

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The present study aims to analyze the ideational metaphors in students' academic writing projects to identify the quality of their writing. Particularly, this chapter introduces the background of the study, the research questions, the research purposes, the research significance, the theoretical framework, and the previous studies.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Writing is a requirement for most vocations, academia, and personal lives. It is seen as an important area of concern that EFL students should become proficient in. Writing skills involve the role of the writer, the reader, the content, and the language form. It needs a different language form of daily interactions. Academic writing is a purposive, formal, condensed, and complicated writing form (Zhang, 2018). In particular, EFL students in higher education are required to elaborate on specific ideas, thoughts, and arguments concisely for writing academic texts.

When constructing academic writing, the students have to write information in a formal style and acceptable to the academic community. According to Taylor (2009) academic writing is to inform the truth about a particular topic with strong evidence and coherent arguments to convey messages obviously. Similarly, academic writing is delivering knowledge to inform the readers about trusted facts of written information (Tardy, 2005). It requires a good comprehension of grammar to construct understandable sentences and avoid misunderstanding in their meaning. On the other hand, it is quite hard to write ideas in academic texts with the appropriate word choices related to the meaning expressed, let alone the use of ideational metaphors in academic writing texts. Therefore, this study attempts to analyze ideational metaphors in students' academic writing projects to recognize the coherence and cohesiveness of their academic texts in delivering information.

In addition, students have to achieve several competencies to produce successful academic writing (D. E. Murray & Christison, 2011). First, students have a high level of organizing ideas into understandable written text. Second, students also maintain the technical terms to avoid misunderstanding of meaning. Next, students have to be masters in vocabulary and grammar to convey the information fit with the reader and certain context.

However, students face challenges in writing academic texts. Students are still confused about how to transform their ideas in writing, let alone the style of writing and the language used to deliver the exact messages (Fatimah, 2018). This includes a lack of vocabulary mastery and being unfamiliar with rewriting and constructing sentences that focus more on grammatical aspects. In short, the grammatical structures sincerely affect their academic writing coherently and cohesively. In this case, grammar is the main tool of language processing and the component that provides meaning to languages (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

Thus, based on the preliminary interviews and observations, the students who enrolled in academic writing in the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung face some challenges in writing academic texts. Students mentioned that they are still confused about how to determine the right words for expressing ideas related to the topic. They also make big efforts to put the words into the correct order as their functions in sentences, whether the place of verbs, nouns, and so forth. They still doubt the way they arrange words and construct sentences grammatically, coherently, and cohesively to avoid ambiguity. Still, it is important to analyze the quality of students' academic writing projects, and Halliday (1994) has introduced a tool to analyze writing products using Systemic Functional Grammar. Additionally, the students were taught and instructed to use the SFG approach when writing academic projects.

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is a branch of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) that views grammar from the perspective of the meanings that its forms represent (Chapman & Routledge, 2009). On the other hand, it discusses language function and the meaning conveyed. The function of language in creating

meaning is called meta-function. A theory by Halliday elaborates on the grammatical metaphor as a fundamental part of Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (Yang, 2018). Grammatical metaphors are divided into ideational and interpersonal. Thus, this research focuses on the ideational metaphors which are actualized in the metaphor of transitivity. Transitivity structures and ideational metaphors are two terms used to characterize incongruent coding. Furthermore, ideational metaphor is appropriate for analyzing student writing, because it is viewed as a form of communication (Eggins, 2004).

Research in this area is still rare. Ngongo and Benu (2020) analyze interpersonal and ideational metaphors from 15 theses of undergraduate students. The study revealed that the material process is the predominate ideational metaphor, while the interpersonal metaphor was used in the mood system and modality. Then, Pasaribu (2022) elaborates on the occurrences of ideational metaphors in students' academic writing essays. The results showed that the writings include strong, grammatically correct metaphorical sentences. In another research, Alhusaiyan (2023) examines the ideational metaphor in academic writing produced by Saudi EFL students. It was shown that there is a rise in the number of excellent grammatical metaphors in the students' writings. Ramadhani, Nainggolan, and Sitompul (2023) reveal the most common ideational meta-function in the students' recount texts at SMAN 1 Panai North Sumatera. It further analyzed 10 students' recount texts and discovered the material process as the dominant process.

However, the current research modifies previous research. The current research illustrates how ideational metaphors usually appear in students' academic writing projects. This research also presents the analysis model about the realization of ideational metaphor in the transitivity process and the forms of lexical shift in ideational metaphor expressions. The present study aims to collaborate theories from several sources to develop various findings. Moreover, the site of this research is different from the previous studies. This research is conducted at the university level in West Java, which can provide a broader perspective on the findings related to EFL writing skills. In other words, this research is the first research about the

ideational metaphor analysis of students' academic writing projects at the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Still, this provides insightful information for the writer and the readers, especially for the academic development of its research site. Therefore, this research investigates the ideational metaphors realized in the fifth-semester students' academic writing projects as critical academic writing projects.

## **B. Research Questions**

This research focuses on the ideational metaphors used in students' academic writing projects. The researcher formulates two research questions, provided as follows:

1. What are the types of transitivity metaphors applied in students' academic writing projects?
2. What are the grammatical shifts in types of ideational metaphors employed in students' academic writing projects?

These research questions require documents to collect data. The first research question is answered by analyzing and classifying the transitivity processes transformation involved in students' academic projects. The actualization of ideational metaphors is in the metaphor of transitivity (Dinagara, 2016). Thus, this analyzes the transitivity processes in change.

Then, the second research question is solved by identifying the grammatical shifts as nominalization forms of ideational metaphors in students' academic writing projects. This demonstrates the patterns of grammatical shift, for instance, the shifting from a verb to a noun. This study involves documents for specific analysis to accomplish the first and second questions. Therefore, documents are used to analyze ideational metaphors in students' academic writing projects related to systemic functional grammar theory.

### **C. Research Purposes**

This study aims to analyze the ideational metaphors in students' academic writing projects. First, this study identifies types of transitivity metaphors utilized in students' academic writing projects. Second, the study portrays the patterns of grammatical shift as types of ideational metaphors in students' academic writing projects. Furthermore, this explores the two matters through qualitative descriptive methods to conscientiously and particularly discover ideational metaphors. The research identifies and classifies each group of ideational metaphors. Therefore, the components show how ideational metaphors are used in students' academic writing projects.

### **D. Research Significances**

EFL students in higher education are supposed to master writing, especially to write academic texts. They have to transfer ideas into understandable formal writing. Still, most students struggle to write cohesively and coherently. Thus, this research investigates ideational metaphors employed in students' academic writing projects. It is valuable to preserve the quality of students' writing skills. This research has two significances, which contain theoretical and practical significances.

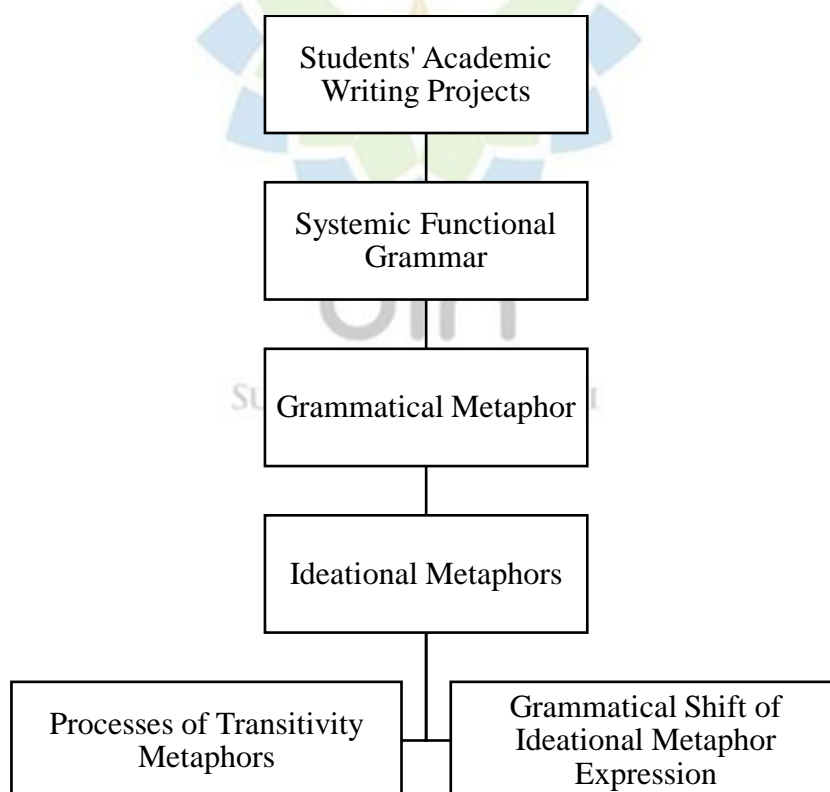
For theoretical significance, this research presents ideational metaphors based on SFL theory which can foster students' writing quality. It also provides information on how to choose the right shift of the process form into the other lexical forms to deliver ideas correctly.

For practical significance, this research is beneficial to help students write cohesive and coherent written texts. Students can be more aware of picking up a word or shifting it. Also, find out the quality of students' academic writing projects. Then, EFL teachers can choose the right strategy to guide the students in improving their grammatical comprehension and writing ability. In addition, a result of this study is advisable notice for the curriculum developer and the head of the English

Education Department to add supplementary programs for students to gain a deeper understanding of systemic functional grammar, let alone ideational metaphors to write better.

### E. Theoretical Framework

This study investigates the ideational metaphors realized in students' academic writing projects. It is beneficial for students and teachers to recognize the quality of students' writing products. Then, they can build plans to make improvements. Every student has a unique writing style based on their experiences and knowledge, which can connect to the ideational metaphors employed in their academic writing projects. Therefore, the theoretical framework for this study is portrayed in the following graphic.



**Figure 1. 1** Theoretical Framework

The figure above depicts the theoretical framework of this study. It presents how the relationship of each concept to another. The ideational metaphors as part of grammatical metaphors in systemic functional grammar are utilized in students' academic writing projects. It can be ensured by analyzing the types of processes and lexical shifts of metaphorical expression in students' academic writing projects.

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) was first introduced by Halliday (1994) to show the function of words beyond sentences, and word changes to fit in purpose of the message conveyed. Language meaning is a crucial part of oral and written communication. Grammatical metaphors are a common tool for transferring expression from one congruent representation to another incongruent realization, involving modifications at the level of clauses, groups, words, and morphemes (Suhadi, 2018). The ideational metaphor is the incongruent forms of clauses, phrases, and words in the transitivity construction (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Ideational metaphor is the concept used to characterize incongruent coding. It includes modifications to transitivity structures.

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) divide transitivity into six types of processes. First, the material process is the process of doing and acting. Second, the mental process is the process of thinking, feeling, and perceiving. Third, the verbal process is the process of saying. Then, the relational process is the process of being and having. The behavioral process is the process of psychological behavior. The last is the existential process, which refers to the existence of something.

The type of process employed in a clause is crucial to deliver meanings. Conveying messages through written language must be clear. It is complex, including grammatical metaphors. Nominalization is the most powerful way to create grammatical metaphors (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). On the other hand, transferring processes to nouns, functioning as Thing in the nominal group. It is the main resource for selecting lexical items. Delivering ideas requires proper lexical form and function based on the meaning conveyed. Furthermore, analyzing the lexical shifts in ideational expression can determine how the word is effectively arranged in the text. One of the indicators to assess written texts is from the

grammar views. Grammatical errors are easily counted, so the only criteria and indicators that are employed in a written text are those related to grammar (Janusheva et al., 2021).

A kind of academic text used in this research is students' academic writing projects. In particular, this research uses one of the academic writing projects, it is a critical academic writing project that involves one main topic with some supporting sentences in a paragraph. Hyland (2009) states that being able to write complex information into a short and clear paragraph is an important aspect of academic writing. In other words, writing a well-organized paragraph is a valuable and important part of academic writing. For Ezeifeke (2015) academic writing covers all writing projects to enhance knowledge in academic or professional necessity. Thus, academic writing is to convince someone about a particular topic that can develop the comprehension of both writers and readers in academic contexts. A good academic text requires good grammatical knowledge of the writer to pick and arrange words properly. Grammatical aspects assist in avoiding ambiguity and confusion to convey accurate messages logically and comprehensibly (Strunk & White, 1999). Word choices must fit in a clause or phrase as well as the word function to write a better text.

Yet, students do not notice the use of ideational metaphors in academic writing. They are only aware of the common words and arrangements. Napitupulu (2017) students often face difficulties in choosing proper word choices and putting them in the right word structure. Therefore, the analysis of ideational metaphors as functional grammar aspects can indicate how the students organize ideas and write academic texts from the aspects of lexical items, nominalization, and realization of the types of transitivity processes.

## **F. Previous Study**

Document analysis has been promoted as a valuable tool for study in the last five years. It is used for analyzing ideational metaphors in writing. Still, research on this area is infrequently investigated for educational purposes. Some previous studies



found ideational metaphors in theses and essays written by university students. These support the analysis of ideational metaphors in the students' academic writing projects, specifically critical academic writing projects.

First, research conducted by Ngogo and Benu (2020) explores the use of metaphors in 15 theses written by undergraduate students. It found interpersonal metaphors realized in mood systems and modality with declarative clauses being the most dominant applied. The research also revealed the material process is frequently used in the realization of ideational metaphors in theses of undergraduate students.

Second, Pasaribu (2022) examined the occurrences of ideational metaphors in students' academic writing essays. They used the descriptive qualitative method to gain the data. As a result, the material process is the dominant process. It is followed by mental processes, relational processes, behavioral processes, and existential processes. The research also indicated a good essay structure of solid grammatical metaphor clauses.

Third, Ramadhani, et al. (2023) revealed the most common ideational meta-function in the students' recount text. The research design was a qualitative descriptive technique by transitivity system analysis. The researchers found that the material process is the most common type of process in students' recount text with a percentage of 40%.

Fourth, Alhusaiyan (2023) found the grammatical metaphors in students' academic writing. There were 20 academic writing essays by undergraduate students in Saudi. The material process is the dominant process applied in students' writing. The result shows that the essays include a high number of good grammatical metaphors.

Nevertheless, this study is similar to the previous study. The previous studies focused on the analysis of ideational metaphors in students' theses and essays. This research focuses on critical academic writing projects. Although this research is similar to the previous studies, it examines the ideational metaphors and the process used in students' academic writing. In addition, the current research provides not only transitivity metaphors but also the grammatical shifts of ideational expression

applied in students' academic projects. The maintaining information in this research helps students in selecting proper lexical items to make their writing better. This research investigates the ideational metaphors utilized in students' academic writing projects. Then, the implications of this study are valuable for educators and curriculum developers to enhance teaching and learning ideational metaphors for writing specifically. The research site is also different from previous studies. In other words, the research will be the first research about the analysis of ideational metaphors of students' academic writing projects at the English Education Department UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung in the last five years.

