



Class Learning Goals

By the end of Week4 – Day 1, you should be able to:

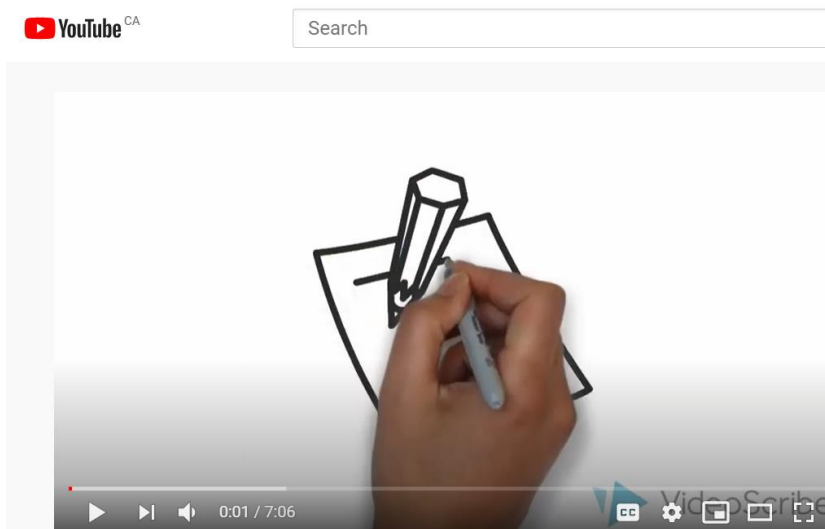
- Describe the importance of the organization metafunction to support information flow in a paragraph.
- Identify theme and rheme on a paragraph.
- Provide feedback to others on their paragraph organization applying principles of information flow and organization studied in this lesson.



Pre-Task 6.1: Video mini-lesson and quiz

Watch the following video and take careful notes. You will need them to complete the quiz that follows.

Video lesson available at the following Youtube link:



(The quiz is not included in this sample lesson, but can be shared upon request)



Asynchronous Session

This Tuesday, you will work asynchronously with your classmates to do the following:

Task 6. 2: Video Lecture. Watch the following video making sure that you take notes, pause and repeat as needed as you watch.

Video lesson available at the following Youtube link:



Task 6.3: Discussion.

Read the following two texts and break them down into theme & rheme using the chart provided in the attachment at the bottom of this task description.

Text 1

Cassava is the staple food of millions of people in Africa, Asia and Central America. It has a tuberous root that can be boiled and mashed to produce a flour. Cassava consists almost entirely of starch, and it is low in protein. Some cassava varieties develop a high prussic acid content and they become extremely poisonous to people and livestock. Large amounts of this root eaten during pregnancy may cause deformities in the developing fetus.



Text 2

A study identified high-risk drinking water sources that were being used by residents during the 2015 typhoid outbreak in Kampala, Uganda. Unregulated vended water sources, specifically single-use kaveras* and refilled water bottles sold in markets and on the street, were of poor quality and they may have contributed to disease transmission during the outbreak. A sample of 25 kaveras was analyzed during this study. A total of 15 (60%) kaveras contained detectable E. coli, with two (8%) containing E. coli at concentrations 100 MPN/100 ml.¹

**Kavera* is a Ugandan name for a plastic bag that holds liquid.

Once your analysis is ready, use it as a basis to respond to the following questions:

Text 1

- Has the writer of text 1 been careful to use “themes” to reiterate ideas previously mentioned in the text?
- If yes, what is the message/idea that is reiterated in the text?
- If not, how should the writer revise this text?

Questions for Text 2:

- In text 2, the first rheme focuses on “drinking water sources”. Does the writer use other words (metonyms, hyponyms or synonyms) or phrases to refer back to “drinking water sources”?
- Do you think that the writer used the rheme to introduce new information?
- If yes, provide two examples of new information in rheme position in Text 2, adding the number of the clause and the information contained.
- If not, provide an example of a rheme that does not contain new information.

Submit this task as an assignment on this discussion board. You will have 48 hours to post your response (submission period: from Tuesday, September 29 to Thursday October 1, before 10 pm, Pacific Daylight Time).

After that deadline, you will have two additional 48 hours to read the responses of **three of your classmates**. Notice if your responses are similar or different to theirs. Write a comment as a reply to each of your 3 classmates’ messages. In your reply, explain whether you agree or disagree with their responses and why. Be kind in your response (avoid expressing criticism in an offensive manner), but do not be afraid of pointing out possible

¹ Texts adapted from teaching materials created by Dr. Alfredo Ferreira
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misunderstandings or different points of view (submission period for the reply: from October 1 (10 pm) to October 3 (before 10 pm)).

When you choose classmates to respond to their posts, pick someone who has not received a reply yet, if possible. In that way, everybody will have someone to respond to their message.

Task 6.4: With your teammate, you will analyze the Assignment 1 Draft that you wrote during the last weekend. You will use the same chart used in Task 6.3 (Discussion) to analyze the theme/rheme structure of your paragraph and decide how well the information flows. If you find that the organization of the text is not ideal, you will have the opportunity to revise it before the deadline. Use the same One Drive collaborative document that you used last week to do this task. You do not need to submit this analysis on Canvas.



Post -Task 6.5. Reading: Theme Patterns

Theme Patterns

English academic audiences are used to read texts with highly abstract and sophisticated content. However, these readers expect that the complex scientific information they access will be organized in the most direct and simple manner possible. This predictable and fluid organization is meant to liberate the readers' brain from unnecessary efforts, so that they can focus their cognitive energy on the complexity of the concepts being communicated.

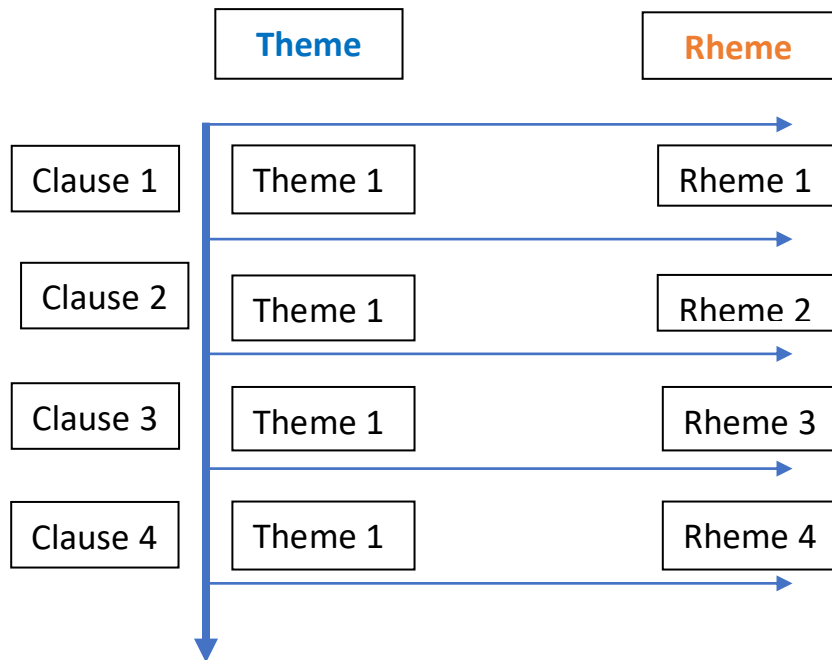
In the previous video lesson, you have learned that within a paragraph, clauses are organized in two related components: theme and rheme. The first one introduces the topic and the focus of the clause. The second component brings up new information related to the clause topic and moves the conversation forward.

In English, theme and rheme can be combined following different predictable organization patterns that we will call "theme patterns". In this course, we will consider how three basic theme patterns and their possible hybrid combinations are used by academic writers to facilitate information flow, depending on the purpose of the communication. The three patterns that we will describe in this lesson are the *reiterative*, the *derived* and the *zig-zag* patterns.



Reiterative Pattern

The first theme pattern that we will consider is organized in the following manner.



As you can notice, in this pattern, all the clauses begin reiterating the same theme, while the rheme introduces something new in relation to that theme. In each clause the rheme is different. See an example of a text that was written following this “**Reiterative Pattern**” below:

The Burj Khalifa: The tallest building of the world

The **Burj Khalifa** is a skyscraper in Dubai, one of the most prosperous cities in the United Arab Emirates. This building is considered the world’s tallest structure with a height of 829.8 m, including the tip. The Burj Khalifa features 163 floors that serve different functions, (e.g., a hotel, office space, residence, and maintenance). The tower was designed by the American architect Adrian Smith and named after Sheik Khalifa, the current president of the country.

Transferred into a theme/rheme table, the text would look like this:



THEME		RHEME
The Burj Khalifa (theme 1)	→	is a skyscraper in Dubai, one of the most prosperous cities in the United Arab Emirates. (rheme 1)
This building (theme 1)	→	is considered the world's tallest structure with a height of 829.8 m, including the tip. (rheme 2)
The Burj Khalifa (theme 1)	→	features 163 floors that serve different functions, (e.g., a hotel, office space, residence, and maintenance). (rheme 3)
The tower (theme 1)	→	was designed by the American architect Adrian Smith and named after Sheik Khalifa, the current president of the country. (rheme 4)

In this pattern, all the clauses share the same theme, but the text is not entirely repetitive for two reasons:

- 1) The theme is sometimes reiterated using a superordinate term (e.g., the building, the tower) to make the text more varied and interesting.
- 2) The new information in the rheme adds interest to the text, expanding in each clause what we know about the topic.

Since the first theme is the one that is revisited over and over in the text (the building), it is not surprising that the title of the text focuses on that controlling idea.

Derived Pattern

This pattern proceeds by highlighting a piece of information introduced in the first rheme, which is reiterated in all the subsequent themes. An example of such organization is provided below:



SOM: An outstanding architectural firm

The world’s tallest structure, The **Burj Khalifa** in Dubai, was designed by a global architectural firm named Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM). The company was founded in Chicago in the early decades of the twentieth century. SOM is responsible for the design of multiple state of the art skyscrapers such the Sears tower in Chicago and the One World Trade Center in New York City. The firm is regarded as one of the most influential engineering and architectural corporations in the world.

The following diagram demonstrates how the information flows in this pattern.

THEME		RHEME
The world’s largest structure, Burj Khalifa in Dubai		was designed by a global architectural firm named Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM)
The company		was founded in Chicago in the early decades of the XX th century
SOM		is responsible for the design of multiple state of the art skyscrapers such the Sears tower in Chicago and the One World Trace Center in New York city
The firm		is regarded as one of the most influential engineering and architectural corporations in the world.

Observe that as in the reiterative pattern, the derived pattern reiterates the same idea by using words that could be synonyms or superordinate terms of the idea introduced in rheme 1.

Accordingly, the title of the text has been crafted to highlight this controlling idea introduced in the first rheme. Therefore, the difference between the two patterns is the place in the first clause where the reiterated idea is first introduced (in the theme or in the rheme).

Because these two patterns do a good job reiterating and expanding information on a controlling idea, they are usually suitable for descriptions. In Assignment 1, the first paragraph will feature a description of a key term related to a figure or table. Therefore, using the derived or the reiterative patterns to organize your paragraph is recommended.



The Zig-Zag pattern

This pattern is more varied because each theme takes up a new topic that was previously introduced in the prior rheme. An example of a text organized with a zig-zag pattern is provided below:

An efficient structural system

The Burj Khalifa uses a structural designed known as the bundle tube design. This design consists of a series of narrow steel tubes clustered in columns. The multi-tubular composition of the column helps to limit the natural sway of the wind on tall structures through the support provided by multiple vertical tubes set side by side. This support increases the lateral rigidity of buildings that are at least 75 meters tall or higher. At such height, the bundle tube design becomes cost effective because it reduces the amount of steel needed to support the structure

Conjunction	THEME	RHEME
	The Burj Khalifa	uses a structural designed known as the bundle tube design .
	This design	consists of a series of narrow steel tubes clustered in columns
	The multi-tubular composition of the column	helps to limit the natural sway of the wind on tall structures through the support provided by multiple vertical tubes set side by side .
	This support	increases the lateral rigidity of buildings that are at least 75 meters tall or higher .
	At such height, the bundle tube design	Becomes cost effective
because	it	reduces the amount of steel needed to sustain the structure.

This theme pattern is more dynamic and flows particularly well for explanations that require the reader to make connections of cause and effect. You will learn more about explanations in an upcoming lesson.

Post-Task:

Go back to the two text you analyzed for Task 6.3 (Discussion) and consider what theme patterns the writers used to organize those texts.

Texts adapted from: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/bundled-tube-system>

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