

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This chapter presents background of the study, research questions, purpose of the research, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1. Background

Instagram is considered to be one of the most popular social media. It is used as a medium for sharing moments through photographs and words. As De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) stated, the feature of Instagram enables the users to share photographs and videos. To write something that describes the photographs or the moments, Instagram provides a space called ‘caption’ feature. In addition, this social media is known to have a huge number of active users. Both young people and adolescents are attracted to and actively use Instagram (Barry, Bates, Billinger, Cauley, Jackson, Martin, Montano, Olusanya, Peoples, Vinal, and Yusuf, 2015). According to Statista (2019) the number of Instagram active users in June 2013 was 90 millions and increased in June 2018, when Instagram reached 1 billion active users. In other words, in the last five years Instagram has successfully gained an additional 910 millions users. From 1 billion Instagram active users, 6.2% of them or 62 million active users come from Indonesia. This makes Indonesia ranked as the 4th country with the most Instagram active users (Statista, 2019).

Among those 62 million Indonesian Instagram users, there are some people who have influence over their followers. They are called social media influencers, the people who usually have more than 10,000 followers. They provide unique contents for the followers and actively share posts on their Instagram accounts. According to De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) the term “social media influencer” refers to

the one who builds a sizeable social network with the followers. It means that their followers trust them and what they post and write on social media.

The growth of social media platform, such as Instagram, and the followers' growing trust towards social media influencers make brand owners leave traditional marketing strategy and choose to hire social media influencers to do promotional activities (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017). This product-promotion activity which occurs in social media platforms is called endorsement activity, a marketing strategy that most business people use now. According to De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) in endorsement activity brand owners hire social media influencers to do the promotional activities because not only do they have social network with the followers but also they seem to be trustworthy to recommend the products on social media platforms.

To be hired as a social media influencer that endorses products and services, one has to have at least 10,000 followers (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017). The number of followers matters when it comes to endorsement activity because recently the number of follower indicates someone's popularity and influence (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017). The more followers they have, the more they are seen as admired and trusted people. Moreover, the huge numbers of followers indicate that people will not easily resist the posts or the captions that they write. Since ad-blocking software appears and people tend to skip uninteresting information, this new marketing strategy is often used (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017). To successfully do this method, brand owners should identify and target possible social media influencers as well as assuring them to promote the products through their social media (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017).

Instagram is a suitable social media for doing promotional activities because the photographs of the products can be visually imaged and described in the caption (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017). In the caption, social media influencers are able to describe the products, to give testimony, and to give instructions on how to

use or buy the products. Two Indonesian social media influencers who actively endorse products on their Instagram accounts are Atta Halilintar and Ria Ricis. They are two famous Indonesian social media influencers who have more than 9 million followers. Atta Halilintar has 9.2 million followers while Ria Ricis has 15.6 million followers. The number of their followers has passed the minimum number of followers proposed by De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) which is 10,000 followers. They endorse many product, such as food, clothes, and Internet-based application.

There are some previous studies about Instagram, social media influencers, promotional activities on Instagram, and promotional captions on certain brands' Instagram accounts. Barry *et al.* (2015) analyzed alcohol marketing on Instagram. It was found that alcohol brand owners could actively post alcohol advertisements on Instagram because unlike Twitter, Instagram does not have a feature that prevents its underage users to see improper contents. On the other hand, De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) investigated people and brand owners' growing trust toward social media influencers and how social media influencers can affect brand attitude.

Other studies focused more on promotional captions posted on huge brands' Instagram accounts. Zai (2018) examined the use of rhetorical tropes, such as schemes and tropes, in Starbucks' promotional captions. It was found that Starbucks used different rhetorical tropes in each promotional caption. On the other hand, Suwondo (2018) investigated the graphological, phonological, and lexical features of promotional captions posted on Nyx, Colorpop, Maybelline, and Lorac's Instagram accounts. Lastly, there was Kristina, Hashima, and Hariharan (2017) who examined the generic structure of promotional texts. However, the texts were printed promotional texts, not digital texts.

Some other studies analyzed the generic structure and the stages inside texts, such as Woodward-Kron (2005) and Wang (2007). However, both of the studies did not examine the stages or patterns inside promotional captions. Woodward-Kron (2005) analyzed the structure of students' writing assignments and found that the

students primarily wrote expositions and discussions. However, they also embedded other kinds of genre, such as exemplum. Wang (2007) analyzed the macro-genre, micro-genre, and the generic structure of Chinese and Australian newspaper commentary sections. Although this study examined the generic structure of texts, it is different from all those studies in terms of the data. This study took the data from promotional captions on Instagram.

Different from those previous studies, this study examined the generic structure, lexico-grammatical features, and social functions of promotional captions written by two social media influencers, Atta Halilintar and Ria Ricis. This study focused on the social functions, the generic structure, the stages or the patterns inside the promotional captions, and the lexico-grammatical features of each clause in the promotional captions. It appears that some previous studies that analyzed promotional captions did not focus on the social function, generic structure, and stages or patterns that occurred inside the texts. Furthermore, the studies that investigated generic structure and patterns that appear in texts did not examine promotional captions. Lastly, this study is intended to help people create a new way of promoting products and services on Instagram.

1.2. Research Questions

There are three research questions that need to be answered in this study:

1. What is the generic structure of Atta Halilintar and Ria Ricis' promotional captions found in their Instagram accounts?
2. What are the lexico-grammatical features of Atta Halilintar and Ria Ricis' promotional captions found in their Instagram accounts?

1.3. Purpose of the Research

This research was conducted in order to discover the possible generic structure and lexico-grammatical features of Atta Halilintar and Ria Ricis' promotional captions. The results were expected to help people create influential promotional captions in the future.

1.4. Scope of the Study

Since this research aims to discover the generic structure and lexicogrammatical features of promotional captions created by social media influencers, it focused on promotional captions taken from Atta Halilintar and Ria Ricis' Instagram accounts.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to fulfill the followings:

1. Theoretically, this study is expected to provide information for future reasearchers who want to examine the generic structure and lexico-grammatical features of online promotional captions or texts.
2. Practically, the results of this study are expected to help people create promotional captions if they want to sell their products and services online.

1.6. Clarification of Terms

1. Genre: Genre is an abstract, socially recognized way of using language (Hyland, 2002).
2. Generic structure: The arrangement of elements in different types of texts. In systemic linguistics, generic identity of a text involves register configuration, schematic structure, and realizational patterns in the text (Eggins, 2004).
3. Lexicogrammar: A term introduced by Halliday that shows the interdependency between grammar and syntax. It is the level of wording, described as intermediate level of linguistic coding (Eggins, 2004).
4. Promotional Caption: Instagram caption which is intended for promotional purposes.

1.7. Organization of the Paper

This paper has five chapters. Chapter one consists of background of the study, research questions, purpose of the research, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper. Meanwhile, chapter two discusses the theoretical frameworks and previous studies that examined similar topic

or used similar theories in conducting the studies. Chapter two mainly discusses genre, promotional genre, digital genre, social media, and Instagram.

Chapter three contains the research design of this study, the process of data collection, and the explanations about data analysis. Chapter four presents the results of the study, including research findings and discussions. Chapter five or the last chapter consists of conclusion, suggestions, and limitations of the study.