First of all, I think in the future will be open to ASEAN. Thai people should to know English language, but thai people are able in gramma more than speaking because thai people are shy to speak with other people. According to, Minister of education to speak about English for Thai people ready to ASEAN such as speak one word or one sentence one a week, and practices to read English newspaper from library while take a noon break. Second, ASEAN community that It a lot of foreigners from other country such as, Japanese, Laos, Singapor, etc. So teacher should to do announce from The Ministry of Education. Teachers can train student to speak in English every week by teach to remember words around body. Student will be permeate a little and teache should partics student to speak together. Student not to be shy. When student can remember words. It not will be problem with them.

Student's work 20

In my opinion, I am agree about the program "English Speaking Year 2012." First, the program "English Speaking Year 2012" is important for students in the future because in 2015, Thailand ready to be a part of the ASEAN and English language is considered a formal language for communication. Moreover, everyone studied English and speaking English is very good will choose work in the country is a part of the ASEAN. Then tourism is work of the ASEAN want to people speak a good English because the foreigner tourist travel more and more very year. Then preparation study English has important for the ASEAN in 2015.

Second, student's and people grew up English language skills. English language have important for work and communicate with foreigner, so program English language help grow up English language in future and student understand to speak English. In addition, student want to speak with foreigner and do not shy. It make student accustoms English language and It make fun.

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE OF ANALYSIS AND EXPECTED COMPLETE TEXT

Examples of Analysis

Original Text

Student number 7

The Ministry of Education(NT) should the opening of its program English Speaking In my opinion, the ministry of of education(1) should the opening of its program English speaking. First of all, most people(NT) in Thailand has a communication with another by speak English ass well. Because people in Thailand can learn English. When the ministry of education open its program English speaking people(1) in Thailand has opportunity to learn English to easy. And they(1) can develop about speaking as well. A second resons that, program English speaking is development country to ASEAN. Moreover, program English speaking(4) make the student in Thailand speak English as well. Because they can learn This program in school: And this program(1) to support about development communication in English. for example, when the student learn this program they can communicate in English with foreign as well.

A third reason that, program English speaking(1) to improve teachers skills in using English. This program(1) to development of student, and the program(1) has to improve teacher about using English for teach student. So, program English speaking(1) have benefit for student , teacher and other people in Thailand about communicate in English.

These for three seasons, I(1) believe that program English Speaking have benefit for country about development communication for to

New Topic = 3

- | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| (1) | Parallel Progression = 8 |
| (2) | Sequential Progression=3 |
| (3) | Extended Parallel Progression=3 |
| (4) | Extended Sequential Progression =3 |

Expected Complete text

The Ministry of Education(NT) should open the English Speaking program. In my opinion, the Ministry of education(1) should open the English speaking program.

First of all, most people (NT) in Thailand has to communicate with other foreigners by speaking English as well because people in Thailand can learn English. When the ministry of education open the English Speaking program, people(1) in Thailand have an opportunity to learn English easier and they(1) can develop their speaking as well.

For the second reason, the English speaking program will help develop Thailand to be a part of ASEAN. Moreover, the English speaking program (4) makes the student in Thailand speak English well because they can learn it in this program in school, and this program(1) could help support the development of communication in English. For example, when the students study in this program, they can communicate in English with foreigners well.

For the third reason, the English speaking program (1) can improve teachers skills in using English. This program (1) can develop students in English, and the program (1) will help to improve teachers' ability in teaching English. So, the English speaking program (1) has benefits for students, teachers and other people in Thailand, who need to communicate in English.

For these reasons, I(1) believe that the English Speaking program has benefits for the country to be a part of the ASEAN, and this program (3) can develop skills in using English for Thai people.