Thematic Progression in English and Punjabi Editorials: Considerations for Genre and Coherence

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents a comparative study of the texts called "editorials" from English and Punjabi newspapers published in India in the light of Systemic Functional concept of "Thematic Progression" and considerations for genre and coherence. "Thematic progression" refers to the way a text moves forward by creating links or breaks in the way information at the "Theme" position is presented in each subsequent clause. Daneš defines thematic progression *as "the choice and ordering of utterance themes, their mutual concatenation and hierarchy, as well as their relationship to the hyper-themes of the superior text units (such as paragraph, chapter...), to the whole text and to the situation" 1974:114). While this paper draws on the work and categories introduced by Daneš and some later researchers (Xu 1982; Huang 1985; Hu 1994; Zu 1995; McCabe 1999; Hawes 2001; Li 2009; Dubois 2009), it introduces the concept of "chunked progression", which Danešian model and the work by others does not account for, suggesting that the whole text cannot progress as an entity and therefore coherence in texts does not rely solely on the number of theme choices in a text. As new themes come into focus and progress, the progression type may remain the same or vary but the focus of information changes leading to chunks of information which have their own progression different from or similar to other chunks. These chunks are a useful tool in predicting the focus and coherence of a text.*