

## **Teaching L2 writing through the use of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)**

Setyo Prasiyanto Cahyono

*Dian Nuswantoro University, Semarang, Indonesia*

### **Abstract**

This study aims to describe the implementation of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) of the textual grammar of message (or textual meaning) to enhance students' critical response to the text they created. For EFL learners, transferring their ideas into writing is already a difficult task and that to give a response to the text they read or write critically is even more challenging. This study intends to approach the teaching of writing by adopting Halliday's idea of textual meaning and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The students were introduced to samples of hortatory texts and trained to analyze the thematic patterns and grammatical cohesive devices. It is hoped that by training them to understand textual grammar (including thematic progression and cohesion), students (as readers and writers) are able to build their critical thinking skill and evaluate their own works. After the training, students were assigned to produce a hortatory text and to do self-editing activity. The data of this study were the twenty students' hortatory texts which was analyzed using a framework of textual meaning proposed by Butt (2000). The analysis of the students texts show that most students were able to self-edit their own writings and edit their peer's writing using thematic progression and cohesive devices. Students adopted skills of using both strategies in creating cohesiveness in their writing. In addition, students also produced critical response to the topic given through its theme and thematic displayed in the text analysis.

**Keywords:** cohesion, critical response, SFL, textual grammar, thematic progression

### **Introduction**

Creating a critical response to a text is something that most students tend to have difficulties with. However, they need to give their best effort to build their critical response whenever they read or write a text. To be critical, students need to understand well the texture of the texts they created. This texture is described as the qualities of a text such as the unity of structure which refers to patterns that create information structure, focus

and flow of the text and the ways in which the text becomes cohesive and coherent.

In giving a critical response, students give their interpretation of what they read or write and correct or evaluate other works. To do this, students need to understand systemic functional linguistics (SFL), especially the textual meaning, herewith, textual grammar. The use of textual grammar helps students to build their critical response to a text and to evaluate the readability of their texts or others.

For most students in my teaching context, writing is considered as the most difficult skill course compared to others. In writing, students realize that putting ideas into written form is not an easy way to do. Writing requires good knowledge of grammar, diction, and sub-skills such as coherency, cohesiveness, and unity. In doing so, this study seeks to explore how the textual grammar of message can build students' knowledge on hortatory text and do a self-evaluation on their own text.

In this study, SFL are introduced to the students. The students were taught to recognize the textual meaning comprising thematic progression and cohesion. These two concepts will assist students on how to give a critical response to their own texts or other texts. SFL provides approaches which enable English learners to increase their English skills especially writing skill. According to Halliday as cited in Hart (2014, pp. 19-21) systemic functional linguistics offers the theory of language based on purpose and choice. It means people, as adult speakers or writers of English, can use language appropriately at different times and for different purposes and choices (Butt, 2000). SFL is the study of language that views language as two characteristics: systemic and functional. It is systemic because it refers to the view that language is a system network or in other words, it is a set of options for making meaning. Meanwhile, functional refers to the ways of people using language.

The use of textual meaning, especially thematic progression and cohesion, has been used in teaching English for many years in my country including my university. Both thematic progression and cohesion are employed in teaching intermediate writing. Thematic progression and cohesion help potential student writers to write a text coherently or cohesively. In the SFL analysis of language, thematic choice patterns are seen as realizing textual meaning in which are realized through the dimension of the mode of context situation (Eggin, 2004, p. 320). Thus, this thematic choice creates how text hang together (to be coherent) and also how the text relates to its context. The register variable of mode strongly influences the thematic patterns. It happens when mode varies; it also makes a variation in Theme/Rheme structure.

## **Theoretical framework**

### ***Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)***

Systemic Linguistics (SFL) was introduced by Michael Halliday in the late 1950s and early 1960s. According to Halliday (1973, 1978, 1994) systemic functional linguistics offers the theory of language based on purpose and choice (in Hart, 2014, pp. 19-21). It means people, as adult speakers or writers of English, can use language appropriately at different times and for different purposes and choices (Butt, et.al., 2000). Systemic Functional Linguistics is a study of language that views language as two characteristics: systemic and functional. It is systemic because it refers to the view that language as a system network or in other words, it is sets of options for making meaning. Meanwhile, functional refers to the ways of people using language.

Along with SFL theory, Eggins (1994, p. 2) describes systemic functional linguistics as an approach to language which is centered on how people use language with each other in accomplishing everyday social life. As an approach, SFL becomes the point of the language itself that language used is functional. Its function is to make meaning and that these meanings are influenced by social and cultural context in which they are exchanged. SFL also views the process of using language is a semiotic process - a process of making meanings by choosing.

For Halliday, the main purpose of SFL lies on its language function because it is a resource for human being to create meaning; so text is a process of making meaning in context (Halliday, 2014, p. 3). That is why language can be called as a 'system of meanings'. Function plays an important role in SFL and it has a special connection to the social use of language.

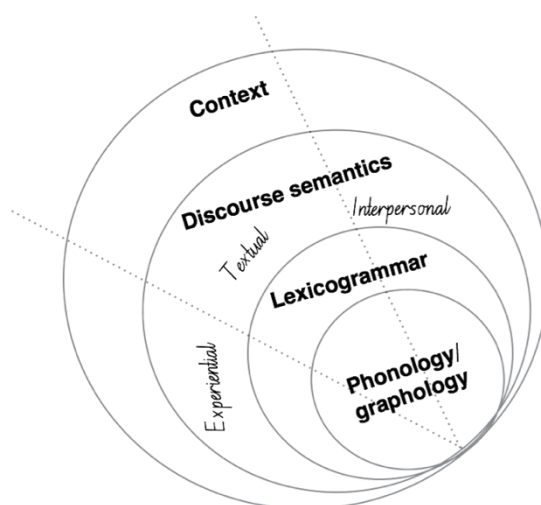
### ***Metafunctions***

The ways in which people use language are classified in SFL into three broad categories known as metafunctions or meanings (Bloor, 2004). These meanings, then, are described as ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings.

Ideational meaning refers to what is going on in the world and it represents our experience of the world and inner world of our thought and feelings (Lock, 1996, p. 9). Meanwhile, Halliday (2014, p. 30) states that language provides a theory of human experience and particular resources of the lexicogrammar of every language is dedicated to that function which is realized in the field. Lock (1996, p. 31) also argues that interpersonal meaning has to do with the ways in which we act upon one another through

language by giving and requesting information, getting people to do things, and offering to things ourselves and the ways in which we express our judgments and attitude about such thing as likelihood, necessity, and desirability where its realization is in term of tenor. Whereas textual meaning refers to the ways of how to organize language into its context and the role of language plays in it which is realized in the system of mode. This realization can be seen in the metafunction diagram in figure 1 (cited from Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004, p. 328).

**Figure 1**  
**Metafunction (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004)**



### ***Textual meaning, theme, and cohesion***

SFL, particularly textual meaning, is always used as an approach to analyzing a written text to determine the coherency or unity of a text. In addition, it is employed as an approach to teaching writing by lecturers or teachers of English to enhance their students' writings. The use of language, in the point of view of textual meanings, is used by students to create messages into a smooth and well organize text both written and spoken texts such as conversation or article writings. It is used as an interaction between the writers and their listeners (Thompson, 1996, p. 117).

As Halliday stated that textual meaning tends to be realized by the order in which things occur, and especially by placing of boundaries. The textual meaning of the clause is expressed by what is put first (the theme); by what is phonologically prominent (and tends to be put last - the New, signaled by information focus); and by conjunctions and relatives which if present must occur in the initial position (Halliday, 2014, 387). The

realization of textual meaning is analyzed through its mode of discourse, covering theme and rheme. Theme always comes at the beginning of a clause whereas the rest of the theme is called rheme (Thompson, 1996, pp. 118-119). Theme is what the clause is about but subject is the doer or actor of a clause. Halliday (1994, p. 38) suggested that it is useful to keep the idea of theme as the "starting – point for the message" or "the ground from which the clause is taking off". Table 1 provides examples of theme in a clause.

**Table 1**  
**Subject and adjunct as theme (Thompson, 1996, p. 120)**

Theme	Rheme
Last night	A man was helping police inquiries.
In our classical collection	You will find many well-loved masterpieces.
Out of Britain’s 37 most senior judges	Only one is a woman
You	Probably haven’t heard of the SOU before.
The Queen	Yesterday opened her heart to the nation.

In my teaching context, the use of textual meaning, especially thematic progression and cohesion, has been used in teaching English for many years. Both thematic progression and cohesion are employed in teaching intermediate writing. Thematic progression and cohesion help potential student writers to write a text coherently or cohesively. In the SFL analysis of language, thematic choice patterns are seen as realizing textual meaning through the dimension of the mode of context situation (Eggin, 2004, p. 320). Thus, this thematic choice creates how text hang together (to be coherent) and also how the text relates to its context. The register variable of mode strongly influences the thematic patterns. It happens when mode varies; it also makes variation in Theme/Rheme structure.

Theme has a very great contribution in developing text through the practice of cohesion and coherence. This also relates to thematic progression. There are three types of thematic progression, namely reiteration, zig-zag, and multiple theme patterns. If Theme of a clause is the signpost for a speaker or writer's point of departure, then each Rheme is the temporary destination (Butt, et.al, 2000, p. 142).

Cohesion is in the level of semantic, which refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that defines it as a text (Hasan & Halliday, 1976). Also, cohesion is a crucial linguistic resource in the expression of

coherent meanings (Thompson, 1996, p.147). There are two types of cohesion i.e. grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion consists of reference, ellipsis, conjunction, and substitution. Lexical cohesion covers reiteration and collocation (Hasan & Halliday, 1976).

### ***SFL in Teaching L2 Writing***

SFL views language as a resource for making meaning (Halliday, 2014). Hence, this theory focuses on how different structures construct meanings and it focuses on authentic texts and their contexts of use. SFL focuses on how speakers express their meanings through the exploitation of linguistic resources. SFL has also been used to teach English skills, specifically writing. Creating well-structured sentences is a major skill that students need to develop in writing (Derewianka & Jones, 2012). Hammond (1992) states that systemic functional linguistics has a number of beliefs that make it particularly useful as a basis for developing a literacy program. SFL has an important role in literacy since it concentrates on both the production and analysis of texts in a given language (Lirola, 2010). Lirola also describes that SFL offers linguistic features of written texts such as the different stages of texts, theme and rheme, lexical choices, types of verbs, noun groups, and cohesion. By learning these features, students will be able to analyze and predict the context of the text and, at the same time, learn to use these linguistic features in their written texts. In relation to this theory, SFL and literacy have been developed as a systemic functional linguistics genre pedagogy or SFL GP (as cited in Emilia & Hamid, 2015). SFL GP has widely been developed in Australia and the term genre in SFL GP refers to text types (Martin and Rose, 2003). Additionally, pedagogy is the tool for organizing knowledge and for building that knowledge visible to students (Joyce & Feez, 2002; Droga & Humphrey, 2003). Thus, SFL GP also points out the importance of knowledge of grammar, as Derewianka (1998) argues:

A knowledge of grammar can help us to critically evaluate our own text and those of others, e.g. identify points of view; examining how language can be manipulated to achieve certain effects and position the reader in a particular way; knowing how language can be used to construct a particular identify or particular way of viewing the world (cited in Emilia & Hamid, 2015, p. 159).

This theory is aimed at “developing a literacy pedagogy that enables students to enhance educational discourse of the kind that they may not become familiar with in their life, to acquire and critique the genres required for success in schooling, in employment, and in the community” (Macken-

Horarik, 2002, pp. 44-45). Furthermore, a literacy program which is developed by Hammond et.al offers some learning cycles of teaching genre covering building knowledge of field, modeling of the text, joint construction, and independent construction. Furthermore, Rose and Martin (2012) elaborates that there are three stages of a literacy program that teachers or learners can learn including deconstruction, joints construction and independent construction simultaneously.

### ***Hortatory / Exposition Text***

In this study, the students were expected to produce a hortatory or exposition text. Hortatory or exposition consists of exposition (persuading that) and exposition (persuading to). Therefore, the social functions of these two expositions, exposition (persuading that) and exposition (persuading to), are different. It is aimed at persuading the reader or listener that something is the case and it is aimed at persuading the reader or listener to take action on some matter respectively (Hammond, et.al, 1992)

The grammatical structure of hortatory text comprises thesis, arguments, and reiteration (summing up/recommendation) (Rose and Martin, 2012) and its significant grammatical patterns consist of generic participant (human or non-human), use of specific participants, mental process, material process, relational process. Hortatory exposition differs from analytical exposition in that the latter argues that X is the case. It argues that X **ought** or **ought** to be or **should** or **should not** be the case (Gerot and Wigdnell, 1994).

### **Research Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative approach comprising the data collection and a qualitative data analysis. The triangulation of data collection is used involving classroom observation, interview, and documentation of the students' texts development. This research was done at Discourse Analysis (DA) class at a private university in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. The participants of this research were twenty students of the sixth semester of English Department who major in linguistic section. Meanwhile, in conducting the research, the researcher also acted as their lecturer in DA class (Stake, 1995) and taught them by implementing learning cycles as proposed by Rose and Martin (2012). The learning cycles cover the scaffolding stages of deconstruction, joint construction and independent construction within three meetings through genre-based pedagogy and each of them lasted for 100 minutes.

The data of this study were collected at the last stage of independent construction. The students were encouraged to write a hortatory text with

their own topic individually by following the schematic structures and linguistic features of hortatory text comprise thesis, arguments, and reiteration (summing up or recommendation). After they finished their writings, they were given time to correct and give comments on their own writings by giving critical response through the use of thematic patterns and cohesive elements. Students analyzed their own development of writings through the use of thematic patterns and cohesive devices to find out whether their texts were coherent or not by using thematic and cohesion rubric as the evaluation tools.

In addition, the students' texts development was analyzed based on SFL framework introduced by Butt et.al (2000) to classify the theme and thematic patterns of the students' hortatory writings, as well as Halliday and Hasan (1976) for its cohesive elements, covers grammatical and lexical cohesion. Therefore, the researcher only focused on grammatical cohesive devices existed in the students'.

For the sake of the data analysis, the researcher employed three samples out of twenty students' hortatory writings taken from the students' assignments purposively. Each sample text represented low, mid and high achievers. In DA class, students learned textual metafunction in term of theme-rheme, thematic progression as well as cohesion. Furthermore, they also learned this material in detail and its application in writing.

Each students' writing was segmented into theme and its thematic patterns as well as cohesive devices to see whether the clauses are interrelated to one another. If they found their clauses were not related, then they must give a critical response to their texts by correcting and editing their writings to achieve interrelated text or clauses to make a coherent text. The idea of thematic patterns and cohesive devices helps all students to be more critical on their own works. Lastly, they wrote comments next to his/her writings and gave some corrections in term of its texture including coherence and cohesiveness by following thematic patterns and cohesive devices to make all the clauses hang together by creating new sentence or clause. In this case, grammar errors are left unanalyzed since students only focus on the text unity.

## **Implementation of SFL**

In this part of the discussion, the researcher presents the findings including the implementation of SFL GP learning cycles and its discussion of the students' hortatory writings. The description below is the explanation of the scaffolding stage in implementing the learning cycles in teaching textual metafunction before the students are assigned to write hortatory text independently.



### ***Stage 1: Deconstruction***

In this part of the stage, deconstruction comes in two parts, namely building knowledge of field and modeling the genre. These are introduced to the students in class. In building knowledge of field, the students were given the description of the hortatory text and explanations about the elements of hortatory text comprising the social purpose, schematic structure and linguistic features of a hortatory text. The lecturer also highlighted some points of the vocabularies, types of processes, as well as tenses existed in the text they discussed to develop the students' conscious knowledge of language and how it works in a text. Instead of teaching the hortatory elements, the lecturer explained the thematic progression patterns and cohesive devices as well as how to achieve a coherent text through the application of these devices. The lecturer then provided examples of hortatory texts to show the students part of the hortatory genre including the schematic structure and linguistics features and analyzing them together by sharing knowledge with one another. In addition, students were also presented with an example of text analysis of using thematic progression patterns and cohesive devices. This allows students to develop and to understand the stages of the text and to set up the prerequisites for the expansion of their ability to make meaning.

### ***Stage 2: Joint Construction***

In stage 2, joint construction is very important for focusing the students on how language is structured or built. In so doing, the lecturer's role is very essential because he acts as the students' facilitator and assists them to write a text. During the teaching and learning process, the lecturer demonstrates to the students the process of writing hortatory text by referring to the elements such as the schematic structures and linguistic features. Besides that, the lecturer provided scaffolding of the material to the students in constructing a text and organizing idea. Then, the students wrote a hortatory text in a group with similar topic. In their group, they discussed their topics. By writing in the group, the students can expand their ideas and knowledge of writing a hortatory text together.

### ***Stage 3: Independent Construction***

In this phase, the lecturer asked the students to write hortatory text individually on a slightly different topic that was related to the field they discussed in the previous stage (joint construction). In writing a hortatory text, the students were free to choose their own topic of the discussion in their writing. After they had finished their writings, the lecturer gave his students some time to check their writings including the texture of the text

they created. The texture that the students checked here is related to the coherency and cohesiveness of the text they made. Through the knowledge of thematic progression and cohesive devices, the students edited and revised their own writings themselves by following the writing rubric to assess their own writings. During this process, the lecturer guided and provided them some support during the writing process.

## **Students' writing samples analysis and discussion**

In this section, I will present the analysis of students' writing samples provided in Appendix A. The samples are written work of students from different levels of achievement. The written works are paralleled to compare the features of the three writings. The written texts show students' control of schematic structure and linguistic features in producing the hortatory texts. As it is seen in Appendix A, these three students show their different level of writings. They can follow the schematic structure of a hortatory text and its linguistics features very well. Apart from the grammar rules, the students can manage their writings and focus on the use of linguistic features of hortatory text. It can be seen that each student provides detail of grammatical features including tense: simple present tense, mental process, material process, and relational process.

Text 1 in appendix A shows the student's (of low achiever) attempt to create the topic knowledge which is shown by the existence of generic participant "people" in her writing. It can also be seen that the student gives elaboration on the issues in detail. She mentions that people are too busy with their lives and have forgotten their life's goal. She also produces an argument in her writing by describing that traveling is very important. However, she has not been able to organize the thesis well. In her writing, the student does not explain nor provides any details on why those activities are included in the argument. In the conclusion part, the student is able to produce restatement of the thesis very well. Closing her writing, she employs modal auxiliary "should" indicating strong suggestion for people to travel.

Text 2 shows the writing of the mid achiever student where she elaborates her writing smoothly. At the first draft of the thesis, she explains a common issue in Indonesia indicated by a generic participant "flood". Rain becomes the topic of the thesis in her writing. She explains in her writing that there are some problems caused by rain and one of them is the flood. Furthermore, she also uses transition words to display sequential events such as first, second and the final. The last schematic structure is the restatement of the thesis and provided some recommendations to prevent floods such as keeping the environment clean.

Text 3 is produced by a high achiever student. She writes a well-organized text. She produces the thesis clearly with “traffic jam” as the issue of concern in her writing. She elaborates her text by following the schematic structure where she discusses how to tackle traffic jam problems in her text. Besides that, she also develops her writing by using transition words to discuss the various ideas to support the main thesis statement.

**Analysis of Low achiever student’s sample text**

At the last stage of independent construction, students are asked to critically review their writing as well as assessing whether their writings are coherent or cohesiveness by following a writing rubrics retrieved from Aalto University website (Kie-98.1600 English Reading / Writing Test) provided by their lecturer. The following example is taken from a low achiever student’s self-critical review on her own writing.

**Excerpt 1  
Student’s Critical Review of Low Achiever**

<u>Who People Should Go Travelling</u>	
<p>Nowadays, people are too busy with their live like work, school, and even personal problem. They always repeat the same thing every day and forget about their desire or passion in life. However, if you ask your self, is it important for me to travelling? The answer is, definitely "Yes" an as long as you are young.</p> <p>I mean, it is not about just go somewhere you never been befere, but from travelling you can meeting some people, learning new things, challenging yourself, and you can more appreciating your life. Life is too short and you have to go out from your comfort zone.</p> <p>In fact, people who are less travelling, they are mostly looks sad and stressful. And with go travelling it can reuce your despretion or your stress. You do not have to just stuck behind your desk and it is fine to forget about everything at the moment.</p> <p>In think you should go travelling, save the date, save your money and pack your stuff and start the new life.</p>	<p><b>Claudia</b> In this clause is not related with the clause before because it does not has the topical theme and it should be edit "They" for the topical theme so this clause can be related.</p> <p><b>Claudia</b> In this sentence is not related with the sentence before because it does not has the topical theme and it should be edit with "Your" for the topical theme so this sentence can be related.</p>

The example in excerpt 1 shows how the thematic pattern is realized in the student’s writing. As seen in the excerpt above, she applied the theme and rheme analysis in reviewing the writing text. Based on her analysis, she suggested to add the personal pronoun "they" after conjunction *and* to make clear the relationship between the two clauses. In assessing her own writing, she follows the writing rubric (see appendix A). Meanwhile, types of cohesive devices she employed are personal reference *they* where this word plays as an anaphoric of the word *people*. Below is a sample of a thematic pattern of the first paragraph. The other cohesive devices found is the repetition of the word "you". She mentions this personal pronoun *you* twice in her writing. These cohesive devices also make her clauses hang together.

This process can be seen in figure 2 that shows the thematic pattern which is identified by arrows and cohesive devices shown in underline words.

**Figure 2**  
**Thematic Pattern of Low Achiever Development Text**

Nowadays, people are too busy with their lives like work, school, and even personal problem.

They always repeat the same thing every day and (they) forget about their desire or passion in life.

However, if you ask your self, is it important for me to traveling? The answer is, definitely “Yes” an as long as you are young.

**Analysis of Mid Achiever student’s sample text**

Excerpt 2 illustrates the text development produced by a mid achiever. As described in Appendix A earlier, student 3 was able to apply the schematic structure of hortatory text properly by including thesis, argument, and restatement of thesis in her writing. Furthermore, by following the writing assessment rubric, she is able to revise some errors pertaining to the texture of her writing including the text coherence. It can be seen in excerpt 2 how she analyzed the flow of information needed to keep the information running smoothly.

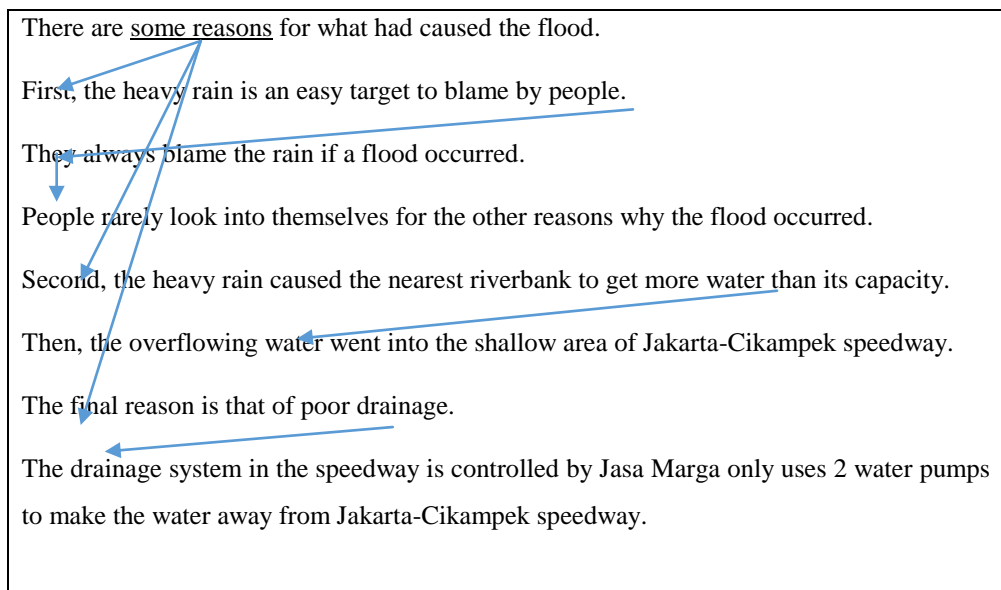
**Excerpt 2**  
**Student’s Critical Review of Mid Achiever**

<p>As the raining season finally came into Indonesia, <u>It</u> makes Indonesian citizen started to worry. They are afraid if they got flood. <u>A heavy rain</u> happened in <u>Bekasi</u> recently caused flood in Jakarta-Cikampek speedway.</p> <p>There are some reasons about what had caused the flood. First, the heavy rain is an easy target to blame. <u>People</u> always blame the rain if a flood occurred. People rarely look into themselves about the other reasons why the flood occurred. Second, the heavy rain caused the nearest riverbank to get more water than its capacity. Then, the overflowing water went into the shallow area of Jakarta-Cikampek speedway. The final reason is because of poor drainage. <u>Jasa Marga</u> only uses 2 water pumps to make the water away from Jakarta-Cikampek speedway.</p> <p>As one of Indonesian citizen, I am concerned whenever a flood occurred. Thus, I provide some recommendations to prevent flood. First, let us look into our surrounding. We just can't blame the heavy rain if a flood happened. We should clean our environment more frequently and try to keep it clean. Second, <u>Jasa Marga</u> or the disposal department should put more water pumps. It can be used to move water from the speedway to another place, like river or sea. By doing so, there will be only slight puddle on the speedway.</p>	<p><b>USER</b> The clause is not related to the previous clause. Thus, a clause should be added before this clause. "They will lose their houses or belongings because of flood caused by the heavy rain." Then, this clause is not complete yet, so there should be more clause followed this clause. "It made the speedway can't be used for several hours."</p> <p><b>USER</b> This clause is not related to the previous clause, so a clause should be added before this clause. "The heavy rain can't be prevented, and even if it can, it will be few hours top. Eventually, it will rain and the impact from this should be braced by people."</p> <p><b>USER</b> This clause is not related, so a clause should be added. "The drainage system in the speedway is controlled by <u>Jasa Marga</u>."</p>
---	---

In the second paragraph, for example, she noticed that there are two sentences which are not correlated with the previous ones. Therefore, she suggested transitional sentences to bridge the second and the third sentences. The focus of her feedback is on the content level and not just on the surface level of grammatical structure.

It can be analyzed that, in her writing, she employs three types of thematic patterns: constant, zig-zag and multiple theme patterns. Besides her awareness of using thematic patterns, she also uses cohesive devices in her writing such as reference, namely personal pronouns *they* to refer to *people* and *Indonesian citizen*; *it* to refer to *Indonesia*; and *we, our, us* to refer to *the Indonesian citizen*. In addition, substitution is also found in her writing, for example the use of “one” to refer to *Indonesia citizen*. Similarly, in the second paragraph, she is able to use three of the thematic progression pattern. She uses a constant theme where the theme of the third clause “*they*” is repeated as the theme in the fourth clause with *people*. Likewise, zig-zag theme pattern is found in the second clause where the rheme of this clause *people* is taken up as the theme in the third clause with “*they*”. The last one is multiple themes can be seen in the first clause where the word *some reasons* are taken up as the theme in some part of the clause in the second, the fifth and the seventh clauses as shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**  
**Thematic Pattern of Mid Achiever Development Text**



### *Analysis of High Achiever student's sample text*

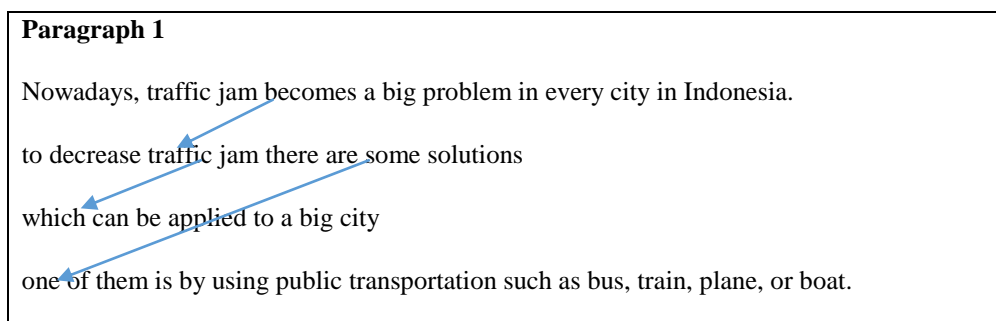
The following sample is taken from a high achiever student's work. This student is able to employ both schematic structure and linguistic features accordingly. Furthermore, she is also able to elaborate her text through the use of thematic progression patterns as well as cohesive devices as these devices make the sentences hang together. The high achiever student also adheres to the writing assessment rubric as given by her lecturer to ensure that her text is written appropriately following the standard of the writing assessment rubric. Excerpt 3 is the example of high achiever text development and its review made by the student herself.

#### **Excerpt 3** **Student's Critical Review of High Achiever**

Public Transportation	
<p>Nowadays, traffic jam becomes a big problem in every city in Indonesia. Actually there are some solutions to decrease traffic jam which may be can be applied in a big city one of them is by using public transportation such as bus, train, plane, or boat.</p> <p><span style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">There are</span> some benefits of using public transportation . First, decrease traffic jam. <span style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">People</span> never realize that using their private transportation even car or motor bike is the source of traffic jam, because the road is full of vehicles. If they move to public transportation the road will be looser than usual.</p> <p>Second, by using public transportation intentionally can decrease a number of the mortality rates caused by accident. as we know that every day there must be an accident caused by motor bike, car, bus, or truck. We can reduce it by move to public transportation that more save.</p> <p>Third, using public transportation can help the people who works as a driver, conductor, or travel agent to develop their business. It is also one of the way to economize the spending of money. Because using public transportation is cheaper than using private vehicle.</p> <p>Therefore, to achieve this conditions there should be a support from the government to give appropriate vehicles of public transportation for bus, train, plane, even ferry or boat. Beside that, there should be a cooperation between the government and the people.</p>	<p><b>master</b> It should be added by <b>conjunction</b> to connect the sentence which refer to the "public transportation"</p> <p><b>master</b> There is no relation between this theme "people" with the previous theme or even <b>them</b>.</p>

As shown in excerpt 3, the student made some evaluation on her own text. She found some clauses that are not interrelated to one another (the first line of the second paragraph). Unfortunately, she did not provide clear reasons for her feedback. However, the text she made can still be categorized as a coherent text because she applies three thematic patterns in her text. Besides that, the use of cohesive devices is also found for example the use of reference (e.g. *they, we, it, their*), conjunctions (e.g. *thus, if, therefore, because, or, as*), and repetition (e.g. *bus, bike, public transportation, government*). This explanation can be illustrated in figure 4.

**Figure 4**  
**Thematic Pattern of High Achiever Development Text**



It can be seen in figure 4 that zig-zag and multiple theme patterns are found in the first paragraph of the high achiever student's text. She organized her text through the use of thematic pattern. As described in the first line that the phrase *traffic jam* is repeated as the theme in the second clause with a similar phrase. It is also repeated as the theme in the third clause with "*which*". There is one multiple theme pattern found here, it is the rheme of the first clause which is taken up as the theme in the fourth clause with the pronoun "*one*". Moreover, the student also used cohesive devices to accommodate the smooth running of information by using reference (e.g. *it, we, they, it, them*), conjunction (e.g. *or, because, if, as*), substitution (e.g. *one*). In doing the review of her own text, she also made use of some criteria from the writing assessment rubric to guide her in her writing process. As a result, her written text is quite coherent in nature.

When the students were asked on their opinions about the teaching approach, the response are positive. Some students shared that they were able to learn to write in a more organized manner. This opinion is best represented by LU as follows:

*I think learning textual metafunctions specifically thematic progression and cohesion help me a lot to write a text better. (LU).*

LU realizes that learning the textual metafunctions enables her to see the mechanistic of composing a sentence. She became aware of the importance of learning textual metafunctions especially thematic progression and cohesion in drafting her writing coherently and cohesively. Furthermore, students also mention that by learning the composition and construction of a good text, they are able to understand textual meaning and treat writing as the process of developing meaning. Writing does not feel

like an obligatory activity that they have to do in class but it is about creating meaningful text. This can be seen from SU remark as follows:

I think I gain more knowledge after learning textual meaning because I can apply it to my writing besides that learning genre also help me to get through my writing skill and correct my writing through linguistics features. So I also can improve my grammar too. (SU)

SU particularly explains how she learned through SFL. She gains knowledge on genre, their linguistics features, writing sub-skills (e.g. evaluating their own writing and giving feedback to their own writing), and textual meaning. She is in the opinion that this knowledge help her to improve her writing skill and grammar knowledge.

### **Closing remarks**

To conclude, SFL GP has an important contribution to students' text development. It helps students to organize their text well. In addition, the learning cycles of genre pedagogy also help students learn genre easily because they can follow the steps on how to create a text systematically. Also, it trains students to analyze the linguistic features of their own writing. In this way, students are made to be aware of the process of writing from constructing sentences in a meaningful way to producing a coherent and cohesive text. More importantly, SFL GP can also help teachers in teaching different genres and their specific characteristics to their students. The use of learning cycles will assist teachers to teach in several stages to accommodate their students learning process step by step.

### **The Author**

Setyo Prasiyanto Cahyono is a lecturer at English Department, Faculty of Humanities Universitas Dian Nuswantoro Semarang Indonesia. He teaches Discourse Analysis, Applied Linguistics, and Intermediate Listening. He obtains his master degree from Semarang State University in 2008. His research interests are in the area of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Discourse Analysis and Register in Classroom Discourse. He has joined and presented his papers both in National and International Conferences such as in Korea, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia etc.



## References

- Butt, D., Fahey, R., Feez, S., Spinks, S. & Yallop, C. (2000). *Using Functional Grammar: An explorer's Guide Second Edition*. Sydney National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research Maguire University.
- Bloor, T., & Bloor, M. (2004). *The Functional Analysis of English*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Derewianka, B. & Jones, P. (2012). *Teaching Language in Context*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Derewianka, B. (1998). *A Grammar Companion for Primary Teachers*. Newtown: PETA.
- Droga, L., & Humfrey, S. (2003). *Grammar and Meaning. An Introduction for Primary Teachers*. Berry, NSW: Target Texts.
- Eggins, S. (2004). *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. London: Pinter Publisher
- Emilia, E. & Hamied, F.A. (2015). *Systemic Functional Linguistic Genre Pedagogy (SFLGP) in a Tertiary EFL Writing Context in Indonesia*. A TEFLIN Journal. Vol, 26, No. 2.
- Feez, S. (2002). *Heritage and Innovation in Second Language Education*. In A.M. Johns (Ed), *Genre in the Classroom*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Gerot, L & Wignell, P. (1992). *Making Sense of Functional Grammar*. Australia: Gerd Stabler.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1976). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar: Fourth Edition*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (2014). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar: Fourth Edition*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & Matthiessen, C.M.I.M. (1999). *Construing Experience Through Meaning: A Language-based Approach to Cognition*. London: Continuum.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman Group Ltd.
- Hammond, J. (1992). *English for Social Purposes: A handbook for teachers of adult literacy*. Macquarie University: Australian Print Group.
- Hart, C. (2014). *Discourse, Grammar, and Ideology: Functional and Cognitive Perspectives*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Kie-98.1600 English Reading/ Writing Test (2015). Retrieved from: [https://mycourses.aalto.fi/pluginfile.php/80621/mod\\_resource/content/1/Kie-98.1600\\_Assessment\\_Criteria\\_2015-2016.pdf](https://mycourses.aalto.fi/pluginfile.php/80621/mod_resource/content/1/Kie-98.1600_Assessment_Criteria_2015-2016.pdf)

- Lirola, M.M. (2010). *How to Apply SFL in Classroom Practice: An Example in Bilingual Education Programs in The USA*. The Buckingham Journal of Language and Linguistics, Vol. 3 pp 205-219.
- Lock, G. (1996). *Functional English Grammar: An Introduction for Second Language Teachers*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Martin, J.R., C.M.I.M. Matthiessen, & C. Painter. (1997). *Working with Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.
- Martin, J.R. (1992). *English Text: System and Structure*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Martin, J.R. and Rose, D. (2003). *Working with Discourse: Meaning Beyond the Clause*. London: Continuum.
- Rose, D. and Martin, J.R. (2012). *Learning to Write, Reading to Learn: Genre, Knowledge, and Pedagogy in the Sydney School*. Sheffield (UK) and Bristol (USA): Equinox Publishing Ltd.
- Macken-Horarik, M. (2002). *Something to Shoot for*. In A.M. Johns (Ed), *Genre in the Classroom*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Thompson, G. (1996). *Introducing Functional Grammar*. London: JW Arrowsmith Ltd.
- Stake, R.E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

**Appendix A**  
**The schematic structure of the sample of the students' hortatory writing**  
**from different levels of achievement**

Stages of the Text	Title and Sample of Text		
	Why People Should Go Travelling	Flood	Public Transportation
	Text 1 by a low achiever	Text 2 by a mid achiever	Text 3 by a high achiever
<b>Thesis</b>	<p>Nowadays, people are too busy with their lives like work, school, and even personal problem. They always repeat the same thing every day and <i>forget</i> about their desire or passion in life. However, if you ask your self, is it important for me to traveling? The answer is, definitely “Yes” an as long as you are young.</p>	<p>As the raining season finally came into Indonesia, it makes Indonesian citizen started to worry. They <i>are afraid</i> if they got the flood. A heavy rain happened in Bekasi recently caused the flood in Jakarta-Cikampek speedway.</p>	<p>Nowadays, traffic jam becomes a big problem in every city in Indonesia. Actually, there are some solutions to decrease traffic jam which can be applied to a big city one of them is by using public transportation such as bus, train, plane, or boat.</p>
<b>Argument</b>	<p>I mean, it is not about just go somewhere you never been before, but from traveling you can meeting some people, learning new things, challenging yourself, and you can more <i>appreciating</i> your life. Life <i>is too short</i> and you have to go out from your comfort zone.</p> <p>In fact, people who travel less, they mostly <i>look sad</i> and stressful. And with go traveling, it can reduce your depression or your stress. You do not</p>	<p><b>First</b>, the heavy rain is an easy target to blame. People always <i>blame</i> the rain if a flood occurred. People <i>rarely look</i> into themselves for the other reasons why the flood occurred. <b>Second</b>, the heavy rain caused the nearest riverbank to get more water than its capacity. Then, the overflowing water went into the shallow area of Jakarta-Cikampek speedway. <b>The final reason</b> is that of poor drainage. Jasa Marga only uses 2 water pumps to make the water away from</p>	<p><b>First</b>, decrease traffic jam. People <i>never realize</i> that using their private transportation even car or motorbike is the source of the traffic jam because the road is full of vehicles. If they move to public transportation the road will be looser than usual. <b>Second</b>, by using public transportation intentionally can decrease the number of the mortality rates caused by accident. as we <i>know</i> that every day there must be an accident caused by</p>

	<p>have to get stuck behind your desk and it is fine to forget about everything at the moment.</p>	<p>Jakarta-Cikampek speedway.</p>	<p>motorbike, car, bus, or truck. We can reduce it by switching to using public transportation that is more efficient and environmentally friendly.  <b>Third</b>, using public transportation can help the people who work as a driver, conductor, or travel agent to develop their business. It is also one of the ways to economize the spending of money. Because using public transportation is cheaper than using private vehicles.</p>
<p><b>Restatement of Thesis</b></p>	<p>I think you should go traveling, save the date, save your money and pack your stuff and start the new life.</p>	<p>Thus, I provide some recommendations to prevent the flood. First, let us <i>look</i> into our surrounding. We just <i>can't blame</i> the heavy rain if a flood happened. We should clean our environment more frequently and try to keep it clean. Second, Jasa Marga or the disposal department should put more water pumps. It can be used to move water from the speedway to another place, like the river or sea. By doing so, there will be only slight puddle on the speedway.</p>	<p>Therefore, to achieve this conditions there should be a support from the government to give appropriate vehicles of public transportation for bus, train, plane, even ferry or boat. Besides that, there should be a cooperation between the government and the people.</p>