CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves to introduce the present study. It concerns the background of the study, the research questions of the study, the purposes of the study, the significance of the study, the operational definitions of key terms and the organization of the thesis, all of which will be discussed below.

1.1 The Background of the Study

This study investigates the Mood structure in students’ Recount texts. The discussion of Mood is traceable to the exploration of context within Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory. SFL considers language as something whose function is to make meaning, which is influenced by social and cultural contexts (Eggins, 2004). SFL further categorizes contexts into two types, namely the context of culture (genre) and the context of situation (register). The context of situation (register) consists of three variables, i.e. field, mode and tenor. All of them work together to create texts that function in a social context.

This study is concerned with the tenor as an element of context of situation. Tenor is interpersonal, because it refers to the social relationship between those who take part in any particular situation. The expression of interpersonal meaning in English is a very complex area of grammar, and very hard to pin down. With regard to the lexico-grammar, tenor is realized in Mood, which consists of Subject and Finite (Halliday, 1985). The Mood system is the interpersonal metafunction of language and the grammatical resource for realizing and interactive moves in dialogue (Halliday, 1985; Gerot & Wignell, 1994; Martin, Matthiessen & Painter 1997; Martin, 2014). Therefore, knowledge of the interpersonal grammar of exchange is also considered beneficial for teachers to introduce grammar explicitly and systematically as a way to help the students exchange meanings with others (Butt et al., 2000).
Analysis of Mood can be realized in all genres of texts, including Recount, i.e. the text which retells events for the purpose of informing or entertaining (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). Analyzing Recount texts by using Mood structure is important because it may help to reveal the interpersonal relations among communication participants. The ability to realize the functions of Subject and Finite in a clause, by filling in the slots with appropriate expressions, is important for second language learners. This way, students will be able to build or maintain appropriate relations with other people.

Many studies concerning interpersonal meaning have been conducted. Studies of interpersonal meaning may focus on any or all of its aspects, including speech functions, mood types/typicality, or mood structure. A study by Neti (2014), for example, focuses on the analysis of speech functions and mood types, while Adejare (2013) focuses on mood types. The analysis of Mood structure has been conducted by Yeibo (2011) on selected poems of J.P. Clark-Bekederemo, by Schulz (2008) on newsgroup texts, and by Adenike and Olusanya (2014) on Christian magazines.

Although many studies concerning the Mood system have been conducted, a study of the Mood structure of Recount text in Indonesian secondary education context so far has not been conducted. Hence this study aims to examine Recount texts written by the students of one vocational school in Bandung by focusing on the Mood structure to explore the interpersonal metafunction and how it contributes to language pedagogy.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, this study aims to answer two questions as follows.

1. How do the students realize Mood structure in their Recount texts?
2. How does the use of the Mood structure contribute to the fulfilment of the social purpose of the Recount texts?
1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research questions above, this study seeks to:

1. examine how the students realize Mood structure in their Recount texts, and
2. explore how the use of Mood structure contributes to the fulfilment of the social purpose of the Recount texts.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to have both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this study is expected to give some information regarding the way Mood structure is realized in Recount texts written by EFL students in Indonesian context. Practically, the results of this study may be used as a basis for teachers to improve the students’ writing skill in expressing the interpersonal metafunction in Recount texts. Additionally, the result of this study is expected to inform teachers in developing the teaching models for writing as well as in evaluating the teaching process of writing.

1.5 Operational Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, below is the clarification of some key terms as they are used in this study.

a. Systemic Functional Linguistics

   Systemic Functional Linguistics is a social theory of language (Emilia, 2014). Systemic Functional Linguistics is a theory of linguistics which concerns language as a source of meaning-making process rather than a set of grammatical rules, and it is one of the linguistic approaches that considers language as a social semiotic system (Halliday, 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004; Bloor & Bloor, 2004; Downing & Locke, 2006).
b. Mood

The Mood system concerns the interpersonal metafunction of language and the grammatical resource for realizing and interactive move in dialogue (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). Emilia (2014, p. 112) states that “Subject and Finite in the Mood block are the pivotal elements of the clause that make all the types of interaction possible”.

c. Modality

Modality is an indication of judgment of the probabilities or the obligations in utterances of the speakers (Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

d. Recount text

Recount text retells an event for the purpose of informing or entertaining (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). All Recount texts have a similarity, i.e. that they tell a series of events in the past that are chronologically sequenced (Derewianka & Jones, 2012).

1.6 Organization of the Paper

This paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter, introduction, includes the background of the study, the research question of the study, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, and the operational definition of key terms. The second chapter discusses the review of the literature covering the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics, the basic notions of Systemic Functional Linguistics, the Mood system, Genre, Recount texts, implications for language teaching, and previous related research. The third chapter concerns the methodology of the study. It explains the research design, data collection, and data analysis. The fourth chapter presents the findings and discussion covering the Mood structure in students’ Recount texts, the Mood structure contribution to the fulfilment of the social purpose of recount text, and the implication for teaching-learning processes. The last chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations.