Revealing Gender Ideology in Integrated Korean Language Textbooks through Theme-Rheme Structures: A Systemic Functional Linguistic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study adopts a Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) approach grounded in Halliday's theoretical framework to investigate Theme-Rheme structures in the Integrated Korean Language textbooks. This research is significant as prior studies on Korean language textbooks have largely overlooked the interplay between thematic structure and ideological representation, leaving a gap in understanding how discourse patterns contribute to implicit cultural messaging. The primary objective is to examine the deployment of marked and unmarked themes as well as the patterns of thematic progression within narrative and descriptive texts. The data are drawn from Volumes 3 and 4 of the textbooks, which encompass cultural, object-related, and activity-based themes. The findings indicate that the majority of clauses adhere to the Simple Linear Thematic Progression pattern, wherein the rheme of one clause becomes the theme of the subsequent clause, thereby contributing to a cohesive and logically sequenced discourse. In certain instances, Complex Linear Progression patterns were also observed, offering extended elaboration of central ideas. Material and relational processes are predominantly employed to represent actions and identity relationships, illustrating how lexical choices such as verbs and conjunctions function to structure the narrative. Furthermore, the analysis reveals the implicit integration of feminist ideology gender roles within the texts, particularly concerning evolving gender roles in contemporary Korean households. The thematic patterns identified reflect broader social values and ideological transformations embedded in the educational material, conveying underlying messages that promote gender equality and advocate for more equitable social roles. The thematic patterns identified in the texts function not only to organize information but also to foreground specific social actors and actions that align with feminist ideology. By consistently thematizing female subjects, progressive roles, or relational identities, the texts reflect and reinforce broader social values of gender equality and contribute to the ideological transformation toward more equitable gender norms.

Keywords: Feminist Ideology, Gender Roles, Theme-Rheme, Thematic Progression, Systemic Functional Approach

1. INTRODUCTION

Ideology plays a significant role in shaping individual and collective worldviews, influencing social behavior, cultural norms, and institutional structures. Language, as a system of meaning-making, is a primary medium through which ideologies are articulated, transmitted, and reproduced (Kıraç, 2023). While symbols also carry ideological significance, language functions

as a more direct and systematic channel for constructing meaning, particularly in educational contexts.

In language education, particularly through textbooks, ideological representations are often subtly embedded within the linguistic and cultural content. This is especially relevant for Korean language textbooks, such as the "Integrated Korean for Indonesians," where language instruction is intertwined with the transmission of Korean social values and cultural narratives. For instance, lessons frequently portray idealized family structures that emphasize filial piety and respect for elders, reinforcing Confucian hierarchical values. Dialogues involving male and female characters often reflect traditional gender roles, with women shown in caregiving or domestic contexts and men in positions of authority or decision-making. Moreover, cultural notes and visual materials tend to highlight nationalistic symbols—such as the Korean flag, traditional clothing (hanbok), and historical landmarks—framing Korean identity through a lens of cultural pride and historical continuity.

These textbooks reflect societal norms such as hierarchy, collectivism, politeness, and changing gender roles, often mediated through narrative and descriptive texts accompanied by visual representations.

Given the increasing significance of global education and intercultural awareness, it is essential to analyze how these ideological messages are communicated through language. Despite the important role of textbooks in language and cultural education, studies rarely explore how ideological content influences learners' perceptions of the target culture. Particularly in the context of Korean language education for Indonesian learners, there is a need to critically examine the implicit messages conveyed through the structure and progression of themes.

This study focuses on Volumes 3 and 4 of the Integrated Korean textbooks and adopts a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework to analyze theme-rheme structures in selected reading texts. Drawing on Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), the study employs the concept of Theme-Rheme to understand how textual meaning is structured and how information flows within clauses. Additionally, Eggins (2004) provides a practical framework for identifying thematic progression patterns, while Martin and Rose (2007) emphasize the role of theme in constructing ideational and interpersonal meanings in educational discourse. It explores how these structures reveal underlying ideological representations, especially related to gender roles and cultural identity. By focusing on thematic progression and the function of clauses within texts, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of how language constructs ideology in educational materials.

Several studies have analyzed theme-rheme progression, primarily in English language textbooks (Mahfud et al., 2024; Wengrum, 2020; Djonov & Muller, 2017; Li, 2016; Pratama et al., 2021; Setiyono, 2019; Susanto, 2020). However, research on thematic structures in Korean textbooks, especially for Indonesian contexts, remains limited. For example, Mahfud et al. (2024) examined thematic progression in Indonesian high school English textbooks to identify patterns that support coherence in expository texts, while Li (2016) focused on how thematic choices in Chinese EFL textbooks affect reading comprehension. Djonov and Muller (2017), through a multimodal approach, explored how theme interacts with image in English literacy materials. In contrast, studies analyzing Korean language textbooks—particularly those designed for foreign learners such as Indonesians—have not adequately addressed how thematic structure contributes to both linguistic coherence and the embedding of ideological

values, such as gender roles or cultural hierarchies. Furthermore, while some research has addressed cultural representation in Korean textbooks (e.g., Kim, 2020; Jeon, 2019), these studies rarely integrate a systemic functional linguistic perspective that examines how such representations are constructed through theme-rheme organization at the clause level. This study aims to fill this gap by combining SFL-based thematic analysis with a critical discourse perspective to uncover how meaning and ideology are co-constructed in the Korean language learning materials used by Indonesian students. Furthermore, while ideological critique has been applied to various media texts, few studies apply this lens to Korean language materials using SFL and critical discourse analysis (CDA).

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the linguistic realization of ideology through theme-rheme structures in Korean language textbooks for Indonesian learners. It investigates not only what ideologies are presented, but how these ideologies are structured through language. The research aims to (1) identify themes in the texts, (2) analyze their thematic progression, and (3) interpret how these linguistic patterns reflect ideological content. Through this approach, the study seeks to inform both textbook analysis and foreign language pedagogy.

2. METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), focusing on the theme-rheme framework derived from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). CDA serves as a tool to uncover the relationship between language and ideology, exploring how textual structures reflect and shape social values, identities, and power relations. Through SFL, this study emphasizes the textual metafunction—particularly the organization of theme and rheme—to examine how Korean language textbooks construct meaning and embed ideological perspectives. The integration of CDA and SFL in this study follows the tradition of scholars such as Fairclough (1995) and Wodak (2001), who argue that SFL offers a systematic linguistic foundation for analyzing how discourse encodes power and ideology. Specifically, SFL's theme-rheme analysis provides the tools for identifying which elements are foregrounded or backgrounded in discourse, which is central to CDA's concern with uncovering implicit ideological structures (see also Machin & Mayr, 2012). By examining how information is staged through thematic choices, this study interrogates the discursive construction of gender roles, cultural identity, and social hierarchy in Korean language textbooks. This dual approach allows for both micro-level linguistic analysis and macro-level interpretation of sociocultural meanings, making it particularly effective for analyzing multimodal educational texts.

The data source comprises reading texts from Volumes 3 and 4 of the Integrated Korean Language textbooks published by the Korea Foundation for Indonesian learners. These volumes were selected for their rich textual content, cultural themes, and suitability for intermediate learners. Texts were chosen based on their relevance to cultural representation, gender discourse, and thematic coherence. The selection includes both narrative and descriptive texts, which were analyzed to identify the organization of themes and ideological positioning.

The study proceeded in three main phases: (1) data collection and preparation, (2) theme-rheme identification and coding, and (3) analysis and interpretation. Texts were transcribed and segmented into clauses, each analyzed for its thematic structure—classifying elements as marked or unmarked themes, rhemes, and identifying the types of processes (material,

relational, mental, etc.) used. Additionally, thematic progression patterns were identified, such as simple linear, constant, or split progression.

The main analytical instruments included a clause segmentation template and theme-rheme analysis sheets. These tools facilitated the categorization of participants, processes, and circumstances based on ideational and textual metafunctions. Frequency analysis of thematic structures was also conducted to identify dominant patterns and their contribution to the representation of ideology in the texts.

This methodology is designed to systematically uncover how linguistic choices in the textbooks contribute to ideological messaging. By focusing on thematic development and process types, this study aims to reveal how representations of gender, culture, and social roles are constructed in the pedagogical discourse of Korean language education for Indonesian learners.

The primary instrument for this study is Halliday's theme-rheme analysis theory, which is grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The study also utilizes a text theme analysis sheet to help categorize and extract themes from the reading texts. The theme-rheme analysis focuses on the ideational metafunction of SFL, which relates to the expression of experiences and ideas within texts. The classification of themes and rhemes is detailed in Table 1, which outlines the thematic and rheme structures used to analyze the texts.

Table 1. Theme-Rheme Classification in Ideational Metafunctions

Ideational Metafunctions	Type
Participant	Actor/goal/beneficiary
	Senser/phenomenon
	Carrier/attribute
	Identifier/identified
	Sayer/receiver
Process	Material (Event, Action)
	Mental (Perception, Cognition, Affection)
	Relational (Attributive, Identifying)
	Verbal
	Behavioural
	Existential
Circumstance	Time, Place
Textual Metafunction	Type
Theme	Marked theme (non-subject, e.g., adverbial groups, prepositional phrases, fronted objects)
Rheme |	N/A
*1234 indicate common patterns.	

The research follows a systematic procedure for data collection and analysis. Initially, all selected reading texts will be transcribed into Microsoft Word documents for ease of analysis. Each text will be input into a text theme analysis sheet (see Table 2), where open coding will be applied to identify key themes, categories, and elements in the texts.

Table 2. Text Theme Analysis Sheet

Integrated Korean Language Textbook Level 3 - KF			
Chapter/Topic	Page	Text Title	Open Code

These open codes will then be categorized and organized by theme (see Table 3), enabling the identification of central ideologies in the text. Once the thematic analysis is complete, the texts will undergo theme-rheme analysis, focusing on the structure of clauses and identifying participants, processes, and circumstances in each clause.

Table 3. Categorization and Thematization of Reading Texts

Integrated Korean Language Textbook Level 3 - KF		
Open Code	Category	Theme
B3-T1	Things	Korean Education System
B4-T1	Person	Korean Heroes

Category: Person/Things/Activity

The procedure will conclude with an interpretation of the analysis results, identifying how the themes and rhemes contribute to the ideological representation in the texts. The research procedure ensures consistency and validity through detailed steps for data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Data analysis in this study involves both qualitative and quantitative methods. Initially, the texts will be analyzed qualitatively through open coding to identify key themes and categories. Once the themes have been extracted, they will be further investigated using theme-rheme analysis to explore how participants, processes, and circumstances are represented in the text. Each clause will be separated into its theme and rheme components, as shown in Table 4. This process will help uncover the ideological representations embedded in the texts.

Table 4. Clause Separation Analysis Sheet in Theme-Rheme

Theme	Rheme	
Circumstance/Conjunction/Participant	Verb process (Type)	Participant/Circumstance/Quality/Identity
Yesterday, the students (Marked)	celebrated (material, doing)	Hari Kemerdekaan Indonesia

In terms of quantitative analysis, the frequency and distribution of themes and rhemes will be recorded to identify patterns across the different reading texts. These patterns will then be analyzed in relation to the ideological content of the texts. By comparing the thematic and rheme structures, the research will identify how the language used in the texts conveys certain ideologies, such as nationalism, identity, or cultural values. The final analysis will also compare the thematic structures and ideologies across different editions of the textbook (if applicable) to see how cultural context influences the representation of ideologies. The findings will contribute to the understanding of how language and its structure in textbooks may influence learners' perceptions and understanding of ideologies, particularly in the context of language acquisition and cultural education.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data for this study consists of 30 texts from the Korean Culture section in the Integrated Korean Language Textbook (Korean Foundation) for Levels 3 and 4. For Level 4, the table contains fifteen entries divided into three main categories: Things, Activity, and Person. The themes at this level focus more on social issues, cultural changes, job preferences, emotional expressions, and traditional and modern phenomena in South Korea. For example, topics like "Job Preferences of Korean Students" and "Environmental Awareness Movement" highlight contemporary issues, while themes such as "Characters in Traditional Korean Folktales" touch on older cultural values. On the other hand, the Level 3 textbook also contains fifteen entries using similar categories: Things, Activity, and Person. However, it emphasizes daily activities and social interactions. Many themes in this book revolve around practical activities like "Shopping in Korea," "Activities at the Bank," and "Maintaining Health." Additionally, there is a focus on aspects of Korean etiquette and social norms, such as "Daily Korean Etiquette" and "Public Expectations." .

The classification of texts into Things, Activity, and Person categories reflects a deliberate pedagogical sequencing of cultural content from the personal to the social. This aligns with Research Question 1 by demonstrating a progression in thematic focus from basic social practices in Level 3 to more abstract sociocultural concerns in Level 4.

In terms of thematic progression (RQ2), Level 3 texts predominantly follow Simple Linear Thematic Progression, where the rheme of one clause becomes the theme of the next (e.g., "In Korea, people usually bow. Bowing is a way to greet others."). This pattern promotes coherence in explanatory texts and aids beginning learners' comprehension. By contrast, Level 4 texts more frequently utilize Complex or Split Progression, reflecting learners' increased proficiency. For example, in "Environmental Awareness Movement," the thematic flow expands from individual actions to collective responsibility and national policy, indicating an ideological shift from personal practice to systemic critique.

As for ideological representation (RQ3), the analysis reveals that Level 4 texts embed progressive social values such as environmental sustainability, gender equity, and youth agency—framed within a Korean sociocultural context. For instance, in the topic "Job Preferences of Korean Students," the text juxtaposes traditional expectations (e.g., government jobs) with contemporary aspirations (e.g., creative fields), subtly valorizing individual choice over conformity. Meanwhile, Level 3 texts reinforce traditional norms such as politeness, cleanliness, and group harmony, which align with Confucian social values. Through thematic selection and progression, both levels reflect and reproduce ideologies about what it means to be a competent social actor in Korean society.

In general, Level 4 focuses on more complex and broader topics, including discussions about cultural changes and modern issues. In contrast, Level 3 emphasizes more practical themes related to everyday activities and social interactions in Korea. Level 4 is designed for learners who have a deeper understanding of the Korean language and culture, while Level 3 is more suitable for learners who are still getting acquainted with Korean daily life and customs.

From a Theme-Rheme perspective, texts in Level 3 tend to use unmarked topical Themes, often beginning with familiar subjects such as people or places ("Koreans usually...," "In Korean markets..."). These choices support explicit, linear organization and instructional clarity for beginner learners. The Rheme typically contains new, concrete information that completes a simple, action-oriented message ("...say hello by bowing," "...use cash or cards").

Conversely, Level 4 texts often employ more varied and marked Themes, including clause-initial adverbials ("Recently in Korea...," "Compared to the past...") or abstract concepts ("Environmental concerns...," "Job satisfaction...") that frame the discourse ideationally. The Rheme sections in Level 4 are more elaborated, often introducing evaluative or explanatory content that aligns with argumentative or reflective genres ("...have become a major concern among youth," "...is shaped by societal expectations"). This shift in thematic structure demonstrates a pedagogical progression toward complex reasoning and critical thinking, while simultaneously reflecting ideologically nuanced portrayals of contemporary Korean society.

3.1 Themes Found in the Texts
3.1.1 Person

Based on the first stage analysis of data from *Integrated Korean Language Book Volumes 3 and 4*, only one text was identified as having a theme focused on a person. The text labelled B4-T15 features characters from various traditional Korean folktales, such as *Simcheong*, *Chunhyang*, *Heungbu*, and *Nolbu*. An example of the depiction of these characters can be seen in the Table 5.

Table 5. Theme-Rheme Classification of B4-T15-K5

Data Number: B4-T15-K5	Theme	Rheme
Circumstance/Conjunction/Participant	Participant/Circumstance/Quality/Identity	Verb Process (Type)
먼저 '심청'은 (First, 'Simcheong')	'효'를 대표하는 인물 (A character representing 'filial piety')	이다 (is)

Analysis: The data analysis of B4-T15-K5 reveals the theme-rheme structure in a descriptive clause portraying the character *Simcheong*. The use of a marked textual theme with the word "먼저" (first) indicates the author's intention to prioritize the sequence of character descriptions, with *Simcheong* being the first to be explained. This is typical in narrative or descriptive texts aiming to establish a clear order when depicting various characters or objects. In the rheme, the clause characterizes *Simcheong* as a representative figure of filial piety, serving as the main descriptive element of the character. The verbal process is a relational process with the verb "이다" (is), which is commonly used in identification clauses. Relational processes, as described by Halliday (2014), are employed to link an attribute or identity to a particular entity, here connecting *Simcheong* to the value of filial piety. The marked textual theme assists in providing a clear narrative structure, especially when arranging information in a specific sequence. The sentence uses a theme-rheme structure to emphasize the order of information (starting with "first") and then identifies *Simcheong* with a description relating to the values of filial piety. This aligns with Halliday's definition of a relational process, conveying identity or characteristic relationships between entities in a clause.

3.1.2 Things

The analysis found 14 texts focusing on objects (things), both concrete and abstract. For example, text B3-T14 discusses "Korean Films" (a concrete object), while text B4-T11 covers "Differences in Marriage Standards for Korean Men and Women" (an abstract concept). The example checks Table 6.

Table 6. Theme-Rheme Classification of B3-T5-K10

Data Number: B3-T5-K10	Theme	Rheme
Circumstance/Conjunction/Participant	Participant/Circumstance/Quality/Identity	Verb Process (Type)
'찜'은 ('Jjim')	재료를 오랫동안 쪄서 만든 음식 (Food made by steaming ingredients for a long time)	의미하며 (means)

Analysis:

The theme "찜은" (Jjim) is unmarked and occupies the subject position, indicated by the topic particle '은'. The relational process verb '의미하다' (means) connects the subject with its definition, making it a typical identifying clause. The rheme provides detailed information about the food item *Jjim*, illustrating its preparation process, which further clarifies its identity as a type of steamed dish.

3.1.3 Activity

Fourteen texts identified the theme of activities representing Korean culture, categorized into three main themes: national holidays, Korean lifestyle, and daily activities. Examples include texts about "Seollal Celebrations" (B4-T7), "Gender Roles in Housework" (B4-T2), and "Daily Korean Etiquette" (B3-T15). The example checks Table 7.

Table 7. Theme-Rheme Classification of B4-T7-K3

Data Number: B4-T7-K3	Theme	Rheme
Circumstance/Conjunction/ Participant	Participant/Circumstance/Quality/ Identity	Verb Process (Type)
설날 아침에는 가족 및 친척들이 (On the morning of New Year's Day, family and relatives)	모여 집안의 조상들을 대접하는 의미로 차례를 (Gather for an ancestral memorial ceremony)	지낸다 (perform)

Analysis:

The marked theme "설날 아침에는 가족 및 친척들이" (On New Year's morning, family and relatives) emphasizes the temporal context. The rheme describes the action involving the gathering for a traditional ceremony, with the verb "지낸다" (perform), a material process indicating an observable activity.

This theme-rheme structure highlights the cultural practice of gathering for ceremonies, reflecting the importance of time and context in Korean family traditions.

Overall, these analyses demonstrate how Korean prose texts use theme-rheme structures to highlight key characters, objects, and activities, revealing the cultural and narrative functions within the texts.

3.2 Theme-Rheme Pattern

3.2.1 Simple Linear Thematic Progression

One of the thematic progression patterns found in the texts from *Integrated Korean Language Book 4* is **simple linear thematic progression**. In this pattern, the themes in each clause originate from the rhemes of the preceding clauses, which is why it is often referred to as **"zigzag thematic progression."** This pattern appears in data sample B4-T2, which discusses gender roles within the household domain as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Text B4-T2

한국 가정 가사 분담의 최근 경향

맞벌이 부부가 증가하면서 가사 분담에 대한 인식과 흐름이 예전과 달라지고 있다. 가부장제 문화가 지배적이었던 과거의 한국 사회에서 가사 노동은 '여성의 일'이라는 의식이 강했고 남성은 가장으로서의 역할에만 관심을 두고 가사 노동의 참여 에는 소홀하거나 보조적인 역할에 그쳤었다. 그러나 여성들의 사회 활동 참여가 증가하면서 부부의 성 역할에도 변화가 생기 기 시작했다. 특히 20~30대 신세대 부부들의 가사 분담의 형태 가 변하면서 과거에는 남편과 아내의 가정 내 역할이 분명하게 구분되었지만 이러한 구분이 점차 감소하게 된 것이다. 서울과 경기 지역의 20~40대 남성들을 대상으로 한 가사 참여에 대한 최근 몇 년 간의 설문 조사에 따르면 집안 청소, 설거지, 이불 개기, 세탁, 화장실 청소, 식사 준비 등에 참여한다는 응답이 해마다 증가하고 있다고 한다. 또한 여성들의 전유물로만 여겨져 왔던 명절 준비 참여 비율이 높아지고높아 지고 있는 것도 주목할 만한 변화이다. 이 같은 결과는 이제는 남성들도 가 사를 생활의 일부로 받아들이고 있다는 인식을 반영한다. 또한 20~40대 기혼 직장인 남성들은 서로 도우며 살아가는 부부 관계를 원하므로 맞벌이 와 가사 분담은 기본이라는 인식이 강해지고 있다. 물론 이러한 인식의 변화가 가사 노동 시간의 평등과 일치하는 것은 아니다. 남성들의 가사 노동 시간이 해마다 증가하고 있는 것은 사실이나 여전히 주부의 가사 노동 시간은 남성에 비해 높고, 연령대가 높을수록 남성의 가사 참여는 소극 적이다. 여성의 사회 진출과 핵가족화 등과 같은 사회 변화에 맞추어 가사가 '여성'의 일이 아닌 '가족의 일'로 인식될 수 있도록 생각을 바꾸고 함께 노력하는 것은 앞으로 한국 사회가 풀어가야 할 과제이다.

Title: Recent Trends in Household Chores Distribution in Korean Families
The perception and trend of dividing household chores have been changing as dual-income couples have increased. In the past, during the dominance of patriarchal culture in Korean society, household labor was strongly perceived as "women's work," and men focused only on their role as the head of the family, often neglecting or playing a supportive role in household tasks. However, as women's participation in the workforce has grown, changes in the gender roles of couples have begun. Especially among the younger generation couples in their 20s and 30s, there has been a shift in the form of chore distribution. In the past, the roles of husbands and wives were distinctly separated, but this division has gradually decreased.

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According to recent surveys conducted among men in their 20s to 40s in Seoul and Gyeonggi Province, there is an increasing trend in participation in various household chores like cleaning, washing dishes, folding blankets, doing laundry, cleaning bathrooms, and meal preparation. Notably, the participation rate in preparing for traditional holidays, which was previously considered a woman's exclusive domain, has been increasing, indicating a significant change. These results reflect a growing perception that men now see household chores as a part of daily life. Additionally, married men in their 20s to 40s desire a partnership where they help each other, leading to a strong belief that dual-income and chore-sharing are fundamental.

Of course, this change in perception does not entirely align with equal division of housework time. While it is true that the time men spend on household chores has increased each year, the time spent by housewives remains significantly higher, and older men tend to participate less in household chores. To adapt to social changes such as increased women's workforce participation and the rise of nuclear families, it is necessary to shift the perception of household chores from being "women's work" to "family work." This is a challenge that Korean society needs to address in the future.

Each clause in the selected text (Text B4-T2) was segmented and analyzed based on Halliday's model of Theme-Rheme structure (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Theme 1 to Theme 10 refer to the sequential identification of thematic elements in each clause. The numbering reflects the chronological order of clauses within the analyzed paragraph. The Theme of each clause is defined as the first experiential element—typically a noun phrase or a marked adverbial phrase—used to launch the message, followed by the Rheme, which carries the new or expanding information. The theme rheme pattern can be seen in Diagram 1.
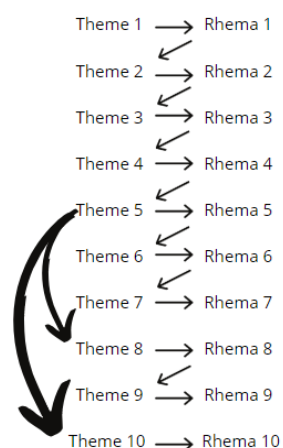

Diagram 1. Theme-Rheme Pattern in Text B4-T2

Analyzing the Theme–Rheme pattern in this text reveals that it follows the Simple Linear Thematic Progression, also known as a "zigzag pattern." In this structure, the Rheme of one clause becomes the Theme of the next, creating a logical flow of ideas. This is observable in Diagram 1, where Theme 1 ("한국의 은행이 하는 일은" / "The role of banks in Korea") presents the initial topic. The Rheme from this clause introduces the bank's specific functions,

which then becomes the Theme in Theme 2 ("은행은 돈을 맡기도 하고") and Theme 3 ("돈을 보내기도 합니다"), thereby showing a clear linear progression.

Most clauses utilize unmarked topical Themes, such as in Theme 1 to Theme 4, where the subject (e.g., "은행은") functions as the Theme. These topical themes help establish the topic in an informative, fact-based tone. However, marked themes are also employed—such as in Theme 5 ("최근에") and Theme 7 ("그중에서")—to draw attention to temporal or contrastive information. Theme 5 ("최근에" / "Recently") functions as a marked topical theme that sets up a transition into newer bank functions, indicating a shift in societal context. This reflects how thematic positioning helps convey not just information, but also ideological emphasis on modernization and relevance.

Additionally, textual Themes like "그러나" ("However", Theme 8) and "그리고" ("And", Theme 6) serve to logically connect clauses, creating cohesion between traditional and modern concepts. These textual Themes support the contrast between older banking functions and their evolving roles in Korean society.

Interpersonal Themes are notably absent or rare across Themes 1–10, reinforcing the idea that the text is objective and descriptive rather than dialogic or evaluative. This supports the text's aim to inform rather than persuade, a feature common in educational materials that seek to present national institutions as stable, rational, and evolving in alignment with social progress.

In sum, the recurring use of topical Themes tied to institutional actors (e.g., 은행 – "bank") combined with logical progressions and contextual marked Themes reflects an ideological narrative of modernization and national development. The text positions Korean banking not just as a functional entity but as an evolving institution aligned with societal progress, subtly reinforcing values like economic rationality and trust in public institutions.

3.2.2 Complex Linear Thematic Progression

One of the texts in Book 4 follows the **Complex Linear Thematic Progression** pattern. The example checks Table 9.

Table 9. Text B4-T10

B4-T10
자린고비
한국에서는 구두쇠처럼 무엇이든지 지나치게 아껴 쓰는 사람을 '자린고비'같다고 합니다. 이 말은 '절인 고비'라는 말에서 유래되었다고 합니다. 한국에서는 제사 때 종이에 죽은 사람의 이 름을 써서 제사상 앞에 붙인 후 제사를 지내고 제사가 끝나면 그 종이를 불에 태웁니다. 그런데 충청도 충주에 살던 부자가 제사 때 쓰는 이 종이가 아까워서 불에 태우지 않고 접어 두었다가 해마다 쓰는 바람에 지방이 기름에 절었다고 합니다. 그래서 '돌아가신 아버지와 어머니'라는 뜻으로 쓰여 있는 '고비'가 기름에 절었다고 하여 '절인 고비'라고 했는데 그것이 입에서 입으로 전해지면서 '자린고비'가 되었다고 합니다. 자린고비가 절약을 하기 위해 한 일은 여러 가지가

있는데 그중 굴비 이야기가 가장 유명합 니다. 자린고비는 평소에 비싼 생선인 굴비를 먹지 않았지만 부모님의 제사에는 굴비를 준비했 습니다. 그러나 굴비가 너무 아까워서 먹지 않고 천장에 매달아 놓고 밥을 먹을 때 보기만 했습 니다. 그런데 식사를 할 때 가족들이 굴비를 자주 쳐다보면 "너무 짜니까 자주 보지 마라."하고 말하곤 했다고 합니다. 이밖에 더울 때 쓰는 부채가 닳는다고 부채를 천장에 매달아 놓고 몸을 흔들었다는 얘기와 길을 갈 때 팔을 흔들고 다니면 옷이 닳는다고 뒷짐을 지고 다녔다는 이야기 등이 유명합니다. 하지만 자린고비는 욕심 많은 구두쇠는 아니었습니다. 이렇게 절약하여 모은 재산을 어려운 사람들을 돕는 데 썼습니다. 진정한 절약과 나눔의 정신을 실천한 사람이었던 것입니다.

Title: Jarin Gobi (The Miser)

In Korea, a person who excessively saves or is extremely frugal is often called a "Jarin Gobi," a term originating from "Jerin Gobi" (pickled gobi). During ancestral rites in Korea, a piece of paper with the deceased's name is placed on the offering table and then burned after the ceremony. However, a wealthy man in Chungju, Chungcheong Province, was too frugal to burn this paper. He folded and kept it for reuse each year, causing the paper inscribed with "father and mother" (gobi) to become oily. Hence, it was called "pickled gobi," and the term evolved into "Jarin Gobi."

Numerous stories exist about Jarin Gobi's frugality. One famous tale involves dried fish (gulbi). Jarin Gobi did not usually eat expensive fish like gulbi, but he prepared it for his parents' memorial services. However, he found it too valuable to consume, so he hung it from the ceiling and merely looked at it while eating. When his family frequently glanced at the fish during meals, he would remark, "Don't look at it too often; it's too salty." Other stories include his reluctance to use a fan for fear it would wear out, so he hung it from the ceiling and fanned himself by moving his body. He also walked with his hands behind his back, fearing his clothes would wear out if he swung his arms.

However, Jarin Gobi was not a greedy miser. The wealth he saved through his frugality was used to help those in need, embodying a spirit of actual savings and sharing.

The text was segmented into 12 clauses for analysis based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, with each clause serving as a unit of meaning. Within each clause, the Theme was identified as the point of departure of the message—typically the first experiential or textual element—and the Rheme as the part that develops the message. The numbering of Theme 1 through Theme 12 corresponds to the sequence of clauses in the narrative. The clauses were segmented by punctuation boundaries and shifts in experiential or ideational content, ensuring each reflects a single proposition or action. The theme rheme pattern can be seen in Diagram 2.

Theme 1 → Rheme 1

Theme 2 → Rheme 2

Theme 3 → Rheme 3

Theme 4 → Rheme 4

Theme 5 → Rheme 5

Theme 6 → Rheme 6

Theme 7 → Rheme 7

Theme 8 → Rheme 8

Theme 9 → Rheme 9

Theme 10 → Rheme 10

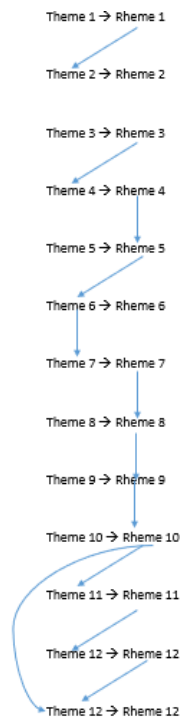Theme 11 → Rheme 11

Theme 12 → Rheme 12

Theme 12 → Rheme 12

Diagram 2. Theme-Rheme Pattern in Text B4-T10

As shown in Diagram 2, each clause is identified with a sequential Theme number (Theme 1–12). These reflect the unfolding of the narrative—from the cultural background of the term '자린고비' (Theme 1–5), to examples of his frugality (Theme 6–10), and finally to a moral evaluation (Theme 11–12). For example, Theme 1 ("한국에서는") initiates the discussion by situating the term culturally. Theme 2 ("이 말은") then reclassifies the term's origin, creating a cohesive reference chain. Themes 6–8 shift the focus to specific actions involving '굴비', showing how old traditions of thrift persist across different scenes. The final two Themes ("하지만 자린고비는…," and "이렇게 절약하여…") serve as evaluative coda, thematizing moral reinterpretation.

The text exhibits a consistent use of topical unmarked themes (e.g., "자린고비는," "이 말은"), which foreground the character and his actions. This pattern supports the narrative's descriptive purpose. Marked themes such as "하지만" and "이렇게 절약하여" in Themes 11 and 12 function as evaluative frames, signaling ideological shifts. The zigzag thematic progression—where the Rheme of one clause becomes the Theme of the next—is evident particularly between Themes 4 to 7, showing how specific examples (굴비, 부채) are built up sequentially to reinforce the moral tone. This organization not only improves coherence but also contributes to the ideological portrayal of frugality as both a personal virtue and a social good.

Overall, the Theme–Rheme structure in this text does not merely serve narrative clarity—it constructs a culturally embedded character whose identity is shaped by Confucian values of thrift, filial duty, and social responsibility. The final Themes (11 and 12) especially reflect a

recontextualization of frugality from a potential flaw (구두쇠) to a moral ideal (나눔의 정신), thus fulfilling the ideological function of the narrative.

3.2.3 Continuous Theme

The **Continuous Theme** pattern is found partially in cultural texts but only throughout part of the text. In Text B4-T1 on the topic of Korean slang "신조어," the first four sentences have a continuous theme pattern, consistently using the same theme: "신조어" (slang). The example checks Table 10.

Table 10. Theme-Rheme Analysis of Text B4-T1

Clause	Theme		Rheme	
1	*Circumstance/Conjunction/Participant*		*Participant/Circumstance/Quality/Identity*	*Verb process (Type)*
	신조어란 'Slang' is		새로 생겨난 개념이나 사물을 표현하기 위해 만들어지는 말로 원래 없던 말이 새로 생겨나거나 기존에 있던 말에 새로운 뜻이 A word created to express newly emerging concepts or objects, where either a previously non-existent word is newly formed or an existing word gains a new meaning. (A freshly formed term to express new concepts)	덧붙여지면서 생성되는 것이다. It is created by being added on
	(Unmarked Theme - nominal group)		*Circumstance*	*Material, doing*
2	*Circumstance/Conjunction/Participant*		*Participant/Circumstance/Quality/Identity*	*Verb process (Type)*
	신조어는 Slang		이러한 개념들을 표현하기 위한 사회적 요구 또는 대중의 요구에 의해서 It is due to the social or societal demands to express these concepts (Is formed based on societal or public demand)	발현된다 revealed or expressed
	Unmarked Theme - nominal group	*Circumstance*	*Material, doing*	

Clause	Theme	Rheme	
3	*Circumstance/Conjunction/Participant*	*Participant/Circumstance/Quality/Identity*	*Verb process (Type)*
	그렇기 때문에 **신조어를 통해** Therefore, through **slang language**	우리는 사회의 변화와 개인의 가치관 또는 사고방식의 변화를 We observe the changes in society and the changes in individual values or ways of thinking. (Reflects changes in society and individual values)	읽을 수 있다 able to read
	Marked Theme - conjunctive adjunct	*Circumstance*	*Material, doing*
4	*Circumstance/Conjunction/Participant*	*Participant/Circumstance/Quality/Identity*	*Verb process (Type)*
	신조어를 통해 한국 사회의 변화를 몇 가지로 요약하면 To summarize the changes in Korean society through **slang language**.	'1인 미디어 시대' '젊은이들의 변화된 직업관' '남성관의 변화' 등으로 The era of personal media,' 'the changing mindset of young people regarding work,' 'the changing views of men,' and so on (Summarizes changes in Korean society)	정리할 수 있다 able to tidy up
	Marked Theme - clause complex	*Circumstance*	*Material, doing*

The table above shows that each theme shares the same element, "신조어," making it a continuous theme. This pattern emphasizes the explanation of slang in Korean, focusing on its definition and significance in a structured manner. Explanation of the Pattern are as follow

- Constant Theme Pattern (Clauses 1–2):

  The repetition of 신조어 ('slang') as the Theme indicates the central concept under discussion. This repetition constructs a coherent focus on linguistic innovation as a social phenomenon, establishing a thematic base.
- Derived/Rheme-Theme Progression (Clause 3):
  The Rheme of Clause 2 (i.e., social/public demand) becomes the implicit referent in Clause 3, where the Theme shifts to a conjunctive circumstance (through slang), linking linguistic change to societal values.
- Split Theme and Thematic Expansion (Clause 4):

The Theme becomes more complex and ideologically loaded, explicitly naming social transformations, including "changing views on men" (남성관의 변화). This expands the previous clause's implications into concrete ideological territory.

The **Theme-Rheme** structure in this text aligns with Halliday's theory, where the unmarked theme introduces the main topic, and the rheme provides new information, creating a logical, cohesive narrative.

This progression is not ideologically neutral. It links language (slang) directly to socio-cultural and ideological change:

- The repeated thematization of 신조어 (slang) frames it as a lens to read societal change, thereby legitimizing informal or evolving linguistic forms.
- Most crucially, Clause 4 thematizes "남성관의 변화" (changing views on men), signaling a critical engagement with gender ideology. By placing this within the Theme-Rheme structure and using material processes ("정리할 수 있다" – can be summarized), the text normalizes and rationalizes feminist ideological shifts as observable, categorizable social phenomena.
- The progression from general (slang as linguistic phenomenon) → causal (linked to social demand) → reflective (of societal change) → summarizing (specific ideological shifts) mirrors thematic progression aligned with ideological deepening.

3.3 Korean Ideologies in Integrated Korean Language Textbooks

One of the ideologies present in Integrated Korean Language textbooks 3 and 4 is feminism. This is particularly evident in the text B4-T2, which discusses "Gender roles in household chores." The text portrays the shift from traditional patriarchal Korean society toward a more balanced distribution of household responsibilities. In specific clauses, it is noted that the participation of men in household chores has significantly increased, reflecting a change in the ideology regarding gender roles and voicing feminist aspects in contemporary Korean society.

For example, the theme in the clause **"맞벌이 부부가 증가하면서 가사 분담에 대한 인식과 흐름이 예전과 달라지고 있다"** ("As dual-income couples increase, perceptions and trends in household chore distribution have changed") emphasizes the changing social conditions that affect traditional household roles.

In the clause **"여성들의 사회 활동 참여가 증가하면서 부부의 성 역할에도 변화가 생기기 시작했다"** ("As women's participation in social activities has increased, gender roles in couples have also begun to change"), the theme is **"여성들의 사회 활동 참여가 증가하면서"** ("with the increase in women's participation in social activities"). The rheme in this clause emphasizes the consequences of this change, namely the shifting gender roles in households. Here, the theme focusing on women's social participation reflects a feminist perspective, indicating that women are increasingly active outside the home, challenging the traditional role of being solely a homemaker.

Another clause, such as **"남성들도 가사를 생활의 일부로 받아들이고 있다는 인식을 반영한다"** ("Men are also starting to accept household chores as part of their daily life"), has

the theme **"남성들도"** ("men too"), highlighting men's involvement in household tasks. The rheme underscores that this involvement is not merely a form of assistance but part of men's growing awareness that household chores are a shared responsibility, supporting the feminist ideology that strives for gender role equality.

The thematic progression pattern in this text follows a **simple linear thematic progression**, where the rheme of one clause becomes the theme in the following clause. For instance, the phrase **"가부장제 문화가 지배적이었던 과거의 한국 사회에서..."** ("In the past when patriarchal culture dominated Korean society") provides a historical context, followed by subsequent clauses that depict the transition from traditional values toward a new gender-equal awareness. This pattern reflects how the theme of feminism and gender equality is discussed continuously and progressively in the text.

The text illustrates the growing feminist ideology in Korean society, particularly in the context of household chore distribution. The shift from a rigid patriarchal culture to a more equal division of roles between men and women in the family reflects a developing social awareness of the importance of gender equality. By highlighting the contributions of both parties in household chores and depicting the increasing participation of men in these tasks, the text embodies feminist values. It guides readers to understand the evolving gender roles in contemporary Korean society.

The thematic progression in this text follows a structured development from definitional to ideological elaboration. By maintaining 신조어 (slang) as a constant Theme in the early clauses and gradually shifting toward marked Themes that explicitly identify societal changes—including shifts in gender perceptions—the text creates a discursive chain that reinforces its ideological stance. This progression reflects a deliberate narrative strategy: using the Theme position not only to organize information but to gradually unveil critical social issues such as the transformation of masculine ideals. Through this, the text embodies a feminist ideological orientation, showing how changes in language are symptomatic of deeper shifts in values and identities in Korean society.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Integrated Korean Language textbooks for Indonesian learners, particularly Volumes 3 and 4, incorporate ideological messages through their theme-rheme structures. Thematic progression patterns, especially the Simple Linear and Complex Linear models, play a crucial role in organizing information and reinforcing ideological content. Through relational and material processes, the texts portray values and identities that reflect broader social discourses.

The first research objective—to identify the dominant themes across the cultural texts—revealed a pedagogical progression from practical, everyday topics (e.g., etiquette and shopping) in Level 3 to more complex and abstract sociocultural issues (e.g., job preferences, environmental concerns) in Level 4. These themes serve not only as learning content but also as carriers of culturally situated ideologies.

The second objective—analyzing thematic progression—was addressed through a comparative analysis of thematic structures. Level 3 texts predominantly used unmarked topical themes in simple declarative clauses, supporting clarity and linear flow suitable for beginner learners. In contrast, Level 4 texts employed marked themes and abstract

participants, allowing more nuanced and ideologically loaded messages to be staged earlier in the clause. For example, in sentences like "Compared to the past, Korean youth now prefer creative careers," the marked theme frames the message with a comparative ideological stance.

The third objective—interpreting how these linguistic patterns reflect ideology—was met by identifying how specific theme-rheme structures function to foreground certain cultural values and background others. For instance, feminist ideology is conveyed in texts that thematize shifting household roles with expressions like "Nowadays, men also help with housework," where "men" as the Theme foregrounds the departure from traditional norms. The Rheme often elaborates this change using relational processes that validate new social identities (e.g., "...are becoming more involved in parenting and domestic chores."). Such configurations construct Korean society as progressively inclusive and responsive to social change.

These findings support the view that Korean language textbooks function not merely as tools for linguistic instruction but also as vehicles for ideological transmission, influencing learners' perceptions of Korean social values. This underscores the importance of incorporating critical literacy into language education, so that both teachers and learners are equipped to recognize and interrogate the cultural and ideological messages embedded in instructional materials. Cultivating this awareness is essential for promoting intercultural competence, especially in contexts of foreign language acquisition where textbooks often serve as a primary cultural lens.

However, this study is not without limitations. It focused solely on the verbal text and did not systematically integrate multimodal features such as layout, images, or typography, which can also shape ideological readings. Additionally, the analysis is interpretive and context-dependent; alternative readings of the same thematic structures may emerge under different theoretical lenses or from learners with differing cultural backgrounds. Future studies could expand the scope by including student reception studies or comparing textbooks across publishers or levels to triangulate ideological impacts more robustly.

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