CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction to the research. It contains the research background, research question, research objectives, research significance, and definition of key terms.

1.1. Research Background

As a social being, humans need a medium to communicate with others by expressing their thoughts and feelings. This medium is called language. Language is "the expression of thought by means of speech-sound" (Sweet, 1900). Furthermore, Aitchison (1978) defined language as "a patterned system of arbitrary sound signals, characterized by structure dependence, creativity, displacement, duality, and cultural transmission." As a system, language has a form that consists of rules and principles. There is a study called as grammar, "the science of the structure of a language and the rules and principles of its generally accepted use" (Gaynor & Pei, 1919). Grammar focuses on how language follows a formulated structure. The main point of grammar is correctness in placing each word in the 'form' of language. Meanwhile, as a medium of expression, language consists of 'meaning' that covers what humans want to convey. Halliday criticized that grammar—which he called as formal grammar—cannot view language as rich as it can produce meaning, whereas language is functional and can be explored in many ways point of view. Then, he introduced Functional Grammar

which views language as a resource for making meaning by its structure so that the text can be viewed as an object on its own and as an instrument for finding out about something else (Halliday, 2004). Functional Grammar concerned not only with the structures but also with how those structures construct meaning (Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

Halliday referred to language as 'text', the term for describing a product of language used in a certain event or purpose, either spoken or written. In any text, there is a context that background the produce of an utterance. Functional grammar constructs not only text, but also context for determining the function of the text. The wordings of text simultaneously encode three types of meaning: ideational, personal, and textual (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). These three functions of the text were called in term 'metafunction'. As structure terms, those meanings refer to transitivity, mood, and theme. This study will focus on transitivity structure. The transitivity structure refers to ideational metafunction which views clause—a unit that composes language—as a representation of the world. There are three elements that explain phenomena of the real world represented in transitivity structures: circumstances, processes, and participants.

The previous research about transitivity analysis that the researcher read is the journal article analyzed by Mohammed (Mohammed, 2021) which aims to investigate the functional significance of transitivity in Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea novel. The research focuses on the prosses element of transitivity and which one that is dominant. The findings reveal that the material process is the

most dominant, it means the critics' arguments on the novel's dynamism and the old man's heroism represented in his struggle with the giant marlin.

Other than that, the researcher also read the journal article analyzed by Hadid, McCabe and Hadad (2023) which aims to analyze the types of verbal process expressed within the clauses of the texts, as well as for their concomitant participants and processes, using the system of transitivity from Systemic Functional Linguistics in EFL textbooks for Palestinian Refugee Children. The research focuses on texts which present references to Palestine whether as participant type or location. The findings reveal that the textbooks are tailored to engage the refugee children in texts that recognize them as Palestinian refugees, yet, the texts including references to Palestine whether as a location, or a character is minimal, comprising 4.5% of the total texts in grades one to six English language textbooks. Additionally, the material process, which presents happenings and doings which are considered as the most familiar and cognitively accessible to this age group of the children, as we have shown, shows a circumscribed construction of the typical contexts in which these processes take place. Another previous studies about transitivity analysis that related to this research is the journal article titled Systemic Functional Linguistics of Political Articles in Eastern and Western Online News that analyzed by Abdulameer, Noor, Nasser (2019). The study employs qualitative analysis the systemic functional linguistics with Critical discourse analysis to find out the how the transitivity process recognizes the experiential meaning in the social actor's discourse in the Western and Eastern online news and the differences or similarities in the social actor's discourse in Eastern and Western

online news. This study investigates 80 political articles in Eastern and Western online news by applied transitivity analysis under the systemic functional study by Halliday. The main findings show that verbal processes, is most predominant in social actors discourse in Eastern especially Turkish's president mostly used the processes and in Western France president mostly used transitivity processes in online news and followed by relational, and mental.

The difference between the previous research above and this research is the researcher will analyze participants and circumstances element, not only processes element like the previous researches. Moreover, the researcher put different object analysis from the previous research above. The first previous researcher put novella that such a kind of literary text, meanwhile the researcher will analyze non-literary text. Although the topic of Palestine is related to the second previous researcher, the researcher has a different approach and focus. The study will focus on what ideas Al Jazeera wants to deliver about Rafah attack on the Instagram post.

The massive growth of technology has changed life in many aspects, including the platform revolution in mass media. Mass media in this digital era utilize social media to reach more audiences. Social media usage is becoming practically required for many people. Instagram, among other social media platforms, provides access to extensive news and information. Instagram is a prominent social media platform. It serves as a platform for sharing memories through photos and text. Despite mainly focusing on photo or video, the mass media reckon the Instagram features to share information in new ways. The text can be found in the caption as one of the Instagram post features or can be written as a

photo or subtitle for the video. Instagram's "caption" tool allows you to add something that explains the images or experiences.

Instagram provides users with access to both domestic and international news sources because the users can see posts from every country. As of early 2024, Instagram has over 2.35 billion active users globally. This makes it one of the most popular social media platforms worldwide. The platform's user base continues to grow, driven by its appeal across various demographics and its integration with features like Stories, Reels, and shopping tools.

Al Jazeera is an international news channel based in Qatar. Al Jazeera is a pioneer of Arab media that is claimed an independent news organization. Besides Arab language, Al Jazeera operates English language to reach worldwide range with Al Jazeera English. They were known as a frontline media that reports Middle-East things with a perspective that is at odds with other major media. Along with the development of social media, Al Jazeera is actively reporting on the Instagram platform which has massive global users.

The never-ending conflict in Gaza has heated up again since the war between Hamas and Israel on October 7, 2023. This issue has attracted world attention and has repeatedly been a major topic of discussion at UN meetings. On May 24, 2024, The United Nations' top court ordered Israel to immediately halt its ground assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, further increasing international pressure on Israel over its war against Hamas. Unhappily, Israel continuously attacked Rafah on the night of May 26, 2024. The attack occurred at Tal as-Sultan, a makeshift shelter just north of Rafah city. US President Joe Biden had previously stated that

a "major offensive" by Israel on Rafah would be a red line. The world community is once again calling for the issue of humanity to be brought back to the surface, resulting in the viral tagline "All Eyes On Rafah".

From all that described above, the researcher is interested in analyzing transitivity on the Instagram post of Al Jazeera English. Al Jazeera, as a large mass media, has reported simultaneously about the Rafah attack on Instagram posts. This study investigates how the Rafah attack that occurred on May 26, 2024 depicted by Instagram posts of Al Jazeera. In this study, the Rafah attack report that is posted on Instagram post will be examined in-depth by unfolding the sequences of ideational meanings or sequences of activities involving people and things. This means that we can see how the media represent the Israel-Hamas conflict. The incident also exploded on social media and received global attention. On this situation, media has a big influence on constructing people's perspectives. Al Jazeera English deliver the Rafah attack on their Instagram post with description of circumstances by a video and text that form an idea. The researcher will analyze the text through transitivity analysis in any elements: participants, processes, and circumstances. The researcher uses transitivity analysis as a tool to analyze the text because transitivity is the system that produces the ideational meaning. Revealing ideational meaning through the transitivity system is in line with analyzing text which is full of ideas. Transitivity elements can construe which process unfolding through time, the participants involved in the process, and the circumstances associated with the process; so the researcher thinks it suits for analyzing text from Al Jazeera English Instagram post about Rafah attack.

1.2. Research Questions

As a product of language, the text of Instagram post of Al Jazeera English has an ideational meaning that can be found through transitivity analysis elements: processes, participants, and circumstances. The researcher formulates two questions that will be the main focuses on this research, they are:

1. What process, participant, and circumstance types are used in Instagram post of Al Jazeera English about Rafah attack?

2. How those processes, participants, and circumstances realize the ideational meaning of the Instagram post of Al Jazeera English about Rafah attack?

1.3. Research Objectives

Based on the formulation of the research questions above, the researcher is intended:

1. To identify the processes, participants, and circumstances types which used in Instagram post of Al Jazeera English about Rafah attack.

2. To find out the ideational meaning which is realized from the processes, participants, and circumstances on the Instagram Post of Al Jazeera English about Rafah attack.

1.4. Research Significance

The significance of this research is divided into two significance: theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to add understanding about transitivity and systemic functional grammar for the reader that studying linguistics. The researcher also hopes this research can enrich knowledge and give an insight

in finding a meaning on a text that being trending phenomenon through linguistics point of view for the reader that interest to the Gaza conflict.

Practically, this research findings can help enrich the knowledge for the researcher that will analyze any systemic functional grammar topic. Moreover, this research findings can contribute on adding resource of linguistics research to systemic functional language scope generally and State Islamic University Sunan Gunung Djati specifically.

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding or overlapping the definition some key terms and to clarify the meaning of key terms that used based on topic of this research, these are the list of definition of key terms.

1. **Transitivity**. The term 'transitivity' on this research refers to a term by Halliday in Systemic Functional Language that related to lexicogrammar which is a system of metafunction that put into function clause as representation. Transitivity is the experiential line of organization of clause (Halliday, 2004). In this system, a function of clause is to represent the real and unreal world or describe the experience of the reality.

2. **Processes**. This research uses the term 'processes' which refers to the element of transitivity. According to Gerot and Wignell (Gerot & Wignell, 1994), processes are central of transitivity. The transitivity system construes the world of experience into a manageable set of process types (Halliday, 2004).

3. **Participants**. The term 'participants' on this research means the element of transitivity which go hand in hand with process. While processes obligatorily

have a doing, the participants are the doer (a thing or someone that experience).

4. **Circumstances**. 'Circumstances' on this research refers to the element of transitivity. Circumstances answer such questions as when, where, why, how, how many and as what (Gerot & Wignell, 1994).

5. **Ideational meaning**: Ideational meaning refers to speakers' perceptions of the world. It focuses on the "content" of a discourse: what kind of activities are carried out, how participants in these activities are defined, classified, and what they are made up of. Ideational meaning is concerned with how our material and symbolic "reality" is understood in conversation.

6. **Instagram posts**: An Instagram post is a piece of content shared on the Instagram platform, visible on the user's profile and in the feeds of their followers. It is one of the social media features that allows to share a photo or video. Users can add text descriptions, hashtags, and mentions to their posts to provide context or engage with other users by adding a caption on the post. Instagram posts are essential to the platform's social interactions, allowing users to share experiences, thoughts, and information with their followers.

7. **Rafah attack**: The Rafah attack refers to a violent incident that occurred in the town of Rafah, which is located on the Gaza Strip's border with Egypt. Rafah has been a flashpoint of conflict due to its strategic location and importance as a border crossing between Gaza and Egypt. The town and its surrounding surrounding areas have been subjected to several attacks and military operations over the years, particularly during the Israeli-Hamas war.

Specifically, Rafah attack that will be talked about in this research refers to an event that occurred on May 26, 2024.