

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This research aimed to analyze clause complexes in report texts written by students of secondary education. This introductory chapter elaborates brief background information and objectives of this research.

### 1.1 Background

In the era of globalization and technological advancements, students are expected to meet the increasing demands of society in which they live and will work in. One of said demands is students' English proficiency, which has been on the rise in recent years (Doan & Hamid, 2019; Zein, 2016). According to the 2013 Curriculum, English language study is a compulsory subject for students of secondary education of Indonesia (junior high school and senior high school), where students can learn various skills, including, but not limited to, reading, listening, speaking, and writing (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2018).

Writing, as a productive skill other than speaking, is believed to be the most critical and most complex language skill for the learners to study (Kayacan & Razi, 2017; Durga & Rao, 2018). Writing is described as a "recursive process" that requires an amount of effort and follows certain procedures in order to properly convey and establish an idea of the author (Utami et al., 2018). The 2013 Curriculum details the basic competencies students need to achieve in English subject; one of said basic competencies involves students' capability in producing a report text (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2018).

In regard to writing, one crucial ability for EFL learners to have is the ability to write a text with a degree of complexity. In the process of writing said text, there are bound to be complex and compound sentences involved. And in those sentences, there are bound to be clause complexes that naturally emerge within (Nguyen, 2013).

Clause complex in systemic functional linguistics can be defined as a combination of clauses that are grammatically and systematically linked to each other in a meaningful way (Egins, 2004; Gerot & Wignell, 1994; Halliday &

Matthiessen, 2014). As stated by Nguyen (2013), clause complexes naturally emerge when one tries to convey an idea “by combining, or complexing the original clause with other related clauses ... to reinforce the message.” With this in consideration, there is a feasible implication that writing clause complexes may reflect one’s ability in writing. In its conception, a clause complex has two systems involved, namely, tactic system and logico-semantic relation (Eggins, 2004; Emilia, 2014; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Tactic system is a framework that dictates how clauses within a clause complex are connected, whereas logico-semantic relation revolves around the semantic relation between the linked clauses (Eggins, 2004; Emilia, 2014).

Clause complex is not a particularly novel focus of research, and numerous studies on the topic have been conducted. Nevertheless, despite the abundant studies, most research about clause complex either focused on texts written by tertiary education students (Xuan, 2019) or texts outside the education context. There are noticeable gaps that could be filled, especially those with secondary education learners as the focus. This study was an attempt to provide a contribution to this area of research, with secondary education learners as its focus.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research aimed to answer the following questions:

- 1) How prominent are clause complexes in report texts written by EFL learners of secondary education?
- 2) What kind of taxis and logico-semantic relations are used by high-achieving, middle-achieving, and low-achieving EFL learners in writing report texts?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

With the background and research questions in mind, this research has several goals:

- 1) To measure the prominence of clause complexes in report texts written by EFL learners of secondary education;

- 2) and to investigate and detail the application of taxis and logico-semantic relations in report texts by high-achieving, middle-achieving, and low achieving EFL learners.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This research aimed to examine and analyze six report texts written by EFL students of a public high school in Cirebon, West Java. The main focus of the study is the utilization of clause complexes, including their interdependency relations (taxis) and logico-semantic relations, in said texts. With that being said, this research does not scrutinize mood and tone within the clause complexes, but only focuses on how clause complexes are structured within the texts. In other words, mood and tone in clause complexes inside the texts are beyond the scope of this research. In addition to that, embedded clauses and embedded clause complexes are also not analyzed in detail, but their occurrences shall be indicated in the analyses to facilitate this study.

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

This research would provide not only academical contribution to the study of systemic functional linguistics, but also to the study of English language teaching.

From academic perspective, this research would contribute to the study of systemic functional linguistics, as it provided new insights on the subject of clause complex. This study involved new subjects of research and also employed a more elaborate research methodology compared to the preceding studies with similar focus. With this new research methodology, which involved stratification on the participants, this research would provide more insights regarding the relationship between EFL students' writing competencies and their abilities in writing with a degree of complexity. Thus, this research would fill in the gaps left by previous studies with similar topic.

From pedagogical perspective, this research would offer EFL teachers of secondary education a new perspective regarding the students' abilities in producing written texts, especially report texts. The result of this research would

hopefully encourage teachers to pay more attention to the students' capabilities in writing with a degree of complexity, which is a crucial practical skill for EFL learners to have, instead of only focusing on grammatical proficiency and writing mechanics. In practice, this study could also be replicated by EFL teachers in their classrooms to evaluate their students' text writing skills in a more descriptive manner, and thus allowing the teachers to adjust their lesson plan and teaching method accordingly.

### 1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

- 1) **Clause complex** is a grammatical or semantic unit where two or more clauses are systematically linked in meaningful ways.
- 2) **Tactic system** or **interdependency** is a system of clause complex that designates interdependency between two or more clauses in a clause complex.
- 3) **Logico-semantic relation** is a system of clause complex that defines semantic relations between clauses in a clause complex.
- 4) **Report text** or **information report** is a type of text which describes a general object or phenomenon instead of a specific one.

### 1.7 Organization of the Paper

The thesis consists of five chapters. Subchapters may present in these chapters to further clarify points, and elaborate contexts and notions.

#### **Chapter I Introduction**

This chapter provides background and general overview of this research. It would consist of the background, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, and organization of the paper.

#### **Chapter II Literature Review**

The second chapter clarifies and defines several terms of this research. It also presents previous research related to this study.

#### **Chapter III Research Methodology**

This chapter elaborates the research methods employed. It includes the detailed explanation of the method, research site and participants, data collection, and data analysis.

#### **Chapter IV Findings and Discussion**

The fourth chapter discusses the findings and results of the study.

#### **Chapter V Conclusions and Suggestions**

The final chapter provides conclusions of this study and offers suggestions regarding future research of the same subject matter.