

**A TOPICAL STRUCTURE ANALYSIS IN ESSAYS WRITTEN BY THIRD-
YEAR ENGLISH MAJORS AT SRINAKHARINWIROT UNIVERSITY**

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

MISS APINYA BUACOMECOTE

**Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Education degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University**

May 2003

๘๘๘.๒๓
๒๐๖๖๕
๕.๓

การใช้แก่นประโยคในเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษของนิสิตชั้นปีที่ 3 วิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษ
มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

นางสาวอภิญญา บัวคำโคตร

10 ต.ค. 2546

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาการศึกษามหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ

พฤษภาคม 2546

๕๓ ๘๒๖๙๗๕

อภิญา บัวคำโคตร (2546). การศึกษาการใช้แก่นประโยคในเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษของ
นิสิตชั้นปีที่ 3 วิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ. สารนิพนธ์
กศ.ม. (ภาษาอังกฤษ). กรุงเทพฯ: บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ.
คณะกรรมการควบคุม: ผศ.ดร.ทิพา เทพอัครพงศ์, ดร.นิตยา สุขเสวีทรัพย์,
Mr.Gregory Jones.

งานวิจัยฉบับนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษาลักษณะการใช้แก่นประโยคและเพื่อวิเคราะห์
ความแตกต่างของการใช้แก่นประโยคในเรียงความภาษาอังกฤษของนิสิตปริญญาตรีชั้นปีที่ 3
วิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ศึกษาคือเรียงความ
ภาษาอังกฤษจำนวน 15 ฉบับ ซึ่งแบ่งออกเป็นสามกลุ่ม คือ กลุ่มคะแนนสูง ปานกลางและต่ำ
กลุ่มตัวอย่างแต่ละกลุ่มนั้นได้จากการสุ่มแบบเจาะจงจากระดับคะแนนสูงที่สุด 5 ฉบับ ระดับ
คะแนนปานกลาง 5 ฉบับและระดับคะแนนต่ำที่สุดอีก 5 ฉบับจากจำนวนเรียงความทั้งหมด 56
ฉบับ จากนั้นทำการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยใช้ทฤษฎีการวิเคราะห์โครงสร้างแก่นประโยค (Topical
Structure Analysis) ของ Lautamatti (1978) แล้วจึงนำผลที่ได้มาวิเคราะห์หาความแตกต่าง
ของการใช้แก่นประโยคระหว่างกลุ่มคะแนนสูง ปานกลางและต่ำ โดยใช้สถิติไคสแคว์ ผลการ
ศึกษาพบว่านิสิตที่ได้คะแนนสูงและปานกลางใช้รูปแบบแก่นประโยคเหมือนกัน คือใช้แก่น
ประโยคแบบ Parallel Progression มากที่สุด รองลงมาคือแบบ Extended Parallel
Progression และใช้แบบ Sequential Progression น้อยที่สุด ส่วนนิสิตกลุ่มที่ได้คะแนนต่ำนั้น
มักใช้แก่นประโยคแตกต่างไปจากสองกลุ่มแรก คือใช้แก่นประโยคแบบ Parallel Progression
มากที่สุด แต่ใช้แบบ Sequential Progression เท่ากันกับแบบ Extended Parallel
Progression ผลการวิเคราะห์ความแตกต่างโดยใช้สถิติพบว่าลักษณะการใช้แก่นประโยคใน
เรียงความของนิสิตทั้งสามกลุ่มแตกต่างกันอย่างไม่มีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ

**A TOPICAL STRUCTURE ANALYSIS IN ESSAYS WRITTEN BY THIRD-
YEAR ENGLISH MAJORS AT SRINAKHARINWIROT UNIVERSITY**

AN ABSTRACT

BY

MISS APINYA BUACOME COTE

**Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Education degree in English
at Srinakharinwirot University**

May 2003

Apinya Buacomecote. (2003). *A Topical Structure Analysis in Essays Written by Third-Year English Majors at Srinakharinwirot University*. A Master's Project, M. Ed. (English). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Advisor Committee: Asst. Prof. Dr. Tipa Thep-Ackrapong, Dr. Nitaya Suksaeresup, Mr. Gregory Jones.

The study analyzed the topical structure occurring in three sample groups of essay quality-- high, middle, and low, written by third-year English majors at Srinakharinwirot University, and it examined the different patterns of topical structure used by those students. Lautamatti (1978)'s theory of Topical Structure Analysis was adopted for the analysis. The patterns frequently used in the three groups were statistically compared using the Chi-square Test. The results showed that the writers of high and middle-rated essays employed similar patterns where the most frequently used pattern was parallel progression, followed by extended parallel progression, and the least used was sequential progression. However, the low-rated essays produced different findings. Here, parallel progression was most frequently used while sequential progression and extended parallel progression occurred at a similar, lower frequency. The above differences were, however, not great and statistical analysis showed them to be insignificant.

The Master Project's Committee and Oral Defense Committee have approved this master's project as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Education degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University

Master's Project Advisor

Tipa Thep-Ackrapong.....

(Asst. Prof. Dr.Tipa Thep-Ackrapong)

Chair of the Master of Education degree in English

Penny Disakaprakai.....

(Asst. Prof. Penny Disakaprakai)

Oral Defense Committee

Tipa Thep-Ackrapong.....

Chair

(Asst. Prof. Dr.Tipa Thep-Ackrapong)

Nitaya Suksaeresup.....

Reader

(Dr.Nitaya Suksaeresup)

Gregory Jones.....

Reader

(Mr.Gregory Jones)

This master's project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Education degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University.

Supha Panjaroen..... Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

(Assoc. Prof. Supha Panjaroen)

8 May 2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to Asst. Prof. Dr. Tipa Thep-Ackrapong for her advice, encouragement and support. This research would not have been possible without her patient, wise guidance and mentorship.

My thanks also go to Dr. Nittaya Suksearesup and Mr. Gregory Jones for providing valuable advice, comments and the benefit of their reflections on the study, and furthermore for serving on the master's project committee. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with them.

I am appreciative of the efforts of Ms. Intira Jarujinda and Mr. Apichai Rung-ruang, who have contributed to be the raters for this study. Without their assistance, this study would still be unfinished.

I will forever be grateful to Asst. Prof. Penny Disakaprakai for being such a wonderful mentor these past few years. Also, I thank my friends who are all lovely classmates and collaborators.

I am deeply indebted to my father, who has always been supportive of my education and to my beloved mother, who had always been a profound inspiration to me, but I regret she could no longer accompany me on this most significant step of my education journey. Lastly, I thank my brother and sisters for their love, support and encouragement.

Apinya Buacomecote

May 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1 INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Objectives of the Study.....	3
Null Hypothesis.....	3
Significance of the Study.....	3
Scope of the Study	4
Definition of Terms	4
2 REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE	6
Topical Structure Analysis.....	6
Previous Research Related to Topical Structure Analysis.....	11
3 METHODOLOGY.....	16
Informants of the Study	16
Procedures	16
Data Collection.....	16
Data Analysis.....	16
4 FINDINGS.....	21
5 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION	57
Conclusion of the Findings	57
Discussion	58
Limitations of the Study.....	62
Suggestions for Further Studies	62

TABLE OF THE CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

Chapter	Page
REFERENCES	63
APPENDICES	66
VISTA	91

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1	Sample of the Highly Scored Essay with Its Topical Structure Diagram..... 9
2	A Correlation of Scores Rated by the Two Raters..... 17
3	Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 1..... 22
4	Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 2..... 24
5	Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 3..... 25
6	Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 4..... 27
7	Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 5..... 29
8	A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essays 31
9	Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 1..... 34
10	Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 2..... 35
11	Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 3..... 36
12	Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 4..... 37
13	Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 5..... 38
14	A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essays..... 40
15	Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 1..... 42
16	Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 2..... 44
17	Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 3..... 46
18	Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 4..... 47
19	Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 5..... 48

LIST OF TABLES (CONTINUED)

Table		Page
20	A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essays	50
21	A Comparison of Patterns of Topical Structure in All Essays.....	53
22	The Chi-Square Tests.....	56

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essays	33
2	A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essays.....	41
3	A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essays	52
4	A Comparison of Patterns of Topical Structure in All Essays.....	55

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Learning to write effectively is a difficult task, especially for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) and learners of English as a second language (ESL). These learners have to cope with difficulties in several areas, such as vocabulary, grammar, sentence structures, etc. Moreover, in writing they may not know how to generate ideas, organize sequences of ideas and make their writing coherent.

To deal with those difficulties, many researchers have examined these problems students encounter in their writing. Not surprisingly, problems with coherence in written work produced by EFL and ESL learners has become an area of academic focus in recent studies. Many studies have been designed to find models to analyze coherence in written work. One significant model is proposed by Lautamatti (1978), who developed her 'Topical Structure Analysis' (henceforth TSA) to describe coherence in texts by focusing on the semantic relationships that exist between sentence topics and the discourse topic of the text. She suggests that in applying the TSA to pieces of writing, readers, in the first instance, should be able to sift-out coherence problems more effectively and writers themselves should be able to write more clearly and with greater lucidity. The TSA has, therefore, been widely used in a number of studies to analyze coherence in texts, and especially so in regard to essays written by both EFL and ESL learners in schools and tertiary institutions.

For example, Witte (1983a) applied the TSA to analyze English compositions written by EFL university students. After initial rating assessments the compositions were classified into two categories, high and low quality. Significant differences were found between the low-rated and high-rated essays in the frequency of occurrence of particular topical structures. Significantly, he found that the high quality essays, whilst being generally longer nevertheless still covered fewer topics than the low quality essays. He also found that the high quality essays had more topical cohesion in the form of parallel progression, while the low quality essays did not include this type of topical progression.

Moreover, in the context of ESL, Connor and Farmer (1990) examined the effects of teaching the TSA as a revision strategy to two groups of students in an intermediate and an advanced level writing class at Indiana University in Indianapolis, USA. The students first analyzed sample texts using the TSA and then, when familiar with the theory and methodology, they went on to revise their own essays. The results were most impressive. Connor and Farmer (1990) suggested that the explanation lay in the fact that the TSA adequately accommodated both the global and local dimensions of the coherence of the texts and thereto proved to be an effective tool for analysis.

In brief, both Witte (1983a) and Connor and Farmer (1990) have shown that the TSA is a valid and valuable model to analyze coherence in texts, and a fair predictor of writing quality of EFL and ESL learners. As a follow-on, the main purpose of this research was to analyze patterns of topical structure appearing in three categories of student writing (rated High, Medium, Low) by third year major EFL learners at Srinakharinwirot University (henceforth SWU).

Objectives

This study endeavored to answer the following research questions:

1. Specifically, what patterns of topical structure appeared in the high, middle and low-rated essays produced by the above informants?
2. Were there any significant differences in the use of these particular topical structure patterns found in the high, middle and low-rated essays?

Null Hypothesis

The patterns of topical structure used by third-year English majors in the high, middle and low rated essays proved not to be different.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study were beneficial for the following reasons:

1. They revealed the specific patterns of topical structure used by the informants.
2. They revealed the significant difference among the patterns of topical structure in the high, middle and low-rated essays.

An awareness of these patterns and their occurrence patterns can help both students and writing instructors analyze essays more critically and effectively in terms of coherence and can, therefore, be used to substantially improve learning and teaching.

Scope of the Study

The study proceeded according to the following methodology:

1. Fifteen sample essays were analyzed, taken at random from a batch of 56, and all written on the subject 'The Person I Love Most' by third-year English majors at SWU. The rating of the essays leading to their classification into the five highest rated, the five middle rated and the five lowest rated was conducted by two qualified English teachers using the Jacob, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel and Hughey (1981)'s ESL Composition Profile. (The profile is included in the appendices.)

2. A 'T-unit Analysis' (Hunt, 1965.; Gaeis, 1980.; Polo, 1997) was applied to divide the essays into t-units

3. The Lautamatti TSA (1978) was applied to elicit patterns of topical structure appearing in the essays.

Definitions of Terms

1. 'A t-unit' is an independent clause, and all its dependent clauses. (Hunt, 1965). For example:

I like to eat mangoes. (1 t-unit)

I am having dinner, when my sister arrives home. (1 t-units)

2. 'Topical Structure Analysis' refers to that model (discussed above) as developed by Lautamatti (1978) i.e. that model used to describe coherence in texts and focusing on the semantic relationships that exist between sentence topics and the overall discourse topic. The model is used to examine how topics repeat, shift and return to earlier topics in discourse.

3. 'Topic' is the main idea of a sentence which is related to the discourse topic. The topic can be expressed by using a noun, noun phrase or pronoun and can appear either at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the sentences. (Lautamatti 1978).

4. 'Parallel progression (PP)' refers to a sentence topic which is semantically identical (Lautamatti, 1978). For example:

(t-unit 1) My mother is good at cooking. (t-unit 2) She likes to cook spaghetti.

The sentence topic in t-unit 2, 'She', refers to the words, 'My mother' in t-unit 1. The use of subject repetition using subsequent referential pronouns is thus called parallel progression.

5. 'Sequential progression (SP)' refers to new sentence topics which are different from previous sentence topics or the comment of the earlier sentence which becomes the topic of the next sentence (Lautamatti, 1978). For example:

(t-unit 1) I love my mother. (t-unit 2) She is very kind.

The comment, my mother in t-unit 1 become the topic, She, of the next t-unit.

6. 'Extended parallel progression (EPP)' refers to the sentence topic which is temporarily interrupted by a sequential progression (Lautamatti, 1978). For example:

(t-unit 1) Chocolate is my favorite sweet. (t-unit 2) Besides, I love candies which my parents always buy for me. (t-unit 3) However, chocolate is a sweet that I like more than candies.

The sentence topic chocolate in the last t-unit is called extended parallel progression because it returns to the same sentence topic that places in the beginning of the text.

7. 'Discourse topic' in this research refers to "The Person I Love Most."

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the TSA (Lautamatti, 1978) and research involving the TSA are reviewed to provide some background to the current study.

Topical Structure Analysis (TSA)

A strategy to determine effective discourse coherence which has recently come to light is the TSA. The model was originally developed in 1978 by Liisa Lautamatti, a Finnish text linguist who drew on the theory of ‘theme’ and ‘rheme’ or ‘topic’ and ‘comment’ of the Prague school of linguistics. The TSA was used by Lautamatti (1978) to describe coherence in texts. She states that the model focusing on the semantic relationships that exist between sentence topics and the discourse topic as meaning is progressively built.

According to her theory, the topic is the main idea of the sentence which has a relation to a discourse topic. It can be expressed by using a noun, noun phrase or pronoun and can appear either at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the sentences. For example:

(t-unit 1) “Biologists suggest that newborn children are completely helpless” (Lautamatti, 1978: 89).

In the above t-unit, the underlined topic, newborn children, is placed in the middle, while in the following example, the topic, young animals, appears at the beginning of the t-unit.

(t-unit 1) "Young animals learn very quickly to look after themselves"
(Lautamatti, 1978: 89).

Lautamatti (1978) suggests that in order to identify a sentence topic, a knowledge of the arrangement of information within the sentence according to the theory of 'topic and comment' is needed. 'Topic' is the main idea expressed in the sentence (what the sentence is essentially about), while 'comment' is what is being said about the topic. For example:

(t-unit 1) The farmer went out to feed his horse.

The farmer is considered the topic and went out to feed his horses, is called the comment.

As mentioned earlier, the concepts of 'topic' and 'comment' are crucial elements in Lautamatti(1987)'s theory. The TSA can be used to examine how topics repeat, shift and return to earlier topics in discourse. Lautamatti (1987) explains that coherence in texts can be charted using a system of three different kinds of progression: parallel progression, sequential progression and extended parallel progression.

In parallel progression, the sentence topics are semantically identical. That is, two or more consecutive sentences share the same topic. For example:

(t-unit 1) Chocolates are a national craving. (t-unit 2) Records show they are sold in huge quantities -- 11.2 pounds per capita per year. (t-unit 3) Designer chocolates often sell for nearly \$30/lb. (t-unit 4) It is obvious that these candies are America's number one choice.

(Conner & Farmer, 1990:131)

The sentence topics in t-unit 2, they, t-unit 3, Designer chocolates and t-unit 4, these candies, refer to the word Chocolates in t-unit 1. The use of word repetition to refer to the same topic is here called the parallel progression.

In sequential progression, the sentence topic is always different from the previous sentence, or the comment of the previous sentence becomes the topic of the next sentence. For example:

(t-unit 1) Computer interviews are used by market researchers to assess product demand. (t-unit 2) Using these, many different products are analyzed. (t-unit 3) For example, people may be asked about detergents.

(Conner & Farmer, 1990:131)

The topics from t-unit 1-3 constitute a sequential progression because the topic of each is different. In t-unit 1 the comment, product becomes the topic, products, of t-unit 2. However, the new topic, detergents, in t-unit 3 is also considered the sequential progression.

In extended parallel progression, a parallel progression may be temporarily interrupted by a sequential progression. For example:

(t-unit 1) Moving in to a dorm is like driving a car for the first time in which you are the only one behind the wheel. (t-unit 2) Though mom and dad are only a phone call away and are paying most of the bills, I am the final one deciding where my college career will lead. (t-unit 3) College, as well as dorm life, in general, is only going to be as pleasurable as I make it. (t-unit 4) I learn and grow in many ways everyday.

(Conner & Farmer, 1990: 132)

The sentence topic I in the last t-unit shows the extended parallel progression because it returns to the same sentence topic that occurs earlier in t-unit 2.

To model topical development in text, Lautamatti (1978) recommends drawing a diagram of the different topical progressions. The diagram can be drawn by placing the topics with parallel progression below each other, indenting the sequential topics and aligning the extended parallel topic under the parallel progression to which it refers. The following sample essay is provided to highlight these three types of thematic progression. Underlying is used to signal sentence topics.

Table 1 Sample of the Highly Scored Essay with Its Topical Structure Diagram

(t-unit 1) There often exists in our society a certain dichotomy of art and science. (t-unit 2) Supporters of either disciplines sometimes are of the opinion that one is more valuable to society than the other. (t-unit 3) But is this a fair judgment to make? (t-unit 4) Should a judgment be made at all? (t-unit 5) I believe that art and science sustain and support each other. (t-unit 6) The developments and knowledge we gain from science can be used to give us a better understanding of our art forms and even improve existing styles and techniques. (t-unit 7) On the other hand, art in its continuous search for new ways to express beauty, often provides the impetus and support for scientific research. (t-unit 8) An example of a discipline where art and science interact is architecture. (t-unit 9) The architectural discipline makes use of forms, shapes, lines, and other aesthetic components of art. (t-unit 10) It also involves principles of physics, engineering, and understanding of chemistry in order to build a sound structure and design. (t-unit 11) Where will society be without the structures and buildings produced from the interplay of art and science? (t-unit 12) Gymnastics is also a good example of such an interplay. (t-unit 13) Gymnasts strive to perfect the beauty of human form and grace. (t-unit 14) However, this will not be possible without some understanding of biology, physics, or physiology. (t-unit 15) The examples are endless. (t-unit 16) Even art forms which many consider "pure" would not have advanced without science. (t-unit 17) Painting benefits from chemistry, (t-unit 18) theater benefits from breakthroughs in acoustics, (t-unit 19) and the list goes on. (t-unit 20) Einstein himself was a lover of many art forms. (t-unit 21) Science and art are both integral and inseparable products of society. (t-unit 22) They come from the same harmonious body of universal knowledge. (t-unit 23) Both are of tremendous and equal value to humankind.

Table 1 (continued)

t-unit 1.	a certain dichotomy
t-unit 2.	supporters
t-unit 3.	a fair judgment
t-unit 4.	a judgment
t-unit 5.	art and science
t-unit 6.	the developments and knowledge
t-unit 7.	art
t-unit 8.	a discipline
t-unit 9.	the architectural discipline
t-unit 10.	it
t-unit 11.	society
t-unit 12.	gymnastics
t-unit 13.	gymnasts
t-unit 14.	some understanding
t-unit 15.	the examples
t-unit 16.	art forms
t-unit 17.	paintings
t-unit 18.	theater
t-unit 19.	the list
t-unit 20.	Einstein
t-unit 21.	science and art
t-unit 22.	they
t-unit 23.	both

Source: Schneider, M., & Connor, U. (1990). Analyzing topical structure in ESL essays: Not all topics are equal. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. 12, 420.

In table 1, the parallel progressions appear in t-units 1, 4, 9-10 and 22-23. The sequential progressions are indented in t-units 2, 3, 5-7 and 11-20. The extended parallel progression in t-unit 21 is aligned under the topic, art and science, which placed nearly at the beginning of the text.

In short, the theory of the TSA was originally developed by Lautamatti (1978) to describe coherence in text. The coherence of the text can be charted using the three types of topical progression: parallel, sequential and extended parallel progression. Using this system, Lautamatti (1978) claims that topical structure

analysis can be used to make texts meaningful because the topical development helps relate the discourse topic to its sub-topics.

Previous Research Related to Topical Structure Analysis

The TSA is widely used by many researchers to analyze coherence in English texts. It is also applied to essays written by EFL and ESL students.

Lautamatti (1978) adopted the TSA to analyze topical development in written discourse. She compared the original text to its simplified versions that students had been requested to write and attempted to see how the writing topics were developed. The results showed that the simplified texts had fewer sub-topics than the original text. In regards to the simplified versions, there was a slight increase in the use of parallel progression, while the use of extended parallel progression showed little change.

In studying the textual stimulus for revision, Witte (1983b) asked 80 native English students at university level to revise an expository paragraph entitled 'Language and Community.' They were told that they were conducting their revisions for a college educated audience and had 40 minutes to finish the task. Then the revised passages were rated by four raters from different occupational backgrounds. Ratings for the revisions were tallied and then divided into two groups: the high and the low-rated essays. Forty-four pieces were randomly sequenced and kept for a month. (No reason is given in the research as to why this one month waiting period was adhered to.) Then, the TSA was applied to the revisions. To do so, Witte analyzed the revisions according to six criteria: number of words, number of t-units, number of clauses, number of sentence topics, number of parallel, sequential

and extended parallel progressions and number of t-units in each type of topical progression. Then the two groups of texts were statistically compared. The results indicated that the two sets of revisions differed significantly in respect of these criteria. Regarding topical progression, Witte (1983b) noted that the writers of the original text and the writers of the high-scored revisions maintained a consistent and clear focus on the most important sentence topics. They developed the topics by using parallel and extended parallel progressions more frequently while the writers of the low-scored revision tended to remain restricted to the use of sequential progression. The low-scoring group did not seem to recognize what the important sentence topics were and what the discourse topic was.

Moreover, Connor and Farmer (1990) examined the effects of instruction in respect of students using the TSA as a revision strategy to check coherence in their own writing. Participants were ESL students in intermediate and advanced-level writing classes at Indiana University in Indianapolis. The study was divided into four steps:

1. The students were asked to number the sentences in their passages.
2. They then highlighted the topic in each sentence.
3. They then drew diagrams of the passage.
4. They then checked for the coherence of ideas of the passage and made changes accordingly.

Connor and Farmer found that teaching the TSA to students by having them revise their first drafts had positive results in that their writing markedly improved. They recommended that the TSA was most useful for helping students to focus on the meaning of individual sentences and their interrelations; students became careful and

critical readers of their own writing. They further claimed that the TSA could be used as a tool to analyze coherence in texts as well as a revision strategy for a writing classroom.

Similarly, in intermediate and advanced level writing classes at Indiana University, Connor (1990) used the TSA to teach students to revise for coherence in their writing. The process used in this study was the same as her former study with Farmer. She found the TSA to be a useful revision technique because it encouraged students to consider the text as a whole and allowed them to make better judgments for themselves regarding the relative coherence of their writing.

Schneider and Conner (1991) applied the TSA to a sample of essays written for the TOEFL's Test of Written English and found that the TSA correlated well with reader's judgments of writing quality. The results of the study showed that more highly rated essays had a high proportion of sequential progression and an extended parallel progression, and this constantly helped pull the essay back to its discourse topic. Schneider and Connor considered the applicability of TSA in text analysis of coherence. They concluded that the TSA offered a productive approach to text analysis in composition research.

Recently, Simpson (2000) studied 40 paragraphs written by academics either in English or Spanish appearing in humanities academic journals. Writing samples in both languages were found, as one would expect, to be very focused, precise and disciplined. However, the physical structure of their writing i.e. simple counts of the number of words, number of sentences, number of word per sentence, number of clauses and number of clauses per sentence and their topical structure were found to be quite different. In accordance to their physical structures, the total number of

words and the number of sentences in English was much greater than in Spanish, but these two languages held the average number of words per sentence. There were more clauses in the English paragraphs but they had a lower number of clauses per sentence comparing to the Spanish paragraphs. Moreover, in the application of the TSA, the English paragraphs tended to have a higher measure of internal cohesion in the form of parallel and sequential progressions while the Spanish paragraph writers did not generally use such progressions as a device for coherence.

Lee (2002) examined improvement in the coherence of essays written by four first-year students at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. To initiate her study, she taught the following six coherence topics to students: 1. purpose, audience and context of situation, 2. macrostructure, 3. information distribution and topical development, 4. prepositional development and modification, 5. cohesion, and 6. metadiscourse. A similar instructional procedure was adopted for each topic, divided into four steps: 1. introduction to coherence topic, 2. reading handouts about the coherence topic, 3. coherence awareness-raising tasks and 4. writing practice. Instruction was carried out for a 42 hour period. Simultaneously, these students were required to write four essays on four different topics. They had to revise two essays two times and the other two three times.

After the students completed the pre-and post-revision tasks, the first and final draft of each topic produced by four students were selected for in depth data analysis. Then, two kinds of data analysis were applied to the selected essays. First, the TSA was used to find out if students had improved the coherence of their writing between the first and final drafts and, in the second, two qualified raters were asked to indicate which draft was better in terms of overall coherence.

The results of the TSA analysis showed that in the post-revision essays, the students had elaborated on the sentence topics more than what they did in the pre-revision essays. They had also relied less heavily on sequential progression and were more likely to produce writing which had a clearer topical focus. They were, as a consequence, more likely to produce coherent writing. The results of the readers' evaluations clearly showed that the participants had improved the overall coherence of their writing after conducting the revisions.

To sum up, the TSA is acclaimed as being one of the most effective theories for analyzing coherence in English texts. This model can be applied to describe coherence in both essays and other texts written by students in a wide variety of contexts. Because "coherence is an important quality of effective writing," (Bamberg 1984; Richard 1990) the TSA is frequently employed as a revision strategy for the classroom and it is, therefore, recommended by many researchers working in situations where improving writing instruction is the goal (Conner, 1990; Conner & Farmer, 1990; Schneider & Connor, 1991).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of the description of the methods used in selecting the informants and the procedures employed to analyze the data.

Informants

The informants of this study were 56 third-year English majors who enrolled in the course entitled En 331: Composition 1 in the Faculty of Humanities at SWU, first semester of the academic year 2002.

Procedures

1. Data Collection

The data were collected from July 8 to 12, 2002. All students were third-year English majors at SWU who were asked to write an essay of about 200-250 words on the topic 'The Person I Love Most.' The students were given two hours to complete the task. The use of a dictionary was not allowed.

2. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed as follows:

2.1 Fifty six essays were rated by two trained Thai raters, who were teachers of English, using the Jacob, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel and Hughey (1981)'s ESL Composition Profile, which is included in the appendices. Their ratings were tested for interreliability using the Pearson-Product Moment Correlations. The results were presented in the following table.

Table 2 A Correlation of Scores Rated by the Two Raters

	N	Rater 1	Rater 2
Rater 1	56	1	.909
Rater 2	56	.909	1

The results from table 1 revealed that both raters had a correlation of .909, which is a very acceptable level of reliability. Then five highest rated, five middle rated and five lowest rated essays were selected. As a result, 15 essays were analyzed. (The two raters' score and the sample essays are included in the appendices.)

2.2 These 15 essays were then divided into t-units, for the purposes of the research. A t-unit, as defined in accordance with Polio (1997)'s research is:

- ✓ a. One simple sentence counts as one t-unit. For example:

I have forgotten my pen. (1 t-unit)

- ✓ b. A compound sentence where a coordinating conjunction joins two simple sentences is counted as two t-units. For example:

I walk, but you run. (2 t-units)

- ✓ c. A complex sentence where a subordinating conjunction is used is counted as one t-unit. For example:

He called me when he received the message. (1 t-unit)

- d. A run-on sentence or a comma splice is counted as two t-units or more. For example:

When I have some problems, I always ask him for some advice; he always helps me solve the problem. (2 t-unit)

e. A fragment is counted as one t-unit. For example:

Whenever Tom comes. (1 T- unit)

f. A direct speech sentence is counted as one t-unit. For example:

She tells me, "Oh! Yes, wait a moment. I will do it for you." (1 t-unit)

In addition, a number of unforeseen grammatical structures were encountered in the data, which were not referred to in Polo (1997)'s research.

g. A sentence or fragment in parenthesis was individually counted as one t-unit. For example:

He is very handsome (I like him.) (2 t-units)

h. A question was counted as one t-unit. For example:

Who are you? (1 t-unit)

i. A sentence with a semi-colon was counted as two t-units or more. For example:

I love my mother; she is very kind. (2 t-units)

2.3 Lautamatti (1978)'s TSA using the three forms--parallel, sequential and extended parallel progression was used to plot the patterns of topical development according to a t-unit analysis of the essays. In order to identify the three forms of topic coherence clearly, the procedure suggested by Conner and Farmer (1990) was adapted as follows:

a. Highlight the topic of each t-unit which could be the parallel, sequential or extended parallel topic. For example:

(t-unit 1) Body language varies from culture to culture. (t-unit 2) To say yes, Americans nod their heads up and down. (t-unit 3) Japanese and Italians use the same nod to say no. (t-unit 4) Body language is an important skill for international managers.

(Conner & Farmer, 1990: 131)

b. Draw a diagram of topical progression. A diagram could be drawn by placing the sentence topics with parallel progressions (PP) below each other. The sequential topic (SP) was then indented from the parallel topics. The extended parallel topic (EP) was aligned under the parallel topic to which it referred. For example:

t-unit 1. Body language (PP)

t-unit 2. Americans (SP)

t-unit 3. Japanese and Italians (SP)

t-unit 4. Body language (EP)

(Conner & Farmer, 1990: 131)

2.4 Then, the parallel, sequential and extended parallel progressions in each essay were counted. A Chi-square test was run for the significant differences among the patterns of topical development and the rated essay quality in each category--high, middle and low.

2.5 Findings of the study were tabulated and discussed.

2.6 Conclusions were drawn from the findings. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further studies were made.

In brief, 56 essays written by third-year English majors at SWU were rated. After that, the five highest, five middle and the other five lowest rated essays were selected to be analyzed. Next, a t-unit analysis was applied to divide those fifteen essays, and the TSA (Lautamatti, 1978) was used to analyze the patterns of topic coherence. Then, the patterns of topical development were statistically analyzed. Finally, the characteristics of each essay and the differences among the patterns of topical development used in those three groups of essays were described.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter there are tables and figures illustrating three patterns of topical structure appearing in the highly, moderately, and lowly rated essays. Tables 3-7 show patterns of topical structure of highly rated essays. The frequencies of the patterns in the highly rated essay are summarized in table 8 and plotted into bar graphs in figure 1. Then, the patterns of topical structure of the moderately rated essays are shown in tables 9-13, and the frequencies of the patterns found in these essays are summed in table 14 and presented as bar graphs in figure 2. Next, tables 15-19 show the patterns employed by the writers in the lowly rated essays. The summary of the patterns is shown in table 20 and then, is charted into bar graphs in figure 3. A comparison of the patterns of topical structure of the highly, moderately and lowly rated essays is shown in table 21. The patterns in those essays are plotted into bar graphs in figure 4. Finally, the patterns used in these three groups of essays were statistically compared and the results are shown in table 22. Under each table, some plausible explanations are given.

Table 3 Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 1

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	The person that I love most	PP
2	My grandmother	SP
3	She	PP
4	I	SP
5	She	EPP
6	She	PP
7	My grandmother	PP
8	she	PP
9	She	PP
10	I	EPP
11	She	EPP
12	She	PP
13	My grandmother	PP
14	She	PP
15	I	EPP
16	I	PP
17	I	PP
18	I	PP
19	my grandmother	EPP
20	I	EPP
21	I	PP
22	I	PP
23	I	PP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Table 3 indicates that the most frequently used topical structure is the parallel progression, followed by the extended parallel. The least used is the sequential progression. The patterns of topical structure inform us that the essay seems very coherent because it contains only two different topics appearing in t-units 2 and 4. The writer has chosen to discuss her grandmother. She always repeats my grandmother and she to refer to the idea discussed earlier in her essay. The repetition

of the pronoun She in the essay forms the parallel progression. Therefore, the sequential progression is not frequently used. However, after the sequential progression, the writer always returns to the previous topic. Therefore, the extended parallel progression occurs in t- units 5, 10 and 19.

Table 4 Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 2

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	more than one person	SP
3	Who	SP
4	It	SP
5	One person (parents)	SP
6	No one	SP
7	Giving birth	SP
8	it	SP
9	I	EPP
10	Best things	SP
11	I	EPP
12	I	PP
13	They	SP
14	I	EPP
15	I	PP
16	they	EPP
17	no one	EPP
18	not many people	SP
19	I	EPP
20	Being alone	SP
21	I	EPP
22	my parents	EPP
23	I	EPP
24	my parents	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

In table 4, the sequential progression is used as frequently as the extended parallel progression. These two types of topical progression are found more frequently than the parallel progression. The diagram shows that the writer shifts the topic at the beginning of the essay. For example, she has eight different topics from t-unit 1 through 8. However, she starts to use the parallel progression in the middle of the essay and returns to the former topic at the end.

Table 5 Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 3

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	Love	PP
2	the feeling	SP
3	we	SP
4	we	PP
5	it	SP
6	the persons whom I love most	SP
7	they	SP
8	they	PP
9	they	PP
10	They	PP
11	they	PP
12	they	PP
13	I	SP
14	they	EPP
15	I	EPP
16	They	EPP
17	I	EPP
18	They	EPP
19	the way of taking care	SP
20	They	EPP
21	They	PP
22	they	PP
23	They	PP
24	This	SP
25	the reason	SP
26	they	EPP
27	I	EPP
28	I	PP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

The patterns of topical structure in table 5 show that the frequently used parallel progression is slightly higher than that of the sequential progression. There is a low frequency of the extended parallel progression. In the diagram, the writer introduces a new topic at the beginning of the essay. Thus, sequential progression

occurs at t-units 1-3 and 5-6. However, in the middle she always uses the parallel progression. After that, she sometimes shifts to a new topic and then, repeats it. For example, she keeps repeating they, from t-units 7-12 and changes to a new topic I in t-unit 13. She then returns to they which is the topic in t-unit 12. Although this essay contains several topics, it seems coherent because the writer keeps referring to the topic they, which refers to the person she loves most throughout her essay.

Table 6 Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 4

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	I	PP
3	I	PP
4	that kind of love	SP
5	me	SP
6	I	EPP
7	you	SP
8	I	EPP
9	I	PP
10	That	SP
11	I	EPP
12	I	PP
13	I	PP
14	he	SP
15	he	PP
16	I	EPP
17	I	PP
18	I	PP
19	he	EPP
20	I	EPP
21	you	EPP
22	I	EPP
23	You	EPP
24	I	EPP
25	I	PP
26	I	PP
27	I	PP
28	you	EPP
29	you	PP
30	you	PP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Table 6 reveals that the most frequently used pattern in the essay is the parallel progression. The extended parallel progression is found less frequently used than the parallel one. A few sequential forms are used. The patterns suggest that the

writer introduces a topic but always repeats it before moving to another new topic.

For example, she writes about I in t-units 11-13. Then she introduces a new topic he in t- unit 14. She then, repeats this topic in t-unit 15, and returns to I several times.

Table 7 Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essay 5

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	many relatives and friends	SP
3	I	EPP
4	one of them	SP
5	She	PP
6	we	SP
7	She	EPP
8	me	SP
9	she	EPP
10	She	PP
11	We	EPP
12	we	PP
13	We	PP
14	she	EPP
15	all she does for me	SP
16	I	EPP
17	I	PP
18	We	EPP
19	we	PP
20	I	EPP
21	she	EPP
22	She	PP
23	any words	SP
24	only her	SP
25	she	EPP
26	I	EPP
27	it	SP
28	She	EPP
29	She	PP
30	she	PP
31	I	EPP
32	I	PP
33	Your life	SP
34	the person I love most	EPP
35	who	SP
36	she	SP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

From the above table, the frequencies of the parallel and sequential progression are found to be equal, but both frequencies are lower than that of the extended parallel progression. The number of sequential progression is very high compared to the total t-units of the essays. It means that the writer always introduces a topic. However, the writer can control her essay by using the extended parallel progression to pull back the idea earlier discussed.

Table 8 A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essays

No. of Essay	No. of t-units	PP	SP	EPP
1	23	15	2	6
2	24	3	11	10
3	28	11	9	8
4	30	14	5	11
5	36	11	11	14
Total	141	54	38	49

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

As the results show, in most of the high-rated essays, the number of parallel topics is found to be the highest. The extended parallel progression is found less frequently used while the sequential progression is found the least frequent. That means most of the writers of highly rated essays tend to repeat their sentence topics in the parallel form except the writer of essay 2, who develops the sentence topic mostly in the sequential form.

The table indicates that each writer has different patterns of topical development. For example the writer of essay 1 tends to use the repetition of words or the parallel topics to refer to the same topic. She rarely generates a new topic. In essays 2 the writer always changes the sentence topic. She uses less parallel progression but often comes back to the previous one and thus, forms the extended parallel progression. The writer of essay 5 equally produces three types of topical

progression. Although her essay contains several sentence topics, she uses a high proportion of parallel and extended parallel progressions which could help her repeat and pull back the essays to the main theme or the discourse topic.

In sum, the most frequently used topical structure in the highly rated essays is the parallel progression, followed by the extended progression. The least used is the sequential progression.

The patterns of topical structure in the highly rated essays are charted into bar graphs as follows.

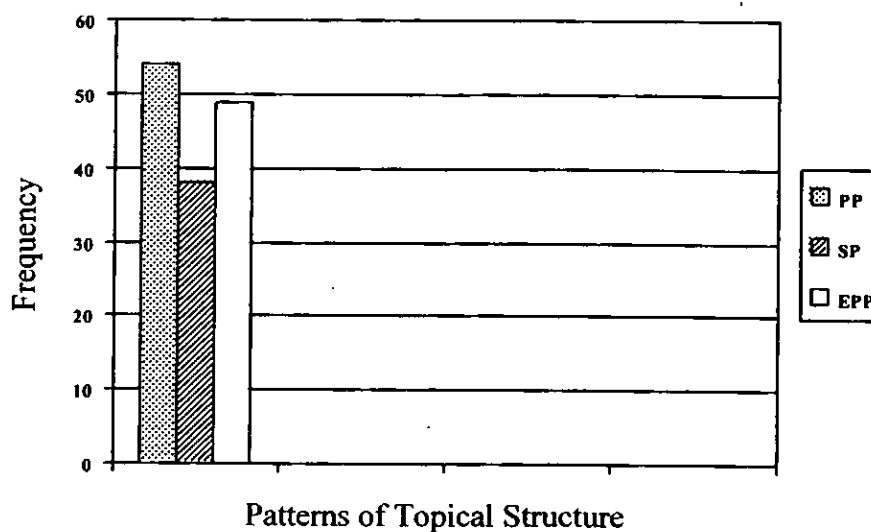


Figure 1 Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the High-Rated Essays

Figure 1 illustrates the patterns of topical structure appearing in the highly rated essays. It is found that the most frequently used type of progression in these essays is the parallel progression. The extended parallel progression is found to be the second highest and the least used is the sequential progression.

In the following tables, 9-14, the topical structure of moderately rated essays are shown.

Table 9 Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 1

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	many persons	PP
2	They	PP
3	many persons that I love	SP
4	the person that I love most (my mother)	SP
5	many reasons	SP
6	my mother	EPP
7	nobody	SP
8	She	EPP
9	I	SP
10	she	EPP
11	I	EPP
12	she	EPP
13	me	SP
14	she	EPP
15	I	EPP
16	All of I done	SP
17	it	PP
18	my mother	EPP
19	She	PP
20	I	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

The patterns of topical structure in table 9 indicate that the writer employs highly sequential and extended parallel progression to form the sentence topics. Conversely, she uses fewer parallel topics. That means the writer always generates new topics and often returns to the same sentence topic but sometimes repeats the previous idea.

Table 10 Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 2

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	The things	SP
3	I	EPP
4	everybody	SP
5	Most parents	SP
6	every parents	SP
7	I	EPP
8	it	SP
9	I	EPP
10	“Love”	SP
11	a person who I like and want her to be my love	SP
12	she	PP
13	We	SP
14	I	EPP
15	I	PP
16	she	EPP
17	she	PP
18	love	EPP
19	Love	PP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Table 10 shows that the writer of this essay uses the most sequential forms and uses the fewer and the lowest patterns of extended parallel and parallel forms respectively. The diagram of topical structure informs us that the writer develops different topics from t-unit 1 to 11. Within these t-units she does not use the parallel progression but always interrupts her essay with a new topic and returns to talk about the previous topic, I in t-unit 1. Thus, the frequently used patterns of sequential and extended parallel progressions appear to be higher than the parallel progression.

Table 11 Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 3

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	someone	SP
3	he	PP
4	My father	PP
5	He	PP
6	He	PP
7	he	PP
8	he	PP
9	He	PP
10	I	EPP
11	He	EPP
12	he	PP
13	He	PP
14	he	PP
15	He	PP
16	my father	PP
17	I	EPP
18	I	PP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

In the table, the parallel progression is used the most, followed by the extended parallel and sequential progression respectively. There is only one topic constituting the sequential progression in the essay. That means the writer develops a few topics in the essay and discusses them forming the parallel progression. For example, she shifts from I in t-unit 1 to someone in t-unit 2 and then parallels the topic with he and My father from t-unit 3 through t-unit 9. Then, she leaves He to discuss the previous topic I in t-unit 1.

Table 12 Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 4

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	I	PP
3	I	PP
4	I	PP
5	They (parents)	SP
6	they	PP
7	They	PP
8	they	PP
9	they	PP
10	They	PP
11	I	EPP
12	They	EPP
13	they	PP
14	they	PP
15	I	EPP
16	I	PP
17	they	EPP
18	they	PP
19	they	PP
20	I	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Similarly, table 12 reveals that the highest frequently used pattern is the parallel progression. The extended parallel progression is found the second highest followed by the sequential progression. From the diagram shown, the writer prefers repetition of a topic. For instance, she repeats they in t-units 5-10 without shifting or returning to other topics. However, the topic, they is interrupted by the previous topic I a few times such as in t-units 11 and 15. Only two topics, I and they, are used in this short essay.

Table 13 Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essay 5

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	Love	SP
3	I	PP
4	I	PP
5	I	PP
6	someone	SP
7	4 person who I love most	SP
8	I	EPP
9	I	PP
10	I	PP
11	I	PP
12	I	PP
13	He (father)	SP
14	I	EPP
15	I	PP
16	I	PP
17	I	PP
18	I	PP
19	my mother	SP
20	I	EPP
21	I	PP
22	I	PP
23	she	EPP
24	My mother	PP
25	she	PP
26	she	PP
27	I	EPP
28	I	PP
29	She (grandmother)	SP
30	she	PP
31	she	PP
32	I	EPP
33	I	PP
34	I	PP
35	she	EPP
36	I	EPP
37	I	PP
38	someone	SP
39	I	EPP
40	I	PP

Table 13 (continued)

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
41	I	PP
42	Jork (boyfriend)	SP
43	I	EPP
44	he	EPP
45	The only one heart	SP
46	He	EPP
47	He	PP
48	He	PP
49	He	PP
50	I	EPP
51	no one	SP
52	no one	PP
53	I	EPP
54	I	PP
55	I	PP
56	they	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Table 13 shows a very long diagram of topical structure produced by one of the writers in the middle-rated essay. In this diagram the topics which constitute the parallel progression are found with the highest frequency. The extended parallel progression is found less often, and the lowest frequent pattern is the sequential progression. This indicates the writer develops a few different topics when compared to the total 56 t-units. She uses the parallel progression in more than half of her essay. For example, when talking about her boy friend, she keeps referring to him several times before moving to a new topic. She always returns to a previous topic throughout the long essay.

Table 14 A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essays

No. of Essay	No. of t-units	PP	SP	EPP
1	20	4	7	9
2	19	5	8	6
3	18	14	1	3
4	20	14	1	5
5	56	31	10	15
Total	133	68	27	38

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

To sum up, the major pattern of topical development performed in the moderately rated essays is the parallel progression. The extended parallel progression is found secondly highest. The least used is the sequential progression. The pattern in these essays shows two different styles of topical structure. First, in essay 1 and 2, the writers introduce many topics and stick to them, which form the parallel and extended parallel progressions. In contrast, the writers of essay 3, 4, and 5 have a different pattern. They prefer the parallel and extended parallel progressions. They rarely develop new topics. Thus, the sequential progression is rarely found in these essays.

The patterns of topical structure in the moderately rated essays are shown as bar graphs below.

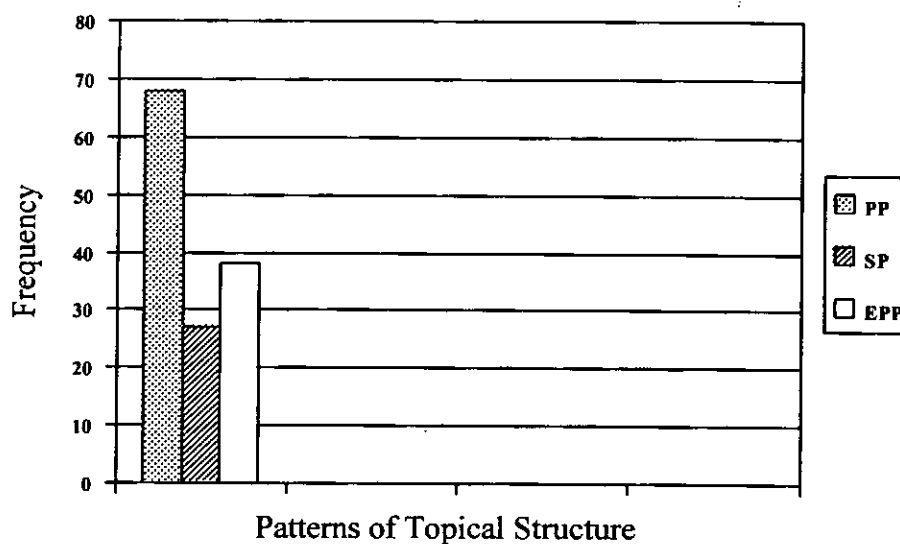


Figure 2 A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Middle-Rated Essays

Figure 2 shows that the most frequently used topical structure in the moderately rated essays is the parallel progression, followed by the extended parallel progression. The least used is the sequential progression.

In the following tables, 15-20, the patterns topical structure of lowly rated essays are shown.

Table 15 Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 1

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	two persons	PP
2	They	PP
3	They	PP
4	they	PP
5	I	SP
6	They	EPP
7	I	EPP
8	my mother	SP
9	she	PP
10	my father	SP
11	father and mother	EPP
12	My father	EPP
13	He	PP
14	mother	EPP
15	they	EPP
16	My parents	PP
17	We	SP
18	the person who I love	SP
19	They	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Table 15 indicates that the highest used type of topical progression found in the essay is the extended parallel progression. The parallel progression is found slightly less in frequency. The lowest frequently used type is the sequential progression. In this essay, the writer begins her essay with parallel progression from t-units 1-4. In t-unit 5, she shifts to a new topic I, and returns to this topic once in

t-unit 7. She does not introduce too many topics but tends to use the parallel progression and the extended parallel progression to form topics.

Table 16 Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 2

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	I	PP
2	I	PP
3	I	PP
4	I	PP
5	“love”	SP
6	Mike Shinoda	SP
7	He	PP
8	I	EPP
9	He	EPP
10	He	PP
11	his family	SP
12	he	EPP
13	that band	SP
14	he	EPP
15	He	PP
16	his band	EPP
17	His first album	SP
18	he and his band	SP
19	He	EPP
20	They	EPP
21	he and his member	PP
22	this band	EPP
23	he	EPP
24	He	PP
25	his lyrics	SP
26	I	EPP
27	His songs	EPP
28	The songs	PP
29	Life	SP
30	our lives	SP
31	I	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Table 16 reveals that the highest frequently used topical structure in the essay is the extended parallel progression. The frequencies of parallel and sequential progressions are equal, but they are lower than that of the extended parallel

progression. The patterns indicate that the writer develops new topics and repeats them at least one or two times. Then, she returns to the previous topic. For example, she shifts from love in t-unit 5 to Mike Shinoda in t-unit 6. She repeats the same topic using He in t-unit 7 and after that, comes back to I, which is originally placed at the beginning of the essay. It seems that she employs this strategy throughout her essay.

Table 17 Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 3

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	the majority of people	PP
2	Why?	SP
3	children	SP
4	The person who they love most	SP
5	most of children	EPP
6	mothers	SP
7	This	SP
8	fathers	SP
9	I	SP
10	the father's nature	SP
11	The minority of children	EPP
12	Some	SP
13	the children	EPP
14	you	SP
15	you	PP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

The above table shows that the highest frequency is the sequential progression, then the extended parallel progression and the parallel progression respectively. The writer always introduces topics but does not repeat or return to them.

Table 18 Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 4

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	my mother	PP
2	she	PP
3	she	PP
4	she	PP
5	I	SP
6	I	PP
7	the sadnesses	SP
8	her love	SP
9	I	EPP
10	her	EPP
11	she	PP
12	she	PP
13	My mother	PP
14	she	PP
15	she	PP
16	She	PP
17	My beautiful life	SP
18	I	EPP
19	I	PP
20	I	PP
21	my love	SP
22	It	PP
23	Mother	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

From table 18 the parallel progression is used the most throughout the essay. It occurs in t-units 1-4, 6, and 11-16. The sequential progression is found to be the second highest in t-units 5, 7, 8, 17, and 21 and the lowest number of topics in t-units 9, 10, 18, and 23 constitute the extended parallel progression. The diagram shows that the writer generates different topics but tends to repeat them, and later on pulls the essay back to the topic mentioned earlier.

Table 19 Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essay 5

No. of t-unit	Diagram of Topical Structure	Type of progression
1	a person	PP
2	She	PP
3	that	SP
4	the concrete	SP
5	The gift	SP
6	The most special concrete	EPP
7	She	EPP
8	My mother	SP
9	she	PP
10	she	PP
11	I	SP
12	I	PP
13	Something	SP
14	I	EPP
15	She	EPP
16	It	SP
17	I	EPP
18	I	PP
19	she	EPP
20	She	PP
21	She	PP
22	I	EPP
23	She	EPP
24	Time	SP
25	she	EPP
26	she	PP
27	the pretty things	SP
28	she	EPP

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Similar to table 18, the highest frequently used topical structure in table 19 is the parallel progression. It appears in t-units 1-2, 5-6, 8-10, 12, 19, 20-21 and 26. It is followed by the extended parallel and sequential progressions respectively.

However, the frequencies of these two types are fairly equal. The topics in t-units 3,

4, 11, 13, 16, 24, and 27 form the sequential progression, and the topics in t-units 7, 14, 15, 17, 19, 22, 23, 25, and 28 form the extended parallel progression. The diagram illustrates that the essay contains not many topics, and the writer often repeats and returns to them.

Table 20 A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essays

No. of Essay	No. of t-units	PP	SP	EPP
1	19	7	4	8
2	31	10	9	12
3	15	2	10	3
4	23	14	5	4
5	28	9	9	10
Total	116	42	37	37

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

Overall, the patterns of topical structure found in the lowly rated essays are different from those in the highly and moderately rated essays. It is found that the most frequently used type of progression in these essays is the parallel progression. Moreover, the sequential progression is found as frequently as the extended parallel progression.

The table shows that these writers themselves employ different patterns of topical structure. For instance, the writer of essay 1 employs the parallel and extended parallel progression slightly higher than the sequential progression. Conversely, the writers of essays 2 and 5 employ the parallel and sequential progressions highly but these two types of progression are found slightly less than the extended parallel progression. One of them, the writer of essay 3 always introduces the sequential progression but uses a few parallel and extended parallel progressions.

The writer of essay 4 often uses the parallel progression while the sequential and the extended parallel progressions are rarely used.

A bar graph showing the patterns of topical structure in the low-rated essays is shown in the following figure.

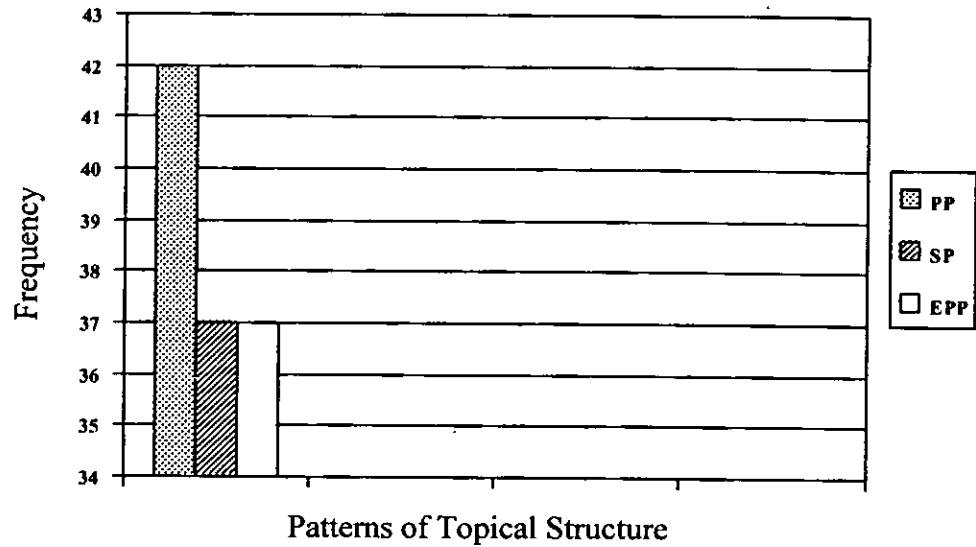


Figure 3 A Summary of Patterns of Topical Structure in the Low-Rated Essays

As shown in figure 3, the most frequently used topical structure in the lowly rated essays is the parallel progression while the sequential and the extended parallel progressions occur at a similar frequency but lower than that of the parallel progression

Table 21 below shows the comparison of patterns of topical structure appearing in the high, middle and low-rated essays.

Table 21 A Comparison of Patterns of Topical Structure in All Essays.

Group	PP	SP	EPP	Total
High-Rated Essays	54	38	49	141
Middle-Rated Essays	68	27	38	133
Low-Rated Essays	42	37	37	116
Total	164	102	124	390

Note. PP=parallel progression, SP=sequential progression and EPP=extended parallel progression

The table shows the frequencies of topical structures employed by writers of high, middle and low quality essays. It indicates that writers in these three groups use the parallel progression the most. They use the sequential and extended parallel progressions differently. In the high and middle-rated essays, the frequencies of the extended parallel progression are found more than the sequential progression while in the low-rated group, the sequential progression is found as frequently as the extended parallel progression.

It is apparent that the writers of highly and moderately rated essays employ similar patterns of topical structure. They use the parallel progression with the highest frequency followed by the extended parallel and the sequential progression respectively. That means the writers of these two groups tend to repeat a sentence

topic using the parallel progression. They do not develop many new topics; therefore, the sequential progression is found the lowest. They always return to the topics discussed earlier using the extended parallel progression, which helps them pull back their essays to the discourse topic.

Differently, in the lowly rated essays, the most frequently used of topical structure is the parallel progression. The sequential and the extended parallel progressions are used equally frequent. The results indicate that the low-scored writers employ different strategies in using the patterns of topical structure from the high and middle-scored writers. They are more likely to develop new topics than do the writers of the other two groups. Thus, the sequential progression is found higher than those two groups in terms of total t-units.

In the following figure, a bar graph of the patterns of topical structure appearing in the high, middle and low-rated essays is shown.

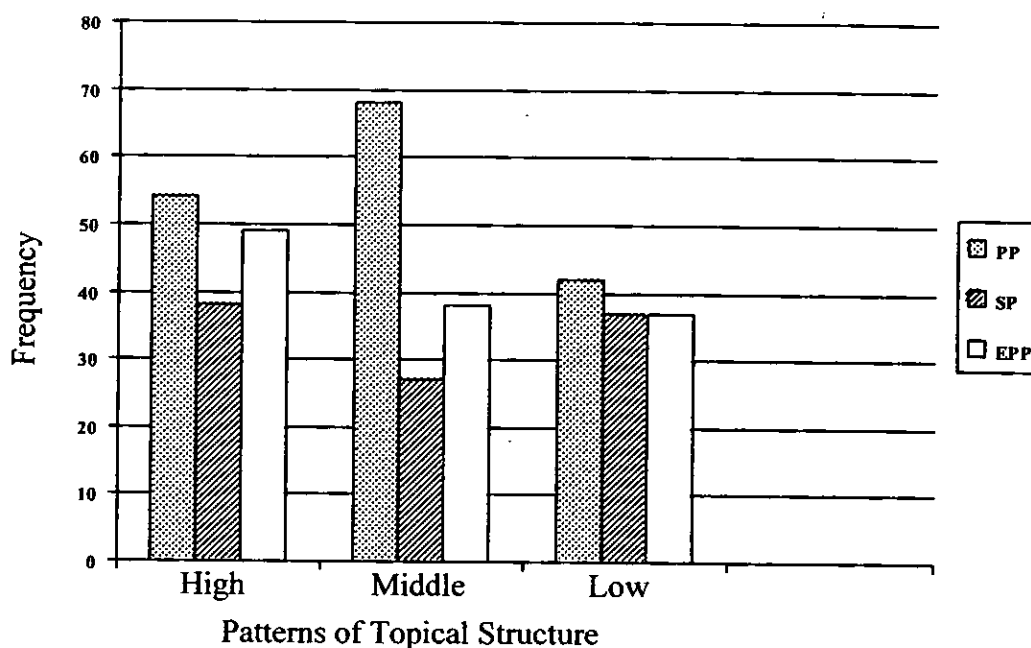


Figure 4 A Comparison of Patterns of Topical Structure in All Essays.

Figure 4 indicates that writers in these three groups use the parallel progression at the highest frequency, but these writers use the sequential and extended parallel progressions differently. The patterns of topical structure appearing in the high and middle-rated essays reveal similar. That is the frequencies of the extended parallel progression are found more than the sequential progression. However, the patterns in the low-rated essays reveal differently from those two groups of essay quality. Here, the sequential progression is found as frequently used as the extended parallel progression.

The frequencies of the three patterns of topical structure found in three groups of essay quality--high, middle and low were statistically compared using a Chi-square test run by SPSS/PC+. The following table shows the results of the analysis.

Table 22 The Chi-Square Tests

	χ^2	df
Pearson Chi-Square	8.082	4
N of Valid Cases	390	

The above table indicates that the value of the Chi-square tests is 8.082. The value is interpreted that there is not a significant difference in patterns of topical structure among the high, middle and low-rated essays. The null hypothesis is sustained. That is the frequencies of parallel, sequential and extended parallel progressions do not differ in those three groups of essays.

To sum up, in this chapter, the patterns of topical structure in five highly, five moderately and five lowly rated essays were analyzed and statistically compared. The findings reveal that there is no significant difference in the use of patterns of topical structures among the three groups of essays.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In the analysis of topical structure of essays written by third-year English majors at Srinakharinwirot University, 56 students were asked to write essays on the topic 'The Person I Love Most.' All essays were rated by two raters using the Jacob, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartifiel and Hughey (1981)'s ESL Composition Profile, and then 15 essays, five from each group of highly, moderately, and lowly scored essays were purposely randomized to analyze. Each essay was divided into t-units, and Lautamatti (1987)'s TSA was applied to it to elicit the patterns of topical structure. The Chi-square was employed to test the differences among the patterns used in those three groups. The results are concluded and discussed below.

Conclusion of the Findings

According to the research question of what patterns of topical structure appearing in the high, middle and low-rated essays produced by third-year English majors at SWU, the results of the analysis revealed as follows.

1. In the highly rated essays, the most frequently used pattern of topical structure was the parallel progression followed by the extended parallel progression, and the sequential progression respectively.

2. The major type of topical structure occurred in the moderately rated essays was the parallel progression. The extended parallel progression was found to be the second highest, and the least used pattern was the sequential progression.

3. The most frequently used topical structure in the lowly rated essays was the parallel progression. The sequential and extended parallel progressions were found equally frequent.

In response to the second research question if there were any significant differences among the patterns of topical structure found in those categories, the finding from the statistical analysis showed that the occurrences of the patterns of topical structure among the high, middle, and low-rated essays did not significantly differ. Thus, the null hypothesis of the research was retained. That means there were not significant differences in the frequencies of the parallel, sequential and extended parallel progressions among those three groups of essay quality.

To sum up, in the analysis of patterns of topical structure, the results revealed that the writers of the high and middle-rated essays employed similar patterns of topical structure while the writers of the low rated essays used different patterns. However, in applying the statistics, the results showed that there were not significant differences in the frequently used patterns of topical structure within those essays.

Discussion

The results from the analysis in regard to the patterns of topical structure and the statistical comparison in the three sample groups of rated essays--high, middle and low, are discussed as follows.

The frequency of the parallel progression was found to be the highest used pattern in the three categories of essays; however, there were some differences in the occurrence of the sequential and the extended parallel progression in those essays. In

the high and moderately rated essays, the frequency of extended parallel progression was found higher than the sequential progression while in the low rated essays the extended parallel progression was used as frequently as the sequential progression.

The above results which revealed in the highly and moderately rated essays suggest that the writers preferred to repeat and return to the key word which had some connections to the discourse topic rather than develop a new topic. That means the patterns employed by the writers of these two groups showed a close relationship between the discourse topic and its sub-topics, which made their essays coherent as Lautamatti (1978) has suggested that the tight connection between discourse topic and the sentence topics can pave the way to create text coherence; thus, having fewer sub-topics can make the essay more coherent.

As mentioned earlier, the patterns of topical structure appearing in the lowly rated essays reveal differently from the high and middle-rated essays in that the parallel progression was found slightly higher than the sequential and extended parallel progressions while the sequential and extended parallel progressions appeared equally frequent. The findings, therefore, suggest that the writers seemed to develop a number of sentence topics within each essay, but they did not often repeat or return to the key words, which were related to the discourse topic. The occurrences of the patterns used in the low-scored essays also suggest that the essays lacked coherence because they showed the loose connection between one idea and the next. These research results support Witte (1983a)'s observation that these types of deviation are used to classify texts as low.

Concerning the statistical analysis, the findings reveal that there were not significant differences in the frequency of patterns of topical structure used in the

highly, moderately, and lowly scored essays. The results do not support Witte (1983b)'s findings that the significant differences were found between the high and low-rated essays.

However, the differences between Witte's research findings and the present research results might derive from the following plausible explanations. Firstly, Witte (1983b) had two independent variables--the high and low-scored essays in his studies while in this research there were three independent variables--the high, middle and low scored essays. The difference in a dependent variable might vary the results and then, might affect the significance of the findings. Secondly, Witte (1983b)'s informants were native speakers of English. They might be more aware of their writing in terms of coherence than EFL learners because "in writing ESL and EFL students focus almost exclusively on the word and sentence levels rather than on the whole discourse" (Bamberg, 1984; Ferris & Hedgecock, 1998 as cited in Lee, 2002: 152). Finally, Witte (1983b) used the revision drafts which his informants simplified from the original text to elicit the patterns of topical structure while the samples of this research were first drafts of written essays. Witte (1983b) himself has suggested that texts of different kinds of purposes differ from the text used in his study; thus, the results remain an open question. To support this point, Lee (2002) also claimed that the text types might be a possible factor which affected the patterns of topical structure. That means the data which were collected under different circumstances might make the results of the studies different.

Even though a statistically significant difference was not obtained among the high, middle and low-rated essays in terms of topical structure, the occurrences of the

patterns of topical structure in highly and moderately and lowly rated essays support findings from many previous studies.

For example, Lee (2002) and Connor and Farmer (1990) have found that more coherent texts tend to rely less on sequential progression and more on parallel progressions. The present research results also support Witte (1983b)'s findings in the sense that the writers of the high-scored essays maintained a consistent and a clear focus on the most important sentence topic; thus, the most widely used topical structure in higher rated essays fell into the parallel and the extended parallel progression. That is to say the good and middle rated writers elaborate the sentence topics more often than do the low-rated ones. Therefore, they are more likely to produce coherent writing.

Moreover, the results of the lowly scored essays revealed findings similar to Witte (1983a, 1983b)'s research results. Witte found that the low-scored writers tended to use parallel, extended parallel and sequential progression in different ways than did the high-scored writers. That is their essays contain more different topics because they were often buried in the sequential progression rather than other types of topical structure.

In short, the discussion above suggests why the results of this study were found to be different from those earlier studies in terms of statistical analysis. It might be affected by the number of independent variables of each study, the differences of the informants used and the differences of the text types. Although the significant difference was not obtained in the highly, moderately and lowly rated essays, the patterns appearing in those essays support the findings from several previous studies (Witte, 1983a, 1983b; Connor & Farmer, 1990; Lee, 2002)

Limitations of the Study

1. Due to the writing task, the students found the topic boring because the task was outside the scope of their lessons and was not accounted for class work.

2. Due to the fact that only 15 essays on 'The Person I Love Most' were analyzed, it may not be possible to generalize the research results to other Thai students' academic paragraphs or essays. The findings were specific to a particular group of students and to the specific context described in the study.

3. There were not many resources about the TSA in Thai libraries.

Therefore, the review of related literature was quite limited.

Suggestions for Further Studies

1. There should be a study of the TSA in essays written by other groups of Thai students.

2. There should be a comparative study of the TSA in essays written by Thai learners and students of other nationalities or English native speakers.

3. There should be more extensive work to verify the findings of this research in other types of writing produced by EFL learners besides Thais.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Bamberg, B. (1984). Assessing coherence: A reanalysis of essay written for the National Assessment of Education Progress. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 18, 305-319.
- Connor, U. (1987). Research frontiers in writing analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21, 667-691.
- (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Connor, U., & Farmer, M. (1990). The teaching of topical structure analysis as a revision strategy for ESL writers. In Kroll, B. (Ed.) *Second language writing*. (pp. 126-139). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Connor, U., & Schneider, M. (1988, March). *Topical structure and writing quality: Results of an ESL study*. Paper presented at the 22nd Annual TESOL Convention, Chicago.
- Gaies, S.J. (1980). T-unit analysis in second language research: Application, problems and limitations. *TESOL Quarterly*, 14, 53-60.
- Hunt, K. (1965). *Grammatical structures written at three grade levels*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teacher of English. (Report No.3)
- Jacobs, L., Stephen A. Zingraf, Deanna R. Wormuth, V. Faye Hartfield, and Jane B. Hughey. (1981). *Testing ESL composition: A practical approach*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

- Lautamatti, L. (1978). Observations on the development of the topical of simplified discourse. In Connor, U., & Kaplan, Robert B. (Eds.). *Writing across languages: Analysis of L2 texts*. (pp. 87-114). Reading, MA.: Addison-Wesley.
- Lee, I. (2002). Teaching coherence to ESL students: A classroom inquiry. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 11, 135-159.
- Polio, C. G. (1997). Measure of linguistics accuracy in second language writing research. *Language Learning*, 47, 101-143
- Richards, J. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Schneider, M., & Connor, U. (1990). Analyzing topical structure in ESL essays: Not all topics are equal. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 411-427
- Simpson, J. M. (2000). Topical structure analysis of academic paragraphs in English and Spanish, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9, 293-309.
- Witte, S.P. (1983a) Topical structure and writing quality: Some possible text-based explanations of readers' judgments of student writing. *Visible Language*, 17, 177-205.
- Witte, S.P. (1983b) Topical structure and revision: An exploratory study. *College Composition and Communication*, 34, 313-341.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE

ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE

Student:	Date:	Topic:
-----------------	--------------	---------------

SCORE	RANGE	CONTENT CRITERIA	COMMENTS
	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable • substantive • thorough development of thesis • relevant to assigned topic	
	26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject • adequate range • limited development of thesis • mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail	
	21-17	FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject • little substance • inadequate development of topic	
	16-13	VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject • non-substantive • not pertinent • OR not enough to evaluate	

SCORE	RANGE	ORGANIZATION CRITERIA	COMMENTS
	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression • ideas clearly stated/ supported • succinct • well-organized • logical sequencing • cohesive	
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy • loosely organized but main ideas stand out • limited support • logical but incomplete sequencing	
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent • ideas confused or disconnected • lacks logical sequencing and development	
	9-7	VERY POOR: does not communicate • no organization or not enough to evaluate	

SCORE	RANGE	VOCABULARY CRITERIA	COMMENTS
	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range effective word/idiom choice and usage • word form mastery • appropriate register	
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range • occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured	
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range • frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage • meaning confused or obscured	
	9-7	VERY POOR: essentially translation • little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form • OR not enough to evaluate	

SCORE	RANGE	<i>LANGUAGE USE CRITERIA</i>	COMMENTS
	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions • few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order /function, articles, pronouns, prepositions	
	21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions • minor problems in complex constructions • several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured	
	17-11	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions • frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions • meaning confused or obscured	
	10-5	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules • dominated by errors • does not communicate • OR not enough to evaluate	

SCORE	RANGE	<i>MECHANICS CRITERIA</i>	COMMENTS
	5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions • few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing	
	4	GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured	
	3	FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • poor handwriting • meaning confused or obscured	
	2	VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions • dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • handwriting illegible • OR not enough to evaluate	

Total Score	Reader	Comments

Source: Jacobs, L., Stephen A. Zingraf, Deanna R. Wormuth, V. Faye Hartfield, and Jane B. Hughey. (1981). *Testing ESL composition: A practical approach*, Rowley, MA.: Newbury House.

APPENDIX B
ESSAYS' SCORES AND SAMPLE ESSAYS' SCORES

Essays' Scores Rated by Two Raters and Their Mean Scores

No.	Scores		Mean
	Rater1	Rater2	
1	69	65	67.0
2	71	72	71.5
3	78	80	79.0
4	82	80	81.0
5	90	92	91.0
6	93	88	90.5
7	78	71	74.5
8	77	72	74.5
9	79	74	76.5
10	94	89	91.5
11	88	82	85.0
12	73	72	72.5
13	75	76	75.5
14	94	89	91.5
15	81	78	79.5
16	78	74	76.0
17	89	91	90.0
18	77	71	74.0
19	78	72	75.0
20	75	70	72.5
21	86	92	89.0
22	87	85	86.0
23	64	61	62.5
24	86	84	85.0
25	74	72	73.0
26	75	70	72.5
27	77	71	74.0
28	82	75	78.5
29	60	65	62.5
30	80	70	75.0
31	90	89	89.5
32	85	89	87.0
33	90	87	88.5
34	93	89	91.0
35	92	88	90.0
36	93	87	90.0
37	75	79	77.0
38	92	86	89.0
39	84	78	81.0
40	83	89	86.0
41	80	83	81.5
42	91	93	92.0

Essays' Scores Rated by Two Raters and Their Mean Scores (continued)

No.	Scores		Mean
	Rater1	Rater2	
43	69	72	70.5
44	94	86	90.0
45	68	70	69.0
46	66	72	69.0
47	63	70	66.5
48	52	57	54.5
49	59	65	62.0
50	61	65	63.0
51	63	67	65.0
52	79	77	78.0
53	69	70	69.5
54	84	82	83.0
55	68	69	68.5
56	70	72	71.0

Sample Essays' Scores

No.	Rank	Mean	Remark
1	1	54.5	} Samples of low-rated essays
2	2	62.0	
3	3	62.5	
4	3	62.5	
5	4	63.0	
6	5	65.0	
7	6	66.5	
8	7	67.0	
9	8	68.5	
10	9	69.0	
11	9	69.0	
12	10	69.5	
13	11	70.5	
14	12	71.0	
15	13	71.5	
16	14	72.5	
17	14	72.5	
18	14	72.5	
19	15	73.0	
20	16	74.0	

Sample Essays' Scores (continued)

No.	Rank	Mean	Remark
21	16	74.0	
22	17	74.5	
23	17	74.5	
24	18	75.0	
25	18	75.0	
26	19	75.5	} Samples of middle-rated essays
27	20	76.0	
28	21	76.5	
29	22	77.0	
30	23	78.0	
31	24	78.5	
32	25	79.0	
33	26	79.5	
34	27	81.0	
35	27	81.0	
36	28	81.5	
37	29	83.0	
38	30	85.0	
39	30	85.0	
40	31	86.0	
41	31	86.0	
42	32	87.0	
43	33	88.5	
44	34	89.0	
45	34	89.0	
46	35	89.5	
47	36	90.0	
48	36	90.0	
49	36	90.0	
50	36	90.0	
51	37	90.5	
52	38	91.0	} Samples of high-rated essays
53	39	91.0	
54	40	91.5	
55	40	91.5	
56	41	92.0	

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE ESSAYS

High-Rated Essay 1

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) The person that I love most is my grandmother. (t-unit 2) My grandmother is a great woman that I've ever known. (t-unit 3) She gives me a lot of precious things, advice, love, care and understanding, which I can develop and use them in my life.

(t-unit 4) When I am blue. (t-unit 5) She is the one who soothe me and be on my side. (t-unit 6) She teaches me the right things when I've done wrong.

(t-unit 7) My grandmother is the strongest women in the world. (t-unit 8) Even now she is nearly 80, she still healthy. (t-unit 9) She like to go outside Bangkok, beaches, hills or gardens, to release from busy in Bangkok nearly every week (t-unit 10) and I love to go with her. (t-unit 11) She never waste time by sitting still or watching TV. (t-unit 12) She usually has something to do everyday, sewing, gardening or taking care of kids.

(t-unit 13) My grandmother knows everything about me. (t-unit 14) She usually cooks, my favorite dish for me, fried spicy noodle with shrimp, (t-unit 15) and I really enjoy eating it very much.

(t-unit 16) I love my grandmother very much (t-unit 17) but I never show my feeling to her. (t-unit 18) One reason, because I am never shy when I want to say I love you to my grandmother. (t-unit 19) Now, my grandmother is very old, (t-unit 20) I have to take very good care of her. (t-unit 21) I will not make she disappointed with me (t-unit 22) and I will be a good girl as my grandmother always teaches me. (t-unit 23) I love you, my grandmother

High Rated-Essay 2

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) I think in a life time, (t-unit 2) there is more than one person that we love; such as parents, relatives, and friends. (t-unit 3) Who do I love most? (t-unit 4) It is a hard question to answer because I don't know how to choose, (t-unit 5) but one person I can think of right now is my parents.

(t-unit 6) No one was born without person who made you born. (t-unit 7) Giving birth is not a one person job, (t-unit 8) but it takes 2 persons to create a beautiful creature come to earth. (t-unit 9) I was so lucky to have my parent who fulfilled me with love since I was born. (t-unit 10) Best thing that I love about my parents is they're ready to accept who you and forgive what you do. (t-unit 11) I know that I am not a good daughter, (t-unit 12) I have made my parents punish me sometimes. (t-unit 13) They don't like to hit me at all, (t-unit 14) I can feel that. (t-unit 15) Every time I make mistakes (t-unit 16) after the punishment, they are always welcome me back to their loving arms and forgive me. (t-unit 17) I don't think there is no one can forgive you everything like my parents.

(t-unit 18) Talking about concern, there is not many people is really care about me like my mother and father. (t-unit 19) I can see it clearly when I was apart from home. (t-unit 20) Being alone in a big city like Bangkok makes me realize how much they concern and care about me, (t-unit 21) and I love them much more than before.

(t-unit 22) After what my parents did for me, (t-unit 23) I don't think that I can love anyone as much as them event though my boy friend. (t-unit 24) I hope that I always be there when my parents need me as they are always be there for me.

High-Rated Essay 3

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) Love is the word which people use it to show the feeling of trust and care. (t-unit 2) When we love somebody, the feeling always show out although we don't want other to know. (t-unit 3) We can love as many people as we want, (t-unit 4) but can we realize whom we love most?

(t-unit 5) It is easy for me to answer that question. (t-unit 6) I can say it truly from my heart that the persons whom I love most are my parents. (t-unit 7) And they are also the most important persons for me.

(t-unit 8) While I was a baby, they always took care of me with love and care, (t-unit 9) When I was too young to take care my self, they always did it for me. (t-unit 10) They did everything for me such as took me to take a bath, helped me to finished the food, etc. (t-unit 11) And when I cried, they would huge me and hold me in their hands to let me know that they were beside me.

(t-unit 12) When I was old enough to attend the school, they brought me to the best school that they have ever heard. (t-unit 13) I appreciate their idea of attending school although I did not satisfy them at first, (t-unit 14) In my opinion, they forced me to do what they wanted. (t-unit 15) But when the time passed by, I grew up and understand. (t-unit 16) They just wanted me to be in good environment and have good friends.

(t-unit 17) Nowadays, I am a junior, majoring in English language at Srinakaran Wirot University. (t-unit 18) They still take care of me. (t-unit 19) Although the way of taking care is changed, I still feel their kindness around. (t-unit 20) They sit with me, when I need someone beside. (t-unit 21) They listen to me

(continued) when I want someone to understand. (t-unit 22) And they give the opinions, when I need some advice. (t-unit 23) They are more reasonable to me. (t-unit 24) This may be because I am old enough to let me go.

(t-unit 25) That is the reason why I always love them most. (t-unit 26) And I hope that they will stay with me as long as they can. (t-unit 27) Because I need the time to show them how much I love them and care for them. (t-unit 28) I want them to be happy as much as I can.

High-Rated Essay 4

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) I'm writing this to you the one I love. (t-unit 2) Since I first saw you I was falling in love with you. (t-unit 3) I've kept trying to show you how much I love you in every way I can. (t-unit 4) But you seemed not to believe that kind of love would exist at all. (t-unit 5) Let me tell you by these words (t-unit 6) I'm going to express:

(t-unit 7) While you were keeping your distance, I was drew closer to you. (t-unit 8) And I was getting to know you better 3 years passed, (t-unit 9) I couldn't even get into your heart. (t-unit 10) That's ok. (t-unit 11) So I told you that I'm going away out of your life. (t-unit 12) And I did for 3 months. (t-unit 13) I've tried to get along my new life with a man who loves me so much (t-unit 14) that he can even die for me (t-unit 15) and I believe he will if I want he to. (t-unit 16) Since then I thought I can love him as much as I did love you. (t-unit 17) I tried my best, (t-unit 18) I did at the very moment (t-unit 19) I was thinking that he can eventually take you place (t-unit 20) I love him most (t-unit 21) but then finally you went back, telling me that I've changed. (t-unit 22) I looked different. (t-unit 23) You think I don't love you any

more. (t-unit 24) I'm sorry (t-unit 25) I cannot tell you just now that I'm just the same, (t-unit 26) I'm sorry that I cannot be good enough to you as you want me to. (t-unit 27) I need to take care of the guy who loves me most (t-unit 28) but still I insist that "you" are the one I love most. (t-unit 29) Someday you'll know. (t-unit 30) It might be late but you'll know.

High-Rated Essay 5

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) I'd like to share a story of the person I love most. (t-unit 2) I have to admit that there are many relatives and friends who are nice to me (t-unit 3) and I love them all, (t-unit 4) but there is one of them who always stands by my side and never lets me down

(t-unit 5) She is a girl in my age (t-unit 6) and it seems we got many things in common. (t-unit 7) She's from Thai-Chinese family but pretty Americanized (t-unit 8) (like me !) (t-unit 9) I like the way she sees the world. (t-unit 10) She is optimistic, fun- loving, out-going, friendly and talkative. (t-unit 11) We like to go shopping , swimming and bowling together. (t-unit 12) We love wearing make up and dressing like girlie. (t-unit 13) I and say that we are typically girl

(t-unit 14) I can say that she is my best friend (t-unit 15) and all she does for me is so wonderful, (t-unit 16) that's why I love her most. (t-unit 17) I know her my whole life. (t-unit 18) We went to the same schools (t-unit 19) and we are now studying in the same university. (t-unit 20) I know her quite well (t-unit 21) and she also clear. (t-unit 22) She always encourager me when I feel terrible, (t-unit 23) never says any words that might ruin my feeling. (t-unit 24) When I make a mistake, there is only her who always stands by my side. (t-unit 25) Even when I broke up with my

boyfriend who I used to think that I love most, she pulled me up from the bottom of the hell. (t-unit 26) Oh no I don't mean to be rude (t-unit 27) but it really was. (t-unit 28) She told me not to give up and encouraged to keep going. (t-unit 29) She told me one thing that I will never forget, (t-unit 30) she said, "Don't cry for such a guy. There's no one who is worth to cry for because that person will never makes you cry." (t-unit 31) After hearing that words from her, I stopped crying.

(t-unit 32) If I had to talk about this friend, I would take whole day to do. (t-unit 33) I believe that if you found such a friend like this, your life is fulfilled. (t-unit 34) This is the person I love most. (t-unit 35) Have I told you who is she? (t-unit 36) She is myself.

Middle-Rated Essay 1

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) There are many persons that pass into my life. (t-unit 2) They are both of good and bad. (t-unit 3) So, I have many persons that I love. (t-unit 4) But the person that I love most is my mother. (t-unit 5) There are many reasons that make me love her so much. (t-unit 6) First, my mother who gives me a birth and devotes everything for me. (t-unit 7) I think that nobody is good for me liked her. (t-unit 8) Second. She works hard in order to support me to study in bachelor's degree. (t-unit 9) I can spend money comfortably by her sweat from working. (t-unit 10) Finally, the most reason, she is only person that stands beside me when I have a problem. (t-unit 11) I am not neglected to solve the problem alone. (t-unit 12) Although I do a mistake, she never punishes me, (t-unit 13) just blames me. (t-unit 14) I know that she scolds me because she wants me to be a good girl.

(t-unit 15) In the future, I intend that when I graduate from the university, I will find a good job and effort to make a lot of money. (t-unit 16) All of I done not only for myself, (t-unit 17) it's for my mother too. (t-unit 18) I wished my mother will comfort, spend money to buy everthings that she wants. (t-unit 19) She doesn't work anymore because she works hard all the whole her life. (t-unit 20) I want to thank god that send me to be a daughter of my mother.

Middle-Rated Essay 2

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) When I was young, I used to love everything that was around me like every child. (t-unit 2) The things were not only human beings but everything, such as funny toys, delicious foods, and beautiful armaments. (t-unit 3) I don't be like that any more when I am growing to be at teenage.

(t-unit 4) Actually, everybody loves parents most because every parents are the greatest person of children. (t-unit 5) Most parents take care their children, bring all good things to them, cook delicious foods every meals to feed them, and prepare the best gifts for them in the birthday. (t-unit 6) Although every parents do the best things to their children, their kids still react bad actions all the times.

(t-unit 7) I used to have a girlfriend (t-unit 8) but I think it was a puppy love because I was just about 14-15 years old. (t-unit 9) I liked her like a fashion and wanted another sex friend. (t-unit 10) Now I still don't have any one because I know "Love" is more than "Like", (t-unit 11) but I have a person who I like and want her to be my love in the future. (t-unit 12) At first I met her, I thought she was cute and wanted to know her more. (t-unit 13) We spent times and had activities to do together such as camping, playing sports, and travelling, (t-unit 14) but I didn't express that I

wanted to be your boyfriend. (t-unit 15) I treated her just like a good friend. (t-unit 16) Although I did that, I hoped in my deep mind that she would be my love. (t-unit 17) Now I think she is my most love person.

(t-unit 18) I think love is more than 2 people like same things, do same things, and say together. (t-unit 19) Love is kind, gentle, not selfish, bearable, and all good behaviors.

Middle-Rated Essay 3

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) Whenever, I'm happy , I'm sad or I'm in trouble, I can still smile because I know that I'm not lonely. (t-unit 2) There was someone who love me, care for me, help me and always be with me whatever I'm good or bad (t-unit 3) because he is my father.

(t-unit 4) My father is the person I love most. (t-unit 5) He is the best person in every way. (t-unit 6) He always takes care of me and my family. (t-unit 7) Even he has a lot of works to response (t-unit 8) but he never ignore the family. (t-unit 9) He do everything to make our family happy. (t-unit 10) When I have a problem with friends, homework or anything. (t-unit 11) He always give me good advice and teach me how to these problems. (t-unit 12) When I'm sick, he take care of me until I get well. (t-unit 13) He knows what I want and always make me surprise by give me a party and buy me everything what I want. (t-unit 14) Every times when he have free time, he always take us to relax in a beautiful places such as the beaches, hill or waterfalls. (t-unit 15) He never murmor when he drive too long to take us to those places.

(t-unit 16) Now my father is getting old. (t-unit 17) I have to take care of him in stead of he take care of me. (t-unit 18) And I will a good girl for him and try to makes him happy in every way that I can do.

Middle-Rated Essay 4

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) I love many persons, such as my friends, my cousin, or my relatives, (t-unit 2) but I exactly love my parent most. (t-unit 3) Do you know why I love them most?

(t-unit 4) I was born by them (t-unit 5) and they raise me as an egg in the stone. (t-unit 6) If I want something which I like, they will find it to me. (t-unit 7) They instruct me to be a good person and teach me in everything which is good. (t-unit 8) I know they do not want the benefit from me, (t-unit 9) they hope me to be a person who can live in society by lonely instead. (t-unit 10) They always teach me to know how I can live with other people in society (t-unit 11) that is I should adapt myself and listen to other's thinking.

(t-unit 12) They plan me to attend to the school where is great for me (t-unit 13) and If I would like to study extra course, Japanese course, cosmetic course and other, they always support me. (t-unit 14) When I had to exame an entrance examination to attend the government university, they supported me to find the best tutor for studying. (t-unit 15) Finally, I could pass an entrance examination (t-unit 16) and I attend to the university where I like. (t-unit 17) I know they proud of me because they always talk about it with their friends.

(t-unit 18) Even I grow up and can look after them, they still look at me as a little kid. (t-unit 19) I know they always concern me, (t-unit 20) so I promise I will be a good child for them and do everything for them to make them happy.

Middle-Rated Essay 5

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) In my life, I love many people. (t-unit 2) Love'll never empty from my heart, (t-unit 3) so I can give *my love* to everyone I want. (t-unit 4) I love somebody so much, (t-unit 5) but I love someone less. (t-unit 6) Someone, I just like. (t-unit 7) I have 4 person who I love most, my father, my mother, my grandmother, and my valentine. (t-unit 8) I can die for them.

(t-unit 9) I love my father more than my mother. (t-unit 10) I don't know why (t-unit 11) but I think that I always talk and do hobbies with my father more than my mother. (t-unit 12) Sometime I get angry with him, (t-unit 13) but sometime he get angry with me. (t-unit 14) I always help my father repair house's hardware such as, computer, car, etc. (t-unit 15) I'm a good assistance because I can do everything and (t-unit 16) I never hate or afraid that I will dirty. (t-unit 17) (I know I can wash)

(t-unit 18) I don't like housework. (t-unit 19) That make my mother always get angry with me. (t-unit 20) I hate to do all of them. (t-unit 21) I do housework in only my part, (t-unit 22) but I don't help another's. (t-unit 23) Sometime I get angry with my mother because she always forces me to do something that I don't want to do. (t-unit 24) Sometime I do housework if my mother is not at home. (t-unit 25) So she never know that I do housework and take care house. (t-unit 26) She always think that I'm lazy and never help her that makes me angry too. (t-unit 27) But I always love her.

(t-unit 28) I love my grandmother very much. (t-unit 29) She is the mother of my mother. (t-unit 30) She is so lovely. (t-unit 31) She had taken care me since I was young until I'd moved the school (t-unit 32) when I was in grade one I had to move my house, too. (t-unit 33) But I still try to find the free time for visit her always. (t-unit 34) Sometime I cook foods or snake for her. (t-unit 35) She never get angry with me (t-unit 36) and I never get angry with her. (t-unit 37) (and I'll never get angry with her)

(t-unit 38) I have someone who come into my life and grabbed my heart. (t-unit 39) I love him so much. (t-unit 40) I keep everyone I love in my heart. (t-unit 41) Sometime I can forget. (t-unit 42) But Jork is different. (t-unit 43) I don't keep him in my heart. (t-unit 44) But he is my heart. (t-unit 45) The only one heart that I have and I can't miss. (t-unit 46) He is a very good man. (t-unit 47) He doesn't smoke, (t-unit 48) He doesn't drink. (t-unit 49) He is a good gentleman, so poilet and smart. (t-unit 50) (Thanks god, I found him.)

(t-unit 51) I don't care if no one loves me. (t-unit 52) I don't care if no one can die for me. (t-unit 53) Because I know who I love (t-unit 54) and I have to live my life for take care them. (t-unit 55) I only want to see their smile, their healthy, and their happiness. (t-unit 56) I never feel sad if they love me less than I love them.

Low-Rated Essay 1

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) In this world, there are only two persons who have meaning to me. (t-unit 2) They're very important to my life. (t-unit 3) They're my parents who give me all the world.

(t-unit 4) Since I was young, they look after me very well. (t-unit 5) When I've got a problem and I can't solve it. (t-unit 6) They'll talk to me for my problem and guide me to find the way to solve it. (t-unit 7) Sometime I do something wrong (t-unit 8) and my mother complain me seriously. (t-unit 9) I won't do anything even say any words with her because I know that she won't listen to me although I've my best reason; (t-unit 10) in that time, my father will be there for release our angry mood by making something fun. (t-unit 11) From this thing, I've know that father and mother have an opposite habits. (t-unit 12) My father is clam, kind and fun. (t-unit 13) He never blame me or hit me (t-unit 14) but mother like she has a power in family. (t-unit 15) However, they can go along together very well.

(t-unit 16) My parents give a warm and love to our house. (t-unit 17) We always have a time to each other and sometime go out together. (t-unit 18) When I thinking of the person who I love. (t-unit 19) They are the first person that I thinking of.

Low-Rated Essay 2

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) First thought, I would like to write about my parent (t-unit 2) but I could not choose one of them; (t-unit 3) I really love them both. (t-unit 4) Now I decide to write about my favorite singer. (t-unit 5) The word "love" may sound over saying to the one who I don't know him for real. (t-unit 6) His name is Mike Shinoda who is the emcee of Linkin Park band. (t-unit 7) He is American – Japanese, living in The State. (t-unit 8) Since I have known him and listen his music. (t-unit 9) He gives me many inspirations. (t-unit 10) He is the kind of person who knows what he loves and want to be since he was young (t-unit 11) (his family always has supported him).

(t-unit 12) When he was at the art school, he had his own band which had the show only in the pub. (t-unit 13) But that band did not achieve, (t-unit 14) he did not give up. (t-unit 15) He sent many sample tapes to the music company and had like a million shows for them. (t-unit 16) Finally, his band made the contract with Warner Bro. Company. (t-unit 17) His first album released on 24th October, 1999 , naming Hybrid Theory. (t-unit 18) Until now, he and his band got a lot of success, (t-unit 19) he never act like the general star. (t-unit 20) “They are very down to earth” saying by one of their fan, (t-unit 21) he and his member love to talk and have interactive with every fans. (t-unit 22) That’s why this band is very popular. (t-unit 23) The reason that I think I love him is he has never given up from his dream although it’s hard to follow. (t-unit 24) He did a good job, (t-unit 25) his lyrics are so meanful about life. (t-unit 26) When I feel down and nobody doesn’t understand me. (t-unit 27) His songs help me to make it through. (t-unit 28) The songs teach me that no matter how hard life is, it is not only me in the world who suffer from it. (t-unit 29) Life is more beautiful and complex, (t-unit 30) if we know how to live absorb the good thing and how to deal with the world, our lives would be happy. (t-unit 31) It’s all that I love him.

Low-Rated Essay 3

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) Not only me, but also the majority of people in the world love their parents most. (t-unit 2) Why? (t-unit 3) Because I think if children don’t have the most extreme problem from their parents. (t-unit 4) The person who they love most should be their parents.

(t-unit 5) In my opinion, I think most of children will love their mothers more than father, and also me, (t-unit 6) I think the reason should because mothers always look after and take care their children more than fathers. (t-unit 7) This made children more close to their mothers. (t-unit 8) And fathers always disadvantage about this because fathers have to work outside all the time, and rarely to have an opportunity to look after their children (t-unit 9) I mean less than mothers; (t-unit 10) moreover, the father's nature always don't expose himself or his feeling to their children.

(t-unit 11) The minority of children will have any extreme problem from their parents. (t-unit 12) Some are about cruel. (t-unit 13) This may make the children dislike or some case hate their parents.

(t-unit 14) In my opinion, I think you can love someone else most, (t-unit 15) but you should love your parents and look after and take care them as same as they give to you.

Low-Rated Essay 4

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) All of my life's time, from the day that my mother pregnant until now, I am so lucky because I have a lovely woman who gave me my life, my breath, (t-unit 2) and she always treats me good.

(t-unit 3) When I was young, she taught me to walk, to talk, to write and so on. (t-unit 4) Every night, before I went to bed she sang the sweet songs, and told me the wonderful tales. (t-unit 5) I slept in her warmest arms till I was 12. (t-unit 6) I had to move to Bangkok to study. (t-unit 7) At that time, all of the sadnesses ran to me. (t-unit 8) Although I can't not be in her arms now, her love always holds around

me. (t-unit 9) The long way from Bangkok to Songkhla is not the wall of our loves, since I keep her deeply in my heart. (t-unit 10) Therefore, anywhere I am, there is her. (t-unit 11) Anytime I cry, she wipes the bitter tears from my eyes, (t-unit 12) and anytime I am glad, she shows me our happiest smile. (t-unit 13) My mother, she is my all good things; (t-unit 14) she can be my friend when I feel lovely, (t-unit 15) she can be my teacher when I am so confused. (t-unit 16) And certainly, she is my excellent mother. (t-unit 17) My beautiful life was built by her, (t-unit 18) so I love her most. (t-unit 19) Although I close my eyes, I can see her beside me. (t-unit 20) Even if I'm far away from her, I can feel her warmth arms.

(t-unit 21) Though the time moves, my love for my mother always be here in my heart. (t-unit 22) it will not change forever; (t-unit 23) Mother ! I love you most.

Low-Rated Essay 5

The Person I Love Most

(t-unit 1) Since I was born, there is a person who usually take care of me. (t-unit 2) She gives me the photonic mind (t-unit 3) that is very meaning for me to still be alive or grow (t-unit 4) Not only the abstract thing but the concrete also. (t-unit 5) The gift that she gives me thought someone tell me it is common, I respect all. (t-unit 6) The most special concrete she give me is my body, my life. (t-unit 7) She is my mother and only one real.

(t-unit 8) My mother almost do all housework for every people in the house, thought she have her own work outside. (t-unit 9) Imagining when I was the enfant ,how busy she is (t-unit 10) but she can do and do it very well. (t-unit 11) I grow up bit by bit and day by day. (t-unit 12) I face with many problems that every person ever confront with. (t-unit 13) Something differ from the other. (t-unit 14) I have my

mother to console me nearby. (t-unit 15) She point the good way to exit from her experience. (t-unit 16) It is true, (t-unit 17) I can struggle the problem by her direction. (t-unit 18) The way I grow up, (t-unit 19) some pate she have pave it for me. (t-unit 20) She want me to grow in beautiful world and can fly away with her smile. (t-unit 21) She didn't want anything back for the good thing she gave.

(t-unit 22) I am very glad to has her beside. (t-unit 23) She made me love her most more and more. (t-unit 24) Time past so quickly (t-unit 25) that she is old. (t-unit 26) Some people may tell she is not beautiful (t-unit 27) but in her mind there is the pretty thing I can see through. (t-unit 28) I promise to keep it forever because she is the person I love most.

VISTA

VISTA

Name: Miss Apinya Buacomecote

Date of birth: July 21, 1974

Place of birth: Udon Thani, Thailand

Address: 199/694 Ring Road, Muang District, Udon Thani
Thailand 41000

Present Position: A Teacher of English at Loei Vocational College, Loei,
Thailand 42000

Educational Background:

2003 Master of Education (English),
Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok

1996 Bachelor of Arts (English),
Rajabhat Institute Udon Thani, Udon Thani