

التطور الموضوعي في التقارير الاقتصادية: مفاوضات العراق مع غازبروم حول حقل الناصرية النفطي

Thematic Progression in Selected Economic News Reports of Iraq Negotiations with Gazprom over AL-Nasiriyah Oilfield

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Abstract

This paper intends to examine thematic progression in economic news reports. The data is limited to three selected reports on Iraq negotiations with Gazprom to develop Al-Nasiriyah oilfield. The paper aims to investigate thematic progression in the reports selected through identifying the theme and rheme in each clause and their types and how thematic progression and its types are linked with the rheme of the said context. The paper is carried out through the qualitative method approach based on an eclectic model including Halliday (2014) systematic functional grammar and Bloor and Bloor (2004) thematic progression patterns. The results show that economic news reports focus on presenting detailed information and facts of the negotiations between Iraq and Gazprom relying on multiple themes in order to draw the readers' attention towards the topic and its importance. Moreover, the simple linear and constant themes are used more frequently to create a good sense of comprehension, rhythm and better realization of the details of the topic.

Keywords: Economic reports, Gazprom, Iraq, Oil sector, Theme–rheme, Thematic progression

المستخلص : تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص التقدم الموضوعي في التقارير الإخبارية الاقتصادية. وتتمثل المشكلة في أن نصوص التقارير الاقتصادية تُصاغ بطريقة تتطلب شرحًا مفصلاً وتفاصيل واقعية يجب تقديمها بشكل متسلسل وضمن هيكل متماسك لتوضيح السياق المعني. تقتصر البيانات على ثلاث تقارير مختارة تتناول مفاوضات العراق مع غازبروم لتطوير حقل الناصرية النفطي. تهدف الدراسة إلى التحقيق في التقدم الموضوعي في هذه التقارير من خلال تحديد الموضوع (Theme) والخبر (Rheme) في كل جملة، وأنواعها، وكيفية ارتباط التقدم الموضوعي وأنواعه بخبر السياق المحدد. تعتمد الدراسة على منهج البحث النوعي باستخدام نموذج انتقائي يستند إلى قواعد النحو الوظيفي النظامي لهالداي (٢٠١٤) ونماذج التقدم الموضوعي لبلاور وبلاور (2004). أظهرت النتائج أن التقارير الاقتصادية تركز على تقديم معلومات وحقائق مفصلة حول المفاوضات بين العراق وغازبروم، مع الاعتماد على مواضيع متعددة لجذب انتباه القارئ نحو الموضوع وأهميته. علاوة على ذلك، تحمل مواضيع الجمل (Clausal Themes) مزيداً من المعلومات التي تسهم في فهم النص بشكل أفضل. وبالنسبة للتقدم الموضوعي، تم استخدام الأنماط الخطية البسيطة والثابتة بشكل أكبر لخلق إحساس بالتناغم والفهم وتحقيق تصور أفضل لتفاصيل الموضوع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التقارير الاقتصادية، غازبروم، العراق، قطاع النفط، الموضوع والخبر، التقدم الموضوعي.

1. Introduction

Dealing with discourse analysis implies examining how the use of language is influenced by certain relationships between participants and the effects of such relationships upon identities and relations. In fact, when a text is said or written, a speaker/ writer needs to organize his/her ideas in a way that makes it said easier (Bloor & Bloor, 2004)(This can take place when a coherent written or spoken discourse implements a sequence of theme and rheme and such a sequence is followed by patterns referred to as thematic progression (Danes, 1974). The notion of thematic progression simply refers to the instances where a theme of a clause might carry or repeat the same meaning from a preceding theme or rheme ((Danes, 1974); (Hawes, 2015). This method gives way to what is known as information flow throughout the text. Simply, thematic progression refers to the framework of the text as a whole .The work of Prague school inspired (Halliday M. A., 1985) to conduct a full study on theme structure in functional terms.

One of the most important sectors in politics and economy is oil in which reporting details concerning developing oilfields, refineries and the production and exportation as well as marketing and negotiations are reported with detailed information. Details of information require theme–rhyme dynamics which play an important role in the structure of thematic progression. Even though many

studies have been carried out to investigate the role as well as the function of thematic structure in political speeches, science speeches, news discourse, literary and legislative texts ((Feifei, 2021); (Mao & Xiaolan., 2023) still, there is a need to investigate the discourse of economic news reports. This paper specifically is an attempt to investigate the Iraqi government negotiations with the Russian Gazprom company of oil over Al-Nasiriyah oilfield through investigating the types of thematic structure and thematic progression that are used in the economic news reports. Accordingly, the problem of the study implies that the types of themes facilitate the process of identifying them in the context to determine the progression in which theme–rheme relationship structure the said context in order to elaborate the factual details of economic negotiations represented in economic news reports.

The paper aims to investigate the correlation between themes of the clauses and their rhemes to represent the details of the negotiations in the selected economic news reports . Moreover, it aims to identify the thematic progression patterns and their functions. The study is built upon the following research questions:

1. How does the different types of themes correlate with rhemes to structure the clauses of the selected ecumenic news reports?
3. What are the thematic progression patterns and how do they function in the selected reports?

4. Literature Review

A. Themacitiy

(Halliday M. K., 1994, p. 36) proposes three metafunctions at a lexico–grammatical level including: “the ideational/ topical (constructing a model of experience), Interpersonal (Enacting social relationships) and Textual (creating relevance to context)”. The textual metafunction is resembled through the two concepts theme and rehem.

(Fries, 1995)(as cited in (Khedri & Ebrahimi, , 2012) states that “every language has some grammatical function which serves to mark the point of departure for the clause (or other grammatical units) as message”. In general, thematicity stands first for theme which is “what is being talked about in a proposition” and rheme which is “what is being said about the theme”

(Firbas, 1964, p. 45) Another term is used to refer to the theme–rheme structure and that the topic–focus term ((Danes, 1974) (Lambrecht, 1994).

To understand a sentence, the theme plays a significant role in comprehending how the information is organized and presented since it establishes the topic of the sentence and help in revealing how the clause is structured. It can be recognized through the different grammatical structures such as verbs or verb phrases, adverbs and noun phrases. The theme helps in determining the discourse’s flow and coherence and establishing the cohesiveness and coherence in a text. Themes come first in the phrase and they are needed to establish the context for the next elements (Mahfud, Rusmawaty, & Kalukar, 2024). Technically, the theme is the first element in the clause resembled through process, participant or circumstance. It is not taken to be the subject of the sentence but rather it can be realized either through the nominal, verbal, adverbial, prepositional groups or even dependent clauses ((Mao & Xiaolan,, 2023) (Syharizal, Fitriani, , & Anggraeni, 2018).

A discourse, whether written or spoken, follows a story line which is implemented through theme–rheme dynamics termed thematic progression. (Hum, 2020) states that words are set in constraints to formulate sentences and then, set in phrases and the decision on the succession of words sometimes is problematic. (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 125) called this as “linearization problem” and such problem can best be solved through the two terms theme and rheme. According to Abdul Abdul Ridha (2014) a theme is defined as “the starting point of the message and also is known as the orienteer of the text that provides a framework for the interpretation of the message” (p.96). In order to understand any text, these two features of theme should be workable in which theme helps to understand how the text is selected and how the flow in information is structured and interpreted as a whole. (Halliday M. K., 1994) argues that in English the clause is organized as a message with a distinct status granted to each party of it which one of the said parts is the theme. The theme is may be combined with the rest of the clause to produce a message. It is worth noting that it locates the clause within its context in relations to the text. The theme functions as a guide for the reader or listener to interpret the message as whole through highlighting the parts of the said message.

Theme was first introduced by Henry Weil in 1844 to be later adopted in two branches of linguistics including, functional sentence perspective and systematic functional grammar (Danes,

1974); (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) (Abdul Ridha, (2014).)The Prague school of linguistics had a pioneer whose name is Vilem Mathesius, who claimed to be the producer of the concepts of theme and rheme in his work on functional sentence perspective in 1939 and later these two concepts were popularized by Fibras and Vackek in 1997. (Halliday M. A., 1985).

The parts that follow the theme are called rheme which refers to the rest of the clause and hence, it is what one can say later about the theme. Theme and rheme are two components that further contribute to the texture of a text in regards to the focus and flow of information. (Panggabean, 2011); (Mahfud, Rusmawaty, & Kalukar, 2024)). Whatever follows the theme is considered the rheme of the clause and here theme functions as the point of departure of the message and introduces the information prominence into the clause in which it occurs (Halliday M. A., 1985); (Paltridge, 2012).

B.Types of Thematic Structure

Based on (Halliday M. K., 1994) themes are basically divided into single themes and multiple themes. The single themes contain one of the experiential elements of meaning either participant, circumstance and process. Multiple themes refer to the occurrence of the experiential elements in the theme preceded by the textual and/or interpersonal elements functioning as textual or interpersonal themes following the order “textual, interpersonal, experiential (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). There are three categories for the theme including: ideational or topical, interpersonal and textual. The ideational theme stands for the participants, circumstances or processes. This category is subdivided into marked (the subject) and unmarked topical themes (on to the subject). The interpersonal category comes before the topical theme connecting the clause to its context. The textual category preceded both the topical and the interpersonal categories (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)

(Halliday M. , 2014) states that theme can be multiple or split. Multiple theme is defined as consisting of textual and interpersonal or both beside the topical theme. The multiple themes contain several cohesive elements and it overlaps with the thematic progression since it connects each clause with the one that precedes it. Spilt theme, on the other hand, refers to the series of subordinate themes containing more than one idea developed in different clauses (McCabe, 1999). According to (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)any text is formulated of processes and each process

includes three basic elements namely, the process itself, the participant and the circumstantial factors including (time, manner and cause). Theme, in its turn contains one of the of mentioned components and the textual function of the constituent in the clause is referred to as the topical theme. This type of theme might be preceded by the textual theme or the interpersonal theme.

The textual theme precedes the topical theme and has three categories: continuatives, conjunction, conjunctive adjunct. The continuatives stand for the set of small words that indicate a move in the discourse as such a response in a dialogue as for instance (well, oh, now). The conjunction is a word or group of words that either links or binds the clause in which it occurs. It sets up a semantic relationship of expansion or projection such as, and , or, nor...etc. The third category is the conjunctive adjunct which stands for the adverbial groups or prepositional phrases relating the clause to the preceding text. The adjuncts are divided into appositives (that is , in which, in other words...etc.), the correctives (at least, to be precise , rather...etc.); Dismissive such as (any case , anyway , ;leaving that side,etc.), Summative (briefly, to sum up, in conclusion...etc.) ; verificative as for instance (actually, in fact, as a matter of fact, ...etc.)additive, such as (moreover, in addition , furthermore, ...etc.) adversative such as (on the other hand, however, generally, ...etc.), temporal (meanwhile, before that, later on , etc.);comparative as in (in the same way, likewise , conversely, etc.) , casual (therefore, in result , due to , ...etc.) conditional such as (in that case , under the circumstances , otherwise, etc.) ; respective (in this respect, as far as is concerned) ; Concessive (despite that, nevertheless) etc. It worth noting that the first two types (the continuatives and the conjunctions) as inherently thematic in and their position is at the beginning of the clause. While the other types are characteristically thematic since that can be found in the thematic position or any other position (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 108).

The interpersonal theme takes place before the rheme denoting a relationship between participants and the said text. The types of interpersonal theme are the vocatives, modal adjuncts, finite operators and wh-content interrogatives. Interpersonal theme can be used for different purposes including probability (perhaps), usuality (often), typicality (in general), obviousness (clearly), persuasion (trust me) , presumption (no doubt) , desirability (hopefully), entreaty (if you may), admission (Truth be Told) , Prediction (as expected) , opinion (in my opinion) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004); (Fory, 2002)

C. Thematic Progression: Structures and Patterns

Thematic progression is a method of development for the text that helps in understanding the flow of information in the text easier. It is defined by (Danes, 1974, p. 102) as “the study of how theme in a text is developed from clause to clause to build larger stretches”. Other definitions are given by (Eggins, 2004) to describe thematic progression as thematic development referring to the way information is developed over the whole text. Moreover, it refers to the complicated thematic relations in a discourse which reveals the methods and ways of relevant information conveyed by speakers, or information presented in a given text ((Danes, 1974); (Wang, 2015)

(Danes, 1974) sets three patterns of progression for scientific and other professional texts involving, simple linear progression, constant progression and thematic progression with derived theme. Later, he proposed a fourth pattern resulting from the combination of the three other patterns and this is called split rheme progression. The constant theme which is referred to as the reiteration in which the theme of a clause is picked up and repeated at the beginning of the next clause. In other words, each clause will have an addition or a comment in regards to the said theme (Hawes, 2015) (McCabe, 1999); (Paltridge, 2012, p. 132).

Simple linear theme refers to the subject matter in the theme of a clause which is taken up in the following clause’s theme. This type of thematic progression is also referred to as zigzag or linear pattern theme. The rheme may contain a number of different pieces of information, each of which may be considered as the theme in a number of subsequent clauses (Paltridge, 2012) More specifically and as far as this paper is concerned, thematic progression theory outlined by (Bloor & Bloor, 2004) will be used.

Bloor and Bloor (2004, p.88) divide thematic progression into constant theme pattern in which the theme is shared by all the clauses given to provide further information concerning the same theme. This pattern is considered as theme focused pattern. This pattern takes the form:

$T1 -R1/T1-R2/T2-R3/T2-R4$

The other pattern, is called the simple linear theme pattern or zig-zag in which the rheme is taken to be the theme of the next clause and this can take the form:

$$T1-R1/T2=(R1)-R2/T3=(R2)-R3$$

The third pattern is called split rheme pattern in which a single rheme might give details related to the same theme and this would take the following form:

$$T1-R1/T2-R2$$

$$T3=(R2)-R3$$

$$T4=(R2)-R4$$

Finally, the derived theme pattern and this pattern there is a cohesive relationship in meaning but not structure, In other words, the whole texts talks about them same idea in different forms. This would take the form:

$$\text{Basic T} = T1-R1 / T2-R2 / T3-R3$$

5.Previous Studies

Theme–rheme structure and thematic progression have received great attention by many researchers. They have been tackled from different perspectives and in different genres. Below are some of the previous related studies that tackled theme–rethem and thematic progression in studies.

(Fory, 2002) studied the aspects of theme and rheme roles in workable texts. The sample of the study involved three workable texts involving 30 memos, 10 reports, and 22 letters with interviews with 12 business people and 15 EFL teachers relying on the systematic functional linguistic perspective. The findings of the study showed that theme plays an important role in the texts as well as the interpersonal and ideational meaning. Moreover, the choice of subject and extended themes is realized through projection constructing interpersonal meaning.

A study by Khedri and Ibrahimi in 2012 tackled thematicity in academic English and Persian texts. The study focused on the multiple theme structure and its different textual and interpersonal types in the translation process. (Halliday M. K., 1994) model was used to identify the cohesive devices. The conclusions indicated that there were significant differences between the two languages as far as multiple theme structures and their types are concerned.

Another study was carried out by (Abdul Ridha, (2014).)entitled “Theme and Rheme: Types and Problems in EFL University Students’ written texts”. This study investigated the relationship between theme and rheme derived from the theory of functional grammar. The sample of the study involved eighty written texts (compositions). The results concluded that the unmarked themes were mostly used in the students’ texts with the nominal group recorded the highest percentage. Moreover, different theme types were identified such as empty rheme, non–constant progression and the themes with the unclear reference.

(Feifei, 2021)tackled an analysis of thematic and thematic progression patterns in political and economic texts. Data analysis was carried out based on Halliday’s “thematic theory” and Dane’s thematic progression patterns. The sample of the study involved Obama’s Election success speech adopting the mixed method approach. The study concluded that there are different thematic progressions such as linear, constant and continuous in addition to constant rheme pattern. Moreover, thematic progression supported the speech with more powerful perspectives including representing opinion and determinizations in the speech of the president.

(Ma, 2022)investigated Cite Space as a documents visualization in order to review the economic studies in China identifying the thematic progression patterns based on reports from different websites. Drawing on a contrastive study between English Chinses economic reports. The study concluded that thematic progression is related to the mode of thinking, typological features (English is subject–oriented while Chinese is topic–oriented).

A recent study by (Nur Latifah, 2024)entitled “An analysis of thematic progression patterns found in thesis Abstracts by postgraduate Education Students”. The paper talked three selected theses abstract and examined them through Paltridge’s theory of thematic progression. The findings of the paper indicate that students tend to use constant theme in writing their abstracts more than other thematic progression patterns and this is due to being not enough skilled.

Despite these different studies still economic news reports representing oil sector constitute an important field that requires further investigation to identify thematic progression patterns used to represent determined and powerful reports. Accordingly, economic news reports over oilfield sector in Iraq which is one of the crucial oil supporters around the world and the negotiations with Gazprom Neft to develop Al–Nasiriyah oilfield have not been tackled yet. This paper intends to fill

the gap and examines the cohesive structure of the reports discourse through focus on thematic structure leading to thematic progression of the detailed information provided.

6. Methodology

A. Sample of the Study

The sample used in this paper, involve three economic news reports of Iraqi government's negotiation with the Russian oil company Gazprom over Al-Nasiriyah oilfield. The three texts are collected from the websites "Crude OILPRICE.COM" (*Society of Petroleum Engineering (SPE)*, *Journal of Petroleum technology (JPT)* and *Interfax*. The selection of the data is purposeful depending on the availability of the economic reports concerning Al-Nasiriyah oilfield.

B. Research design and procedures

This paper is carried out through the qualitative research approach in order to give an in-depth view of information and holistic as well as comprehensive understanding concerning economic news reports. The researcher herself is the primary instrument as far as data collection and analysis are concerned, in addition to the secondary instruments such as the scripts of the economic texts and the tables for analysis. The analysis of the data is carried out through reading the selected economic news reports, segmenting the clauses with theme and rheme and count the frequency of themes' types as well as thematic progression patterns' in the texts selected using the abbreviated form T1, T2, T3, for themes and R1, R2 R3 for rhemes.

C. Models of Analysis

In order to identify theme and rheme in the different clauses of the economic reports, (Halliday M. , 2014) model of systematic functional grammar is adopted in which theme types are classified into simple (ST), clausal (CT) and multiple (MT) as well as their components (topical, ideational, interpersonal) and rheme can be identified. Moreover, based on Bloor and Bloor (2004) patterns of thematic progression the four patterns including constant theme, linear pattern, rheme split pattern and derived pattern are identified and interpreted

D. Analysis and Discussion

In order to identify the thematic structure of the selected economic news reports concerning Iraq and Gazprom negotiations concerning Al-Nasiriyah oilfield, the three types of themes (ST, CT, MT) are identified based on (Halliday M. , 2014) systematic functional grammar. The table below presenters the frequency of theme types cooccurrence and their percentage in the three selected reports.

Table (1): Distribution of theme in the economic news reports

Types	The three reports	Percentage
ST	31	٢٩,٨٠
MT	40	٣٨,٤٦
CT	33	٣١,٧١
Total	104	%١٠٠

The distribution of the thematic structure in the three selected economic reports on Iraq-Gazprom negotiations over Al-Nasiriyah oilfield indicates that MT comprises the largest percentage (٣٨,٤٦%), followed by the CT one (٣١,٧١%) and then, the ST with a percentage (٢٩,٨٠%). The MT constitutes the largest percentage due to the different functions and purposes of the speeches selected. The purpose of focusing on the multiple themes is to introduce and explain the details concerning the negotiations and agreements for developing Al-Nasiriyah oilfield. The following examples are given from the three reports for a better understanding of how information is conveyed in the clauses through the three types of themes (ST, MT and CL) identified in the data selected:

Analysis of Report (1):

Example (1):

“The Iraqi cabinet (ST)// has decided to invite Russia’s Gazprom to develop the Nasiriyah oil field in the southern part of the country” (R) (Szymczak, 2024)

In this example, the phrase “The Iraqi Cabinet” serves as the ST which performs the topical function in which the reporter focuses on the doer of the action and that is the Iraqi cabinet specifically. The details of information clarify for the readers the role of the Iraqi Cabinet in negotiating with other oil companies to invest in Iraq.

Example (2):

“Through its subsidiary Gazprom Neft Middle East, the company also (MT) // participates in oil and gas projects in Iraqi Kurdistan including Shakal (80% share) and Garmian (40%).” (Szymczak, 2024)

Example (2) entails three semantic functions starting first with the textual conjunction “through”, “its subsidiary Gazprom Neft Middle East” as interpersonal and “the company” serves as the ideational element and present the topic followed by the continuative “also” in the textual theme.

Example 3:

“With negotiations dead on arrival with Russian independent major Lukoil, Iraq (CT)// is asking Gazprom to take over development of the Nasiriyah oil field south of Baghdad.” (R) (Szymczak, 2024)

In this example “with negotiations dead” the textual element followed by the adverbial in the CT “on arrival of Russian independent major Lukoil” to add more details. The ideational element is presented through the proper noun “Iraq” which stands for party responsible for the negotiations and deals with the Russian companies.

Analysis of report (2):

Example (4):

“The government of Iraq (ST) //has decided to invite Russia's Gazprom into the project to develop the Nasiriyah oil field in the southern part of the country”(R) (n.d., interfax.com , 2024)

This example includes the ST which is formulated of the phrase “the Iraqi Government” representing the party responsible for discission making in the whole negotiations.

Example (5):

“The project to develop the field (CT) is intended to last 20 years, with an option for a five–year extension. (R).” (n.d., interfax.com , 2024)

The clause includes a CT since it begins with the dependent clause “the project to develop the field” to clarify more about the details of the negotiations and what the Iraqi government has decided and planned as far as Al–Nasiriyah oil filed is concerned.

Analysis of report (3):

Example (6):

“The supergiant Nasiriyah oilfield (CT) has an estimated 4.36 billion barrels of reserves in place, but since its discovery in the DhiQar province by the Iraq National Oil Company in 1975 little has been done to develop the oil”. (R) ((Watkinson, 2024))

This example involves CT in “The supergiant Nasiriyah oilfield” and the MT type “but since its discovery in the DhiQar province by the Iraq National oil company” and both constitute constant theme pattern which keeps the text coherent providing further details concerning Nasiriyah oilfield. The modifier “ the supergiant” is a noun used commonly with resources of oil and gaz pointing out extraordinary large reserves. The proper noun “ Nasiriyah” specifies the oilfield upon which the negotiations are taking place. The multiple themes point out the vast quantities of oil produced by Al Nasiriyah oilfield which contributes largely to the global as well as the regional energy production of oil.

Having identified the types of themes (ST, CT, and MT) and the frequency of their cooccurrence, the three metafunctional themes (textual, interpersonal and topical) are examined quantitatively and then interpreted through content analysis. The table below presents the frequency and percentage of thematic structures’ types:

Table (2): Types of thematic structure in economic news reports

Theme types	Frequency	percentage
Topical	114	48.71%
Textual	83	35.47%
Interpersonal	37	15.08%
Total	234	100%

The results of the analysis indicates that the topical theme constitute the highest percentage of all with (48.71%) since this component appears in all sentences followed then by the textual with (35.47%) and the interpersonal one with (15.08%). These results imply thar economic reports include lots of details and more specifically when such reports represent discussions, negotiations, suggestions and furturely plans and agreements. Therefore, the use of the textual components such as the conjunctions (through, though, and, but, the conjunctive adjuncts (as for, as far as) and the relatives all represent details for the recent and previous negotiations as well as the details supported with numbers and percentages. For example, conjunctions and adjuncts such as “through”, “as far as”, “at the time” such devices represent the details with the dates required for the agreement. The interpersonal theme is only used slightly here and there in the reports through the vocatives and the modal since these reports focus on representing factual details rather than judgments. The interpersonal themes are used less; yet, the hold certain details concerning certain dates where issue were set and negotiations were achieved successfully.

C.Analysis and Discussion of Thematic Progression

Thematic progression plays an important role in providing a better understanding of how information is structured. This paper follows Bloor and Bloor (2004) model of thematic progression patterns to identify the structural components and how they are combined in the economic reports selected through cohesive ties. The classification of theme patterns includes simple linear theme, constant theme, split theme, and derived theme. These four types are identified quantitatively in which the frequency and percentage are given in the table below:

Table (3): Patterns of Thematic Progression in economic news reports

Thematic patterns	progression	Frequency	Percentage
Simple linear		134	37.74 %
Constant		120	33.80%
Split		87	24.50%
Derived		14	3.94%
Total		355	100%

The statistical analysis implies the fact that the clauses in economic reports are coherent through the simple linear with (37.74%), constant patterns with (33.80%) and split pattern with (24.50%). The economic reports tend to provide descriptions and details of the negotiations between the Iraqi government and Gazprom to develop Al-Nasiriyah oilfield. Examples are analyzed from the selected economic news reports as follows:

Example (7):

“Gazprom’s oil subsidiary, Gazprom Neft (T1) // is already active in Iraq with a 30% operator stake in the Badra project in the Wasit region in eastern Iraq. Its partners include Korean Gas Corporation (KOGAS) , 22.5 % Malaysia’s Petronas , 15%, and Turkey’s TPAO , 7.5 %”. Gazprom owns more than 95% of shares in Gazprom Net which is developing Badra with its estimated 3 billion bbl in reserves under a 2—year contract agreed in 2010 with ab option Fau a 5 –year extension.” (Szymczak, 2024)

In this example, the constant progression takes place where the themes appear in different utterances with rhemes that carry different information. The theme “Gazprom Neft”, its partners, and Gazprom” are three themes which are related semantically and are set in the form

$$T1-R1/ T2 (=T1)-R2/ T3(=T1)-R3$$

The constant theme in clearly stated in the example since the same theme which is “Gazprom Neft” appears in other utterances providing further details concerning the company and exemplifying that the company has been settled and is working in the southern of Iraq in Badra oilfield. The reference “its” partners which form another constant theme representing Gazprom and its partners the Korean, Malaysian, and Turkish companies work in cooperation with it in Iraq.

Example (8):

“Lukoil’s main asset in Iraq (T1) remains the West Qurna–2 field(R1). It also (T2)holds a 60% operating interest in Block 10 (R2) where the recently discovered Eridu field (T3)is located, (R3)and since March 2023,(T4) has been added to Lukoil’s Iraqi portfolio(R4). Lukoil (T5) holds a 60% operator interest in Block 10 in partnership with Japan’s INPEX Corporation holding a 40% participating share(R5). Block 10(T6) is located in the Di–Kar and Mutanna provinces, 120 km west of Basra, near major fields such as Rumaila and West Qurna” (R6) (Szymczak, 2024)

In this example, the constant pattern and the simple linear are used. The simple linear pattern is used here to show coherent details of information concerning Lukoil company. The themes “T1/ Lukoil” and “T2/ it” represent more details are given concerning the agreements over developing the oilfields. The constant progression is coherent in the form (T1–R1/ T2 (=T1)–R2. The clauses in the same example, are coherent through the simple linear in which the rheme of one clause becomes the theme of the other one as in the rhemes “Block 10, Lukoil” become the theme of the following clause. This pattern takes the form R2=T3, R3=T4, R4=T5.

Example (9):

“Commercial oil shipments from the field(T1) began in August 2014 (R1). The field’s geological oil reserves (T2) are estimated at 3 billion barrels.(R2) The project to develop the field (T3)is intended to last 20 years, with an option for a five–year extension.” (R3) (n.d., interfax.com , 2024)

The example involves split progression in which there are more than one idea. The theme of “commercial oil shipments from the field” is a multiple theme which is formed of the textual and topical themes and these types serve to present good introduction about the main topic. The theme,

here, explains fair enough the details of the oilfield production. The rheme of the first theme which is “began in August 2014” provides the date when the oilfield began its first commercial shipment. Then the second theme begin with the noun phrase “the field’s geological oil reserves” to add further details about the field production and shipment of oil. The rheme “are estimated at 3 billion barrels” gives certain numbers about the estimation of the oilfield production. The third theme which “the project” is a split theme which begins a new idea about the same oilfield pointing out that the project intended to develop the oilfield can have better achievement for twenty years with five years extension.

Example (10):

“Originally, China (T1) had intended on taking the very direct approach to securing all the assets (R1)it (T2)wanted in southern Iraq(R2) that Russia had taken(T3) in 2017 when it had effectively taken control of all of the oil assets in Iraq’s semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan” (R3) (Watkinson, 2024)

Thematic progression in this example is built upon the constant progression pattern in which the theme “China” takes place in many clauses with different utterances and with the different rhemes. The coherence between the clauses represents the details concerning the development of oilfield sectors in the country.

Example (11):

“The Dhi Qar region (T1)includes two of Iraq’s potentially biggest oil fields (R1) – one being Nasiriyah, and the other Gharraf – and China (T2) said (R2) that it (T3) intended to complete the airport by 2024 (R3). This airport project, it announced, (T4)would include the construction of multiple cargo buildings and roads linking the airport to the city’s town center and separately to other key oil areas in southern Iraq.” (R4) (Watkinson, 2024)

In this example the split and the simple linear progression pattern are used providing certain details concerning oil sector in Iraq. The theme “ The Dhi Qar region” is used first to state that information are given about this specific area of Iraq followed by the rheme “ includes two Iraq’s potentially biggest oil fields” provides further information and details through describing them as “the biggest” . Then, the rheme of the first theme gives further new ideas about the oil filed. The use of the noun

“China” preceded by the conjunction “and” to link these details with the previous one, states that China worked in Dhi Qar province and about to complete an airport. The rehem of the second theme “The airport” becomes the theme of the following clause indicating that such airport would be of great importance since it would link “oil areas in the southern of Iraq”. Such details can support the negotiations between the two parties. The example involves many structural devices basically the relative clauses with multiple themes and cohesive devices that links the themes and rhemes together.

7. Conclusions

The results of the study imply that as far as thematic structure is concerned, economic news reports focus on presenting details and facts depending basically on multiple themes which account for the largest percentage in order to draw the readers’ attention towards the topic and its importance. Moreover, the clausal themes are used also with high percentage since they carry more information and direct readers for a better understanding of the text. The topical themes appear always in all sentences. The textual themes constitute high percentage of the economic report more than the interpersonal theme since they have great effect upon the text to be more logical, factual and cohesive. These textual themes are identified through the conjunctive “through”, “and”, “but” and the continuative adjuncts (as far as, as far) in addition to the topical themes identified through the use of proper nouns and the pronoun “it”.

As far as thematic progression is concerned, the simple linear and constant themes are used largely in the economic news reports to create a good sense of comprehension, rhythm and better realization of the topic. The constant themes keep the concession within the details given concerning the negotiations over Al-Nasiriyah oil sector. Multiple theme / Split rhemes are used frequently in economic news reports performing exposition function to elaborate information and add new details to the reports of negotiations to avoid ambiguity.

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