CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study. A brief explanation on the issue and aspects related to the discussion are also included.

1.1 Rationale

As one of the productive skills of language (see Nation, 1994; Davies, 2011), writing is now widely used to express ideas by everyone through any media. The importance of writing needs to be realized by people nowadays since information recently are available in pieces of texts as can be found in newspapers, magazines and even internet. Writing has preferably chosen recently since it is not difficult to post in social media and it can reach society easily. As writing can be found almost everywhere it appears as if people are bound to writing because, in fact, "humanity relies on writing to an unprecedented extent" (Coulmas, 2003: 1) since through writing "we record, convey, and communicate ideas appears in our mind" (Rodgers, 2005).

However, writing is not as easy as it seems for it is generally recognized as a difficult task by ESL and EFL students (Rosa, 2007; Priyatmojo, 2011), especially in Indonesia, and it makes them tend to be not productive in writing (Alwasilah & Alwasilah, 2005). The reason for this is that for being capable to convey their ideas accurately and smoothly to the readers, the students need to consider carefully the aspects of good writing. One aspect that plays an important role in writing is the coherence (Wang, 2007; Suraishkumar, 2013). Halliday (1994: 309) defines coherence in writing as "the internal [resource] for structuring the clause as a message". To help the students organize information within clause to make their writing coherent, the use of Theme and Thematic Progression is determining (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Belmonte & McCabe, 1998).

Focusing the students' writing on the Theme system, including thematic progression, will be very useful in helping students to communicate their ideas

successfully (Wang, 2007). Theme system assists the students "to specify the place in the reader network of meaning where the meaning is to be incorporated as relevant" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: 19). Furthermore, Theme is the "point of departure for the message" (Halliday, 1994: 37; Eggins, 2004: 296) which determines the concern of a clause; what a clause is about. The Theme then becomes the prominent element for standing as the "grammatical system that organizes the clause in such a way that it helps to construct the environment" (Emilia, 2014: 225) and for providing the environment for the remainder of the message, which is known as the Rheme, in the Theme-Rheme organization (Halliday, 1994).

Many researchers throughout the world have conducted studies on Theme and thematic progression in different field of knowledge, such as translation (Wang, 2014). Research on Theme and thematic progression also have been done in various genres of texts, such as argumentative (Banks, 2008; Al Bakaa, 2014), explanatory (Yang, 2008), narrative (Safitra, 2013), and report (Ikaningrum, 2009). Not only in those types of texts commonly found in classrooms, analysis on Theme and thematic progression have also been conducted even in letters (Lianawati, 2008; Humanis, 2014) and research abstracts (Soepriatmadji, 2009; Albogobeish and Sedghi, 2014).

Studies concerning the analysis of Theme and thematic progression in exposition texts written by EFL and ESL students in some countries have been conducted, including China (Xu, 2000), Sweden (Herriman, 2011) and Indonesia (Rakhman, 2013). A research on Theme and thematic progression in exposition texts written by English Education program students in the research site (Bangga, 2013) has been conducted as well. However, studies dealing with the analysis of Theme and thematic progression in English Education program students' analytical exposition texts are hardly discovered. As the students majoring this program are expected to be teachers in the future, they are expected to be able to write good analytical exposition texts as well as to teach their students how to make good analytical exposition texts. To help teachers write good texts and teach

the students how to make good writings, the knowledge of Theme and thematic progression is required. Theme and thematic progression in texts is important to be investigated as their existence in texts becomes one of the characteristics of good texts. Thus, this study tries to fulfill the gap of analyzing the students' analytical texts in terms of its textual organization using Theme-Rheme and thematic progression of Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL), realizing that the knowledge of the Theme system can help learners to organize ideas more effectively in writing (Emilia, 2014: 247) in their efforts to make good texts in order to achieve the purpose of the texts. This study is part of a bigger study conducted by Emilia, et al. (2014) dealing with the implementation of Genre Based Approach in teaching writing (see also Emilia, 2011), in which their data are taken to be analyzed in this study in terms of Theme and thematic progression. Hence, other aspects which consist in the texts other than the Theme and thematic progression cannot be further discussed.

1.2 Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the research questions formulated as follows:

1. What Themes and thematic progression patterns are realized in students' analytical exposition texts?
2. To what extent does the realization of Theme and thematic progression support the nature of analytical exposition texts?

1. 3 Scope of the Study

This study concerns the analysis of English Education study program students in one of the public universities in Bandung in terms of its thematic structures and the textual organization.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to have a significant impact to some areas, such as theory and practice. In terms of theory, this study would verify the previous findings in Theme system and thematic progression analysis and it could also develop studies in Systemic Functional Grammar, particularly in Theme system and thematic progression analysis.

In terms of practice, this study is expected to provide information for teachers to broaden their knowledge of textual organization of exposition texts. This study would give views on teaching expository genre, especially in applying Theme choice and in developing paragraphs in order to make a cohesive writing. Besides, information in this study is hoped to be useful for other researchers as a reference to conduct other research related to this topic.

1.5 Operational Definition

a) Systemic Functional Linguistics is a theory of linguistics which concerns language of a source of making-meaning process rather than a set of grammatical rules (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004; Bloor & Bloor, 2004; Emilia, 2005; 2014; Downing & Locke, 2006).

b) Theme is the "the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that which locates and orients the clause within its context" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: 64).

c) Thematic progression is the choice of Theme to which support the text to develop the ideas they present (Fries, 1995a; 1995b; Eggins, 2004).

d) Analytical exposition text is a text arguing a certain point of view of an issue to persuade the reader that something is the case (Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

e) The features of analytical exposition text, some of those cover the focus on generic human and non-human participants, the use of simple present tense, use relational processes, use internal conjunction to stage argument, and causal conjunction or nominalization (Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

1.6 Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction which gives the reader an overview to the study by highlighting the background of the study, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, some operational definition as the clarification of terms, and organization of the paper. The second chapter is theoretical framework which elaborates the theories relevant to this study, covering the theories of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Theme system, thematic progression, expository text, and some research related to the analysis of Theme system and thematic progression of texts. The third chapter is research method which provides explanations of the research design, data collection, and data analysis. The fourth chapter is data analysis which chapter presents the findings and some discussion of this study. The fifth or the last chapter is conclusion which concludes this study and closes it with some recommendations for the readers and for English teachers in Indonesia.