

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research problems, the objectives of the study, the theoretical framework, the significance of the study, the assumption, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of key terms.

### **1.1 The Background of the Study**

EFL students learn language without being aware of communicative functions of the language. Language is functional; therefore studies of the language form alone cannot fully explain systematic language use (Gerot & Wignell, 1994), for example studies on sentence pattern will not reflect how it should be used in reality such as in conversation and daily use. Language can be used to explore linguistic elements systematically from a functional point of view. With functional grammar, one can analyze the lexical grammar, transitivity, mood, modality, and theme of a language. Among these, transitivity is the most feasible choice in analyzing texts because it discusses how events are represented in terms of what is happening, who is responsible for particular actions, how both actions and those responsible are described.

Transitivity plays role in ‘meaning making’ in language (Halliday, 1994, as cited in Simpson, P., & Mayr, A., 2010). Therefore, it can be used as a tool to analyze ideological perspectives. The conceptual aspects of ideology are not only reflected in

the vocabulary of a language, but they are also at work in the grammar (Goatly, 2000:59). According to Fowler (1986:27), linguistic codes do not reflect reality neutrally. They interpret, organize, and classify the subjects of discourse. They embody theories of how the world is arranged including world-views or ideologies.

In transitivity, ideology is reflected by identifying who is responsible and powerful for an action (material process), whose utterance is being reported and what effect the sayers might influence the readers (verbal process), whose action is described (behavioral process), whose psychological condition is described (mental process), who is labeled or identified to signal one's identity (relational process) and whose existence of the situation (existential process). Furthermore, the negative and positive values are manifested through the choice of words which contains certain connotations of the participants mentioned in the text. Thus, this study uses Halliday's transitivity approach of systemic functional grammar because it can be used to analyze ideology of the characters in narrative composition.

Narrative refers to texts which tell a story (Bal, 1999:16). It explains how people feel, act, think, and what they value as an individual or as a member in a community. Often the values of the story are implied rather than explicit. In addition to that, the values of the story can be manifested through certain lexico-grammar. One of the most popular representations of these moral values is the conflict between good and evil. Other representations might include struggle of the weak against the strong, the poor against the rich, the radical against the conventional, or the young against the old, as portrayed in a number of contemporary literatures.

The social purpose of narrative genre is to entertain, amuse, or reflect an experience in different way. According to Macken & Slade (1993), Macken-Horarik (2002), this social purpose can be achieved by introducing the reader to a possible world in which individual characters experience a problem of some kind which they have to face and overcome. This type of text is fiction in which the values are used to describe or to explain human behavior. It involves settings and characters who are involved in a conflict or more.

In composing narrative texts, basically EFL students express their ideology. They write a story in which the plot, the characters and the setting correspond to their beliefs and perspectives of the world. A transitivity analysis is required to uncover the hidden ideology beneath the layers of sentences and choice of words. In addition to that, the focus of this study is the sentence constructions which emphasize on the verbal, nominal, and adverbial phrases. Transitivity is chosen because these phrases represent the transitivity processes, participants and circumstances. Narrative texts, on the other hand, are chosen because, unlike other texts, they represent the writer's ideology indirectly in the form of stories. Moreover, transitivity can provide a clear description on how EFL students perceive information or an event in accordance to their ideology through the configuration of the processes, participants, and the circumstances in their narrative texts.

Based on the background above, this study aims at finding the transitivity constructions and uncovering the ideology reflected by the roles of the characters in the narrative compositions through transitivity analysis.

## **1.2 The Research Problems**

1. What type of transitivity constructions are used by the second semester undergraduate students of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya in their narrative composition?
2. What ideologies are manifested in the transitivity construction reflected by the role of the characters in the narrative compositions by the second semester undergraduate students of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya?

## **1.3 The Purposes of the Study**

In line with the statement of the problems, this study intends to find out the following:

1. The transitivity constructions such as processes, participants, and circumstances that are used by the second semester students of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya in their narrative composition
2. The ideologies manifested in the transitivity construction reflected by the role of the characters in the narrative compositions by the second semester undergraduate students of English Department Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya

#### **1.4 The Theoretical Framework**

The underlying theories that were used in this study are the theory of Systemic Functional grammar (SFG) and the theory of ideology. The Systemic Functional Grammar stated by Halliday (1994) was used as the guideline in answering the first research questions in exposing the transitivity constructions. The theory of ideology and transitivity were used in answering the second research question about the representation of the writer' ideology reflected by the role of the characters in the Narrative composition of the second semester students of English department Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya.

In the transitivity approach of Systemic Functional Grammar stated by Halliday (1994), language is used to represent a speaker's or writer's experience of the world. The expressions of that experience include the processes, the participants, and the circumstances. The processes refer to the configuration of particular meaning components. The participants refer to persons, objects, entities involved in those happenings.

In addition to that, the processes, participants and circumstances are constructed through lexicogrammar choices in terms of group and phrase. Process is usually represented in by verbal groups or verb phrase. Participant is represented by nominal groups or noun phrase. Circumstance is represented by adverbials and prepositional phrase.

In order to expose the transitivity process, the sentences in the students' narrative composition were transformed into clauses in unity to Subject-Predicator-Complement-Adjunct (S-P-C-A) structure. As stated by Talib (2008), it is useful to view the element of clause in terms of the Subject-Predicator-Complement-Adjunct (S-P-C-A) structure rather than viewing in terms of group and phrases only. Below is the illustration of S-P-C-A:

**Table 1.1**  
**The Illustration of S-P-C-A**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>(Clause structure)</b>
He	Put	the plate	carelessly	on the table	<b>(sentence/clause)</b>
<i>Participant</i>	<i>Process</i>	<i>Participant</i>	<i>Circumstance</i>	<i>Circumstance</i>	<b>(transitivity)</b>
nominal group	Verbal group	Nominal group	Adverbial group	Prepositional phrase	<b>(class)</b>

In the example sentence 'He put the plate carelessly on the table above', the sentence can be broken down into the S-P-C-A clause structure with 'he' as the subject, 'put' as the predicator, 'the plate' as the complement (direct object), and 'carelessly' and 'on the table' as the adjunct. Furthermore, in the transitivity analysis, the nominal groups 'he' and 'the plate' represent the participant, the verbal group 'put' represents the process, while the adverbial group 'carelessly' and the prepositional phrase 'on the table' represent the circumstance.

Halliday's transitivity approach of systemic functional grammar are adapted to categorize the transitivity process based on the predicate or verb (linking verb, action verb, and non-action verb) contained in the clause.

Besides the theory of transitivity approach of Systemic Functional Grammar stated by Halliday, the theory of ideology is also the main fundamental theory since it is used as the guideline in answering the second research question. Ideology involves meanings that embody claims whether things are of positive or negative value. In transitivity, ideology is reflected by identifying who is responsible and powerful for an action; whose utterance is being reported and what the sayers might influence the readers; whose action is described; whose psychological condition is described; who is labeled or identified to signal one's identity; and whose existence of the situation. In narrative text, one may reflect his surrounding through language that their use in their composition. In addition to that, in telling a story an individual can put their values and beliefs to expose themselves in facing the complication and resolving the problems. Furthermore, the negative and positive values of ideology are manifested through the use of choice of words which contains certain connotations in describing the participants.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

The result of this study is expected to give contribution to the field of the study, especially the theory of transitivity approach.

## **1.6 The Assumption**

This study was conducted under the assumption that the ideologies manifested in the five narrative compositions were the students' ideologies which were reflected through the role of the characters in the narrative compositions.

## **1.7 The Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study was an analysis of five narrative compositions final test paper of the second semester undergraduate students of English Department Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya, 2010 academic years. The interpretation of transitivity construction was based on Halliday's systemic functional grammar viewpoint. The analysis of the writers' ideology reflected by the role of the characters in the narrative compositions was limited on the result of the construction of transitivity process, participants and circumstances along with the connotation of words choices. In addition, the characters that were analyzed in the narrative compositions were limited to animated being and groups of animated being.

Furthermore, the researcher considered the subjects, as novice writers, therefore any mistakes related to spelling, grammar, word order, punctuation and etc. of the students' narrative compositions were beyond of the researcher's control.

## 1.8 The Definition of Key Terms

The writer hopes that by defining the key terms below, the reader can have clear idea of what the study is about. The key terms are: transitivity, narrative text, ideology, connotation, clause, voice and agency.

- **Transitivity:**

Transitivity refers to the arrangements of particular meaning components, or semantic roles to communicate about happenings (processes), persons, objects, entities involved in those happenings (participants), and different aspects of those happenings (circumstances) made manifest via particular lexicogrammar choices (Halliday, 1970:145-150).

- **Narrative text:**

Narrative text is a type of text in which a narrative agent tells a story (Bal, 2009).

- **Ideology:**

Ideology is the attitude that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor (Brewer and Brown, 1998).

- **Connotation:**

Connotation refers to the meanings of words that embody claims whether things are positive, negative or neutral.

- Clause :

A clause is a group of related words which contains a subject and a predicate (LaPalombara, 1976).

- Voice :

The voice is a technical term for the description of sentence structure which explains whether a sentence is active voice or passive voice (encyclopedia of linguistic, Vol 2, 2005).

- Agency :

The agency refers to whether the doer of the action in a clause is known or not. If it is known the agency is said to be specified, if not it is said to be implied.