

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers the research background, problem statement, research objectives, theoretical framework, significance of the research, definition of critical terms, scope and limitations of the research, and organization of the proposal.

#### **1.1 Research Background**

Mass media has become one of the needs of society, providing information to the public about the world. There are two categories of mass media: print and electronic. Print mass media include newspapers, magazines, books, billboards, and many more. Meanwhile, electronic media include television, computers, radio, and others. Newspapers are commonly used for the analysis of written discourse and the coverage of information from the economy, politics, and national and international issues. When it comes to news, it won't be far from the headlines. Newspaper headlines are very important because they can attract someone to buy and read the newspaper. Newspaper headlines should grab attention and be written in short words. According to the book *Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG)* by Halliday (2004), as quoted in Alfangca (2015), language is a system of meanings which means that when people use language, their language actions are expressions of purpose. In the same book, Halliday (2004), as quoted in Alfangca (2015), states that language has three strands of function: interpersonal, textual, and conceptual. They are commonly known as Metafunctions.

Traditionally, transitivity is affiliated with a grammatical feature that indicates whether a verb takes a direct object (transitive verb). In the concept of the letter of transitivity, Halliday (1985), as quoted in Alfangca (2015), claims that instead of just a matter of the verb taking or not taking the direct object, transitivity in the clause gives the reader the impression of what is happening to the news by connecting the three main elements to create meaning. The three main factors are the process, the participants, and the circumstances.

The process acts as a description of what happened. While participants explain who is responsible for the operation, and circumstances explain what happened and

who is responsible explained. The three elements are further distinguished in transitivity. The verbal group is aware of the process. Meanwhile, the participants are realized by the nominal group, and for the circumstances, they are embodied by prepositional phrases.

Based on this background, the author decided to use the Halliday transitivity approach, namely Systematic Functional Grammar (SFG) because it is used to analyze language, especially in newspaper headlines. The authors aim to identify and explain what transitivity processes, participants, and circumstances are formed in the headlines of *The New York Times*, *China Daily*, and *The Jakarta Post*. All three newspapers were chosen over the others because they provide extensive and frequent coverage of the data of this study. It represents three countries, Indonesia, America, and China, of which three newspapers were chosen by their ties to Russia and Ukraine. Indonesia played a neutral role, facilitating Russia and Ukraine for reconciliation. Meanwhile, the United States is on the side of Ukraine, and China is on the side of Russia.

The data analyzed are the headlines of the Russia-Ukraine war news report. The war began on February 24, 2022 until now. The trigger began in 2014 because Russia supported the Ukrainian Revolution to invade Crimea. Casualties in the Russia-Ukraine war include 14,200-14,400 civilians and military troops killed during the War in the Donbas (2014-2022) and thousands of deaths during Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Previously, a study of transitivity analysis on newspaper headlines has been conducted by Ali and Omar (2016); Qawariq (2020); and Abbas and Tallat (2019). Compared to previous studies, researchers conducted an analysis based on news of the Russia-Ukraine war. Researchers want to provide a new source in filling the knowledge gap in newspaper headline analysis. As future teachers, the researcher aims to present how discourse is used in educational settings. This is supported by Allen (2008) who states that the discourse of appropriate use can strengthen the teacher-student relationship, create an open and supportive learning environment, and provide students with new ways to explore information that can lead to a deeper understanding of new concepts. A discourse that supports how the mindset of

students explores new information that leads to a deeper understanding, is in line with Halliday's transitivity (1985).

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

In line with the background of this research, the problem is constructed as follows:

1. What transitivity processes are found in *the headlines of The New York Times, China Daily, and The Jakarta Post*?
2. What is the composition of transitivity processes used in *the headlines of The Jakarta Post, New York Times, and China Daily*?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

From the problems formulated above, this study aims to:

1. Identify the elements of transitivity in headlines in *The New York Times, China Daily, and The Jakarta Post*.
2. Explore the similarities and differences in the elements of transitivity found in the headlines of *The New York Times, China Daily, and The Jakarta Post*.

## **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

The theories that support this research are the theory of transitivity and systemic functional grammar. These theories will be presented below.

In his Systemic Functional Grammar, Halliday divides 'process' into six processes: material, mental, verbal, behavioral, relational, and existential. The 'process' is the part of the clause that the vocal group is aware of or perceived as what 'happened' (Bloor & Bloor, 1995, p. 109) as quoted in Alfangca (2015). In addition, Bloor & Bloor (1995: 106-107), as quoted in Alfangca (2015), explains that language plays an important role in our relationships with other people, living things, such as animals, and inanimate objects.

While 'participants' are entities involved in the process (Bloor & Bloor: 1995: 109) as quoted in Alfangca (2015); In addition, Halliday (1999), as quoted in

Alfangca (2015), says that different types of processes involve different types of participants: each experiential clause has at least one participant, and other types have up to three participants, especially the participants are human, or at least animated, but it is also possible to become dead.

Halliday (1985) Systemic Functional Grammar claims that there are three meanings of the problem of 'State': location, space, means, cause, and time. Secondly, according to Bloor & Bloor (1995), as quoted in Alfanga, 'Circumstances' relate to arrangements (time and place, the manner of how the process is carried out, and the people or other persons who participate in the process from being directly involved in it.

Furthermore, according to lexical choices, 'Process' is usually embodied by verb phrases, 'Participants' by group phrases/nominal nouns, and 'Circumstances' by adverbs.

### **1.5 The importance of this study**

The findings of this study will present knowledge in English language learning to understand more about the nature of sentence structure embodied by the process, the participants involved in the process, and the circumstances. Furthermore, this research is expected to contribute to the study of English discourse used in news reports.

### **1.6 Limitations and Scope**

Due to time and resource constraints, the analysis was limited to headlines of the Russia-Ukraine War in each of the following three newspapers: The Jakarta Post, New York Times, and China Daily, in the period from February 24th to April 30th 2022. Furthermore, the analysis of transitivity is limited to the framework of Halliday's systemic functional grammar transitivity, which addresses processes, participants, and circumstances.

## 1.7 Definition of Key Terms

The following key terms used in this thesis are defined below for the avoidance of misunderstanding. These key terms are discourse, headline, news, clause, transitivity, transitivity process, transitivity participant, and transitivity state.

1. Discourse: in a broader sense, is a complex unit of a form of language, a meaning, an action that may be best captured under the idea of a communicative event or communicative action. (van Dijk, 1988)
2. Headlines: the most striking parts of news reports: they are short, printed 'above', in large bold, and often in several columns. In addition to summarizing the most important information from the report, headlines also have cognitive and ideological functions. (van Dijk, 1988a, 1988b, 1991)
3. News: the communication of current event information presented through print, broadcast, internet, or word of mouth to third parties or the mass audience. (Stephens, 2007)
4. Clause: the product of three simultaneous realizations of ideological, interpersonal, and textual meanings. (Halliday, 1981: 42)
5. Transitivity: the configuration of certain components of meaning, or semantic roles to communicate about events (processes), people, objects, entities involved in those events (participants), and different aspects of those events (states) that are manifested through certain lexical grammatical choices. (Halliday, 1985)
6. The process of transitivity: the part of the clause embodied by the verbal group, but can also be considered as what 'happened' represented in the whole clause. (Bloor & Bloor, 1995: 109)
7. Transitivity participants: entities involved in the process. (Bloor & Bloor, 1995: 109)
8. Transitivity states: the setting, temporal and physical, the way in which the process is implemented, and the people or other entities that accompany the process rather than being directly involved in it. (Bloor & Bloor, 1995: 131)

## **1.8 Thesis Organization**

This research consists of five chapters: Introduction, Review of Related Literature, Research Methodology, Findings and Discussion, and Conclusion.

**Chapter one** is an explanation of the background of the proposal, the statement of the problem, the objectives, significance, scope, and limitations of the research, the definition of key terms, the theoretical framework, and the organization of the research.

**Chapter two** reviews the related literature and previous studies. This chapter discusses the related theories used in and relevant to this research.

**Chapter three** discusses the research design, the data sources taken for the research, the instruments used, the data collection procedures, and the data analysis procedures.

**Chapter four** discusses the findings along with an explanation of the findings, while chapter five consists of the conclusion of the thesis and the author's recommendations.