

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. Finding

It is important to point out the sources of the data used in this study in order to fully analyze the findings. The data were obtained from classroom observations and narrative interviews conducted with six participants, referred to as Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), Participant 3 (P3), Participant 4 (P4), Participant 5 (P5), and Participant 6 (P6). The participants were students of the English Education Study Program who were taking the Academic Speaking class. The data were collected through two classroom observation sessions and semi-structured narrative interviews.

a. Constant Thematic Pattern

The observations were conducted in Academic Speaking Class A and Class B to identify the thematic patterns used by students during spoken English classroom interaction. Meanwhile, the interviews were conducted to obtain deeper information regarding students' experiences and challenges in constructing thematic patterns while speaking English. The six participants were given several interview questions designed to explore their understanding and use of thematic patterns in spoken English interaction. The interview questions also aimed to identify the challenges experienced by students during

classroom speaking activities. In order to complete the present study, two research questions needed to be answered. The first research question focused on the types of thematic patterns used by students in English classroom interaction. The second research question focused on the challenges faced by students while constructing thematic patterns during spoken English classroom interaction.

The first observation session (October 9-10, 2025) took place in Class A and Class B, where each student delivered a monologic presentation about their holiday experiences in English. The second observation session (November 27-28, 2025) required students to perform role-plays as actresses in a simulated TV show, involving dialogic interaction. Across both sessions, over 60 students were observed.

1. Thematic Patterns That Students Used in English Classroom Interaction

The six interview participants were selected because they represented the range of speaking activity levels (active, moderate, less active) observed in class. All six confirmed that before the research, they had no knowledge of the term "thematic patterns." However, after being introduced to the concept during the interview process, they were able to identify which patterns they tended to use. Five out of six participants reported that they frequently used the constant thematic pattern, especially when describing people, objects, or personal

experiences. The interview findings indicate that the Constant Theme Pattern is frequently used by participants during spoken English interactions. Participant 1 (P1), who is categorized as an active speaker, explained that they often use this pattern when discussing topics they are already familiar with. They stated, “I tend to use the constant theme pattern. P1, P4, and P6 explained that they frequently used the Constant Theme Pattern by maintaining the same topic while adding new information. They stated that this pattern was easier to apply when discussing familiar topics such as personal experiences, daily activities, family, and close friends. One participant explained:

“I tend to use the constant theme pattern. For example, when I talk about my best friend, I keep repeating the same topic while adding new information.”

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that students often use consistent thematic patterns when discussing familiar topics, such as personal experiences, daily activities, and their close friends and family. The participants showed a tendency to maintain the same topic over several sentences while adding new information related to that topic. These findings suggest that students prefer to use a stable thematic structure because it helps them maintain the flow of communication and organize their ideas more easily during spoken English interactions.

b. Linear Thematic Pattern

All six participants also reported using the linear pattern, particularly when explaining sequences of actions or cause-effect relationships. The

interview findings also indicate that participants frequently used the Linear Theme Pattern when explaining procedures and sequences of events. P2, P3, P4, and P5 reported that they commonly used the Linear Theme Pattern when explaining procedures, tutorials, recipes, or other sequential activities. They explained that each sentence naturally developed from the previous one, making it easier to organize ideas logically. As P2 stated:

“I use the linear pattern when explaining how to make a recipe step by step.”

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that students tend to use a linear thematic pattern when explaining procedures, sequences of actions, or in sequence events. The participants demonstrated that each idea is connected to the next, thereby creating a logical flow of information. These findings suggest that students are able to develop discourse step by step when discussing step-by-step processes or explanatory topics in spoken English interactions.

c. Absence of Other Patterns

No participant reported using split, derived, or encapsulating thematic patterns. When asked whether they had ever used such structures, all six responded negatively. This finding is consistent with the classroom observations, where these more complex patterns were entirely absent. It suggests that students at this level of English proficiency rely on two basic

thematic progressions and have not yet developed the ability to use more sophisticated patterns such as split rhemes or hypertheme-derived structures.

Based on the findings of the interviews above, it can be concluded that the students are not yet accustomed to more complex thematic development patterns. The absence of split, derived, and encapsulating patterns indicates that the students primarily rely on basic thematic structures when interacting in spoken English. These findings also indicate that the students have limited variation in constructing discourse and tend to use simpler thematic development patterns because they are easier to apply during communication.

2. Challenges Faced by Students in Constructing Thematic Patterns

All six participants described multiple challenges when trying to organize their spoken English thematically. Five major challenges emerged from the narrative interviews.

a. Lack of Confidence

Lack of confidence was mentioned by five participants as a primary obstacle. This psychological barrier often prevented them from speaking fluently or even attempting to use varied thematic structures. The participants' narratives reveal that confidence is not merely an affective issue but directly impacts their ability to produce coherent thematic patterns. When students doubt themselves, they tend to either repeat the same simple structures (constant pattern) or avoid speaking.

The interview findings indicate that a lack of self-confidence is one of the challenges most frequently reported by participants during oral English interactions in the classroom. This issue appears to affect not only their willingness to speak but also their ability to coherently organize and develop ideas when constructing thematic patterns. Some participants admitted that they often doubted their own speaking abilities, especially when having to speak in front of classmates or participate in speaking activities in class. P2, P3, P4, and P6 mentioned that lack of confidence was one of the main challenges during classroom speaking activities. They explained that they often hesitated to express their ideas because they were afraid of making mistakes and doubted their speaking ability. As P2 stated:

“The barriers I face are nervousness and a lack of self-confidence.”

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that a lack of self-confidence is one of the most common challenges faced by the participants. Most students expressed doubts about their speaking abilities, especially when communicating in front of their classmates. This situation affects their willingness to express ideas freely and limits their ability to develop the flow of conversation during oral interactions. These findings indicate that self-confidence plays a crucial role in helping students maintain smooth communication and organize their ideas coherently when speaking in English.

b. Limited Grammar and Vocabulary Mastery

All six participants explicitly mentioned grammar and vocabulary as ongoing difficulties. This limitation restricts their ability to vary thematic patterns because they lack the linguistic resources to rephrase or expand ideas. The interview findings indicate that limited mastery of grammar and vocabulary is one of the main challenges participants face when constructing thematic patterns in spoken English interactions. P1, P2, P4, P5, and P6 reported that limited grammar and vocabulary frequently prevented them from expressing their ideas effectively. They explained that these linguistic limitations made it difficult to develop thematic progression smoothly during spoken interaction. One participant stated:

“I'm still not confident with grammar, vocabulary, and fluency.”

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that limited grammar and vocabulary mastery significantly influenced students' ability to construct thematic patterns. The participants frequently reported difficulties in selecting appropriate vocabulary and forming grammatically correct sentences during speaking activities. As a result, students tended to rely on simple and repetitive thematic structures rather than developing more varied patterns. This finding indicates that linguistic competence is closely related to students' ability to organize and expand ideas during spoken English interaction.

c. Nervousness and Anxiety When Speaking

Nervousness was explicitly mentioned by P2, P4, and P5, and implicitly by others who described physical or emotional discomfort during speaking tasks. Further interview findings indicate that nervousness and anxiety while speaking affect participants' ability to organize and develop ideas during oral English interactions. P2, P4, and P5 stated that nervousness frequently occurred during classroom speaking activities, particularly role-plays and presentations. They explained that nervousness affected their concentration and made it more difficult to organize ideas coherently. As P2 explained:

“When doing role-playing in class, I felt nervous, so after finishing I felt like there were many things wrong with my grammar, vocabulary, and fluency.”

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that nervousness and anxiety when speaking are important factors that affect students' oral performance. Some participants reported feeling uncomfortable when speaking in front of the class, particularly during presentations and role-playing activities. These feelings often disrupted their concentration and made it increasingly difficult for them to organize their ideas coherently. These findings suggest that anxiety not only affects speaking fluency but also impacts students' ability to maintain the flow of their discussion throughout their speeches.

d. Fear of Making Mistakes

Fear of error was mentioned by P1, P2, and P6. This fear often leads to hesitation, self-correction, or avoidance of unfamiliar structures. Another challenge identified through the interviews was the participants' fear of making mistakes when speaking English. P1, P2, and P6 acknowledged that fear of making mistakes often caused hesitation when speaking English. They preferred using familiar expressions rather than experimenting with more complex language because they were concerned about making grammatical or vocabulary errors. As P2 stated:

“I'm afraid of making mistakes.”

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that the fear of making mistakes contributes to students' hesitation when interacting in spoken English. Some participants were worried about using incorrect grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation, so they were reluctant to try various ways to express their ideas. As a result, students often preferred to use familiar and simpler structures to avoid potential mistakes. These findings suggest that the fear of negative evaluation can limit students' opportunities to develop more varied and effective thematic patterns.

e. Lack of Prior Knowledge about Thematic Patterns

Strikingly, all six participants stated that they had never heard of "thematic patterns" before the interview.

The interview results showed that none of the participants had any prior knowledge of thematic patterns before participating in this study. All participants (P1–P6) stated that they had never learned about thematic patterns before participating in this study. Although they were unfamiliar with the concept, they were still able to use Constant Theme Pattern and Linear Theme Pattern naturally during spoken English interaction. As P1 stated:

“Before this, I didn't know what a thematic pattern was.”

These findings suggest that students rely more on intuitive language use than on consciously applying thematic development theory when constructing their spoken discourse. This universal lack of explicit knowledge is a critical finding. Despite being in an English Education Study Program, none of the participants had been formally taught about thematic progression. They used constant and linear patterns intuitively or through exposure, not through conscious application. This gap in the curriculum may explain why students do not use more advanced patterns and why they struggle to organize their ideas coherently.

Based on the interview data above, it can be concluded that none of the participants had explicit knowledge of thematic patterns prior to participating in this study. Although the students naturally employed constant and linear thematic patterns during oral interactions, they were unaware of the theoretical concepts underlying these patterns. This finding suggests that thematic development had not been explicitly introduced in their previous learning

experiences. Consequently, the students relied more on intuitive language use than on consciously constructing their discourse through various thematic development strategies.

B. Discussion

This section discusses the research findings and provides a more in-depth interpretation of how students construct thematic patterns during interactions in spoken English language learning in the classroom, as well as the challenges that influence this process. This discussion is important because thematic development is not only related to grammatical structure but also to coherence, discourse organization, classroom interaction, self-confidence, and students' communicative competence.

The discussion is organized into two major sections based on the research questions. The first section discusses the types of thematic patterns used by students in spoken English classroom interaction. The second section discusses the challenges experienced by students while constructing thematic patterns during speaking activities in the classroom.

1. Thematic Patterns Used by Students in Spoken English Classroom Interaction

The first research question in this study aimed to identify the types of thematic patterns used by students during spoken English classroom

interaction. Based on the findings obtained from classroom observations and narrative interviews, the study revealed that students mainly used two types of thematic progression, namely constant theme pattern and linear theme pattern. Meanwhile, the split theme pattern, derived theme pattern, and encapsulating theme pattern were not found in students' spoken interaction.

These findings indicate that students relied heavily on relatively simple thematic structures while communicating in English during classroom activities. Although the students were able to maintain coherence and continue communication, their thematic organization still remained at a basic level. The dominance of constant and linear progression demonstrates that students preferred thematic structures that were easier to manage during real-time spoken interaction.

The findings are important because thematic progression plays a significant role in organizing spoken discourse. Thematic progression helps speakers organize information logically and maintain coherence throughout communication. In spoken English interaction, thematic patterns guide listeners in understanding how ideas develop from one sentence to another. Therefore, the thematic patterns used by students in this study reflect not only their speaking habits but also their ability to organize ideas and maintain coherence during spoken English classroom interaction.

a. Constant Theme Pattern as the Most Dominant Pattern

The results show that during spoken English classroom interactions, students commonly employed the Constant Theme Pattern. When discussing well-known subjects like daily activities, family, and personal experiences, students preferred to stick to the same theme while providing new material through the Rheme. They were able to maintain coherence throughout impromptu communication and arrange ideas more readily thanks to this pattern.

These findings support Halliday & Matthiessen, (2014) They clarify that by repeating the same theme while evolving the rheme, the Constant Theme Pattern preserves thematic continuity. Additionally, because speakers process information in real time. This finding is also consistent with the view of Brown, G., & Yule, (1983) contend that repetition is a regular feature of spoken conversation. As a result, despite their language barriers, students favored this more straightforward thematic approach to successfully convey their thoughts. Another possible explanation for the dominance of consistent developmental patterns is the students' limited linguistic resources. Interview findings indicate that many participants experienced difficulties related to grammar, vocabulary, and self-confidence. These limitations may lead students to rely on familiar thematic structures, which feel safer and easier to manage. When students lack vocabulary or feel uncertain about grammatical accuracy, they often return to

the same theme repeatedly. In this case, constant thematic repetition functions not only as a tool for organizing discourse but also as a compensatory strategy that allows students to continue speaking despite facing linguistic challenges.

The prevalence of these patterns confirms Halliday & Matthiessen, (2014) theory regarding thematic stability and demonstrates how learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) utilize simple thematic structures to support communication. At the same time, these findings highlight the need for broader exposure to various thematic development patterns so that students can develop more flexible and sophisticated discourse organization skills in spoken English.

b. Linear Theme Pattern and Sequential Discourse Development

The results also showed that when describing steps, procedures, or chronological events, students typically employed the Linear Theme Pattern. This design allowed thoughts to flow logically and progressively as the rheme of one clause became the theme of the subsequent clause.

According to Halliday & Matthiessen, (2014), linear progression creates forward-moving discourse because information introduced in one clause becomes the starting point for the next idea. The findings demonstrated that students mainly used linear progression when explaining processes, sequences, or cause-and-effect relationships. For example, students used linear progression while explaining recipes, makeup tutorials, classroom activities, and chronological experiences. This finding indicates that students

were capable of developing ideas sequentially during spoken interaction. Unlike constant progression, which focuses on maintaining one topic, linear progression allows discourse to move gradually from one idea to another. As a result, linear progression creates stronger logical development and more dynamic discourse flow.

These findings support the theory proposed by Taboada & Lavid, (2003), which states that linear thematic development helps speakers organize their ideas more coherently and makes it easier for listeners to follow the flow of information during oral communication. According to Taboada and Lavid, thematic progression contributes significantly to coherence because it guides listeners through the development of information.

This structure naturally aligns with linear development. This finding can also be linked to the concept of transactional communication proposed by Brown & Yule, (1983) they stress that in order for listeners to understand oral communication, concepts must be arranged correctly.

c. Absence of Split Theme, Derived Theme, and Encapsulating Theme Patterns

The results showed that neither classroom observations nor interviews revealed Split Theme, Derived Theme, or Encapsulating Theme Patterns. This suggests that during spoken English conversation, students mostly relied on simpler theme patterns.

The lack of these more intricate patterns implies that pupils lacked the discourse skills necessary to create more intricate topic progression. Rather, they favored well-known patterns that were simpler to generate during impromptu conversation.

According to Halliday & Matthiessen, (2014) split progression occurs when several Rhemes introduced in one clause later become separate Themes. Derived progression occurs when multiple Themes are connected to one broader hyper-theme. Encapsulating progression involves summarizing previous information into a new Theme. These thematic structures require more advanced discourse organization because speakers must manage multiple ideas simultaneously. The absence of these patterns suggests that students' spoken English discourse competence remained at a relatively basic stage. Students were able to maintain topic continuity and sequential explanation, but they had not yet developed the ability to construct more sophisticated discourse organization. Several factors may explain this finding.

According to Halliday & Matthiessen, (2014) emphasize that thematic progression is fundamental for organizing information effectively and maintaining coherence in discourse. However, because students lacked awareness of thematic organization, they relied mainly on intuitive and repetitive structures. Third, the spontaneous nature of spoken interaction may discourage the use of advanced thematic progression.

According to Shockey, (2008) spoken English is produced in real time with limited planning opportunities. Unlike written discourse, speakers cannot easily revise or reorganize their ideas during interaction. Consequently, students tend to use simpler thematic patterns that support immediate communication. Fourth, psychological factors such as anxiety and fear of making mistakes may also discourage experimentation with complex thematic structures. Students who feel nervous are more likely to rely on familiar patterns rather than attempting sophisticated discourse organization.

d. The Influence of Classroom Interaction on Thematic Progression

Another important finding of this study is the relationship between classroom interaction and thematic progression. Classroom interactions greatly influence how students construct spoken discourse during speaking activities. Sinclair and Coulthard's IRF model explains that classroom communication often follows structured interaction patterns involving teacher initiation, student response, and teacher feedback. Within such interactional structures, students may prioritize understandable responses rather than sophisticated discourse organization. The classroom observations showed that speaking tasks strongly shaped thematic progression. Narrative speaking tasks encouraged constant progression because students focused on maintaining one

topic. Procedural tasks encouraged linear progression because students needed to explain sequential actions.

This finding demonstrates that thematic progression is closely related to communication purpose. Different speaking activities encourage different ways of organizing information. The findings also support Sahlender et al., (2024) discussion regarding classroom interaction. According to Sahlender et al., teacher talk and classroom interaction influence students' language production. Teachers' questions and speaking tasks shape how students construct spoken responses. In this study, descriptive questions often triggered constant progression, while explanatory tasks encouraged linear progression. Furthermore, peer interaction also influenced thematic development. During role-play activities, students frequently repeated their partners' lexical choices or Themes in order to maintain conversational flow.

This finding indicates that thematic progression is not constructed individually alone but also collaboratively through interaction. Therefore, thematic progression should be viewed not only as a grammatical issue but also as an interactional phenomenon shaped by classroom communication.

e. The Role of Thematic Progression in Spoken English Coherence

The findings of this study demonstrate that thematic progression plays a crucial role in maintaining coherence during spoken English interaction. Even though students mainly used simple patterns, these structures still helped them organize ideas and continue communication. This finding strongly supports Halliday and Matthiessen's theory that Theme-Rheme organization is fundamental for discourse coherence. Similarly, Taboada & Lavid, (2003) explain that thematic progression guides listeners through the flow of information. The students' speech showed that constant progression helped maintain topic focus, while linear progression supported sequential idea development. Without thematic organization, spoken discourse would become fragmented and difficult to follow. Therefore, thematic progression is an essential component of spoken English competence. However, the findings also indicate that students need greater exposure to varied thematic structures. At present, students rely heavily on constant and linear progression because these patterns are easier to manage during spontaneous interaction. Nevertheless, introducing more advanced thematic progression may help students produce richer and more sophisticated spoken discourse. Explicit teaching about thematic progression may also improve students' awareness of discourse organization. When students understand how Themes and Rhemes function, they may become more capable of organizing information

coherently and flexibly. Overall, the findings indicate that students' spoken English interaction is characterized by functional but limited thematic progression.

Constant and linear progression dominate because they support fluency, coherence, and communication effectiveness within students' current level of English proficiency.

2. Students' Challenges in Constructing Thematic Patterns

The second research question focused on the challenges faced by students while constructing thematic patterns during spoken English classroom interaction. The findings revealed five major challenges experienced by students, namely lack of confidence, limited grammar and vocabulary mastery, nervousness and anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and lack of prior knowledge about thematic progression. These findings indicate that students' difficulties in thematic organization are influenced not only by linguistic competence but also by psychological and environmental factors.

a. Lack of Confidence in Spoken English Interaction

Students' use of thematic patterns was found to be significantly hampered by a lack of confidence. Because they were unsure of their speaking

abilities, students tended to hesitate, repeat concepts, or simplify their statements.

These findings support Harmer, (2001) theory, who explains that a successful speaking performance is mostly dependent on one's level of confidence. While students with lower confidence tend to rely on simpler language structures, individuals with higher confidence are typically more willing to communicate ideas and build conversation. According to M. Takrim, (2020), a supportive learning environment positively influences students' motivation and learning achievement. In this study, students who perceived the classroom environment as supportive tended to speak more actively despite their limitations. Therefore, confidence is not solely an internal psychological factor but is also influenced by classroom interaction and social atmosphere.

b. Limited Grammar and Vocabulary Mastery

Students' capacity to successfully create thematic patterns was also impacted by grammatical and vocabulary constraints. Students were frequently unable to develop their thoughts or create more complex topic progression due to a lack of language resources. This finding strongly supports Mofareh A., (2019) study, who discovered that among the key elements affecting English-speaking ability are grammar and vocabulary. Learners who

are more proficient in language are better able to arrange and develop concepts during spoken communication.

This finding supports Brown, G., & Yule, (1983) definition of speaking, which explains that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning through producing, receiving, and processing information. Brown explains that speaking involves producing, receiving, and processing information simultaneously. When students struggle with vocabulary retrieval or grammar construction, their cognitive processing becomes overloaded. As a result, thematic organization becomes more difficult. Therefore, linguistic competence and thematic progression are closely interconnected. Students cannot easily develop sophisticated discourse organization without adequate grammar and vocabulary mastery.

c. Nervousness and Speaking Anxiety

Students' capacity to maintain coherent spoken speech was impacted by their anxiety and fear of making mistakes. When speaking in front of the class, many participants said they felt nervous, which made them lose concentration and hesitate when sharing their thoughts. These findings are consistent with the research by Trinh & Pham, (2021), who noted that a major obstacle to oral communication is speaking fear. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, worry can also lower language proficiency by impeding learners'

capacity to efficiently process and generate language. According to Sahlender et al., (2024), which explains that students perform better in language learning when they feel relaxed, confident, and free from excessive pressure or anxiety. According to this theory, language acquisition and production become less effective when learners experience high anxiety. A high affective filter blocks learners' ability to process and produce language efficiently. In this study, nervousness reduced students' fluency and limited their thematic development.

Conversely, students reported feeling more comfortable speaking English outside formal classroom situations. This suggests that lower-pressure environments encourage freer communication and greater willingness to express ideas. Therefore, reducing classroom anxiety is important not only for fluency development but also for improving thematic coherence.

d. Fear of Making Mistakes

The results show that students' speaking performance was generally boosted by the classroom setting. Participants said that peer interaction and teacher comments helped them organize thoughts more confidently, and they viewed the classroom environment as supportive. However, because they were under less pressure, many students felt more at ease while speaking outside of the classroom.

These results imply that students are more likely to engage in spoken communication in a supportive learning environment. Students have the chance to gain confidence and enhance the structure of their spoken speech through constructive criticism and positive classroom interactions.

This finding highlights the importance of positive classroom interaction. Classroom interactions play a crucial role in shaping students' communication behaviors during oral English activities. Supportive interaction can lower anxiety and increase students' willingness to participate. Therefore, creating a classroom culture that tolerates mistakes is essential for improving spoken English competence.

f. Lack of Prior Knowledge About Thematic Patterns

The results showed that, prior to taking part in this study, none of the participants (P1–P6) had any prior awareness of theme patterns. During classroom speaking exercises, they instinctively employed Constant Theme Pattern and Linear Theme Pattern, despite their lack of familiarity with the subject. This shows that without knowing the theoretical underpinnings of thematic progression, pupils were able to arrange their thoughts intuitively. This result implies that even in the absence of explicit theoretical training, thematic progression can emerge through consistent speaking practice. On the other hand, teaching speaking classes about thematic patterns can make students more conscious of how ideas are structured, which would help them

create more cohesive and powerful spoken speech. According to Halliday & Matthiessen, (2014), who stress the significance of topic progression in information organization and communication coherence. As a result, students may produce grammatically acceptable sentences but still struggle to maintain coherent spoken interaction. Therefore, integrating thematic progression into speaking instruction may provide important benefits for students' communicative competence.

g. Implications of the Findings

The results of this study help to clarify thematic progression in spoken English classroom interactions by demonstrating that students primarily organized their ideas using the Constant Theme Pattern and the Linear Theme Pattern. According to Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014), which highlights the significance of topic development in preserving coherence and advancing information in speech. Additionally, the study shows that when students have fewer language resources, they are more likely to rely on simpler topic patterns during spontaneous conversation.

Practically speaking, the results indicate that in order to assist students better arrange their thoughts, speaking sessions should include explicit instruction on theme patterns. To help students feel less nervous and more confident, teachers can also offer frequent speaking practice, helpful criticism,

and a positive learning atmosphere. Students may be able to communicate in spoken English more coherently and meaningfully by developing both linguistic competence and discourse awareness.