# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

In recent decades, the study about theme structure has become an interesting topic of language study, ( see, e.g, Danes 1974; Halliday 1987, 1994, 2004; Halliday & Martin 1993 ; David Banks 2008 ; Jallilifar 2010; Mardani ; 2014; Wang 2015) especially in sociological pole of the sociolinguistic cline. (Bazeran 1988; Atkinson 1999, Gross; 1996, Gross et al. 2002, Valle 1999) ,scientific texts (David Banks 2008), and translation texts (Hassan 2015).

Theme, has been introduced earlier as a starting point of a clause that compose meaning as a result(Banks 2008). The study of theme progression has expanded from clause to discourse(Wang 2015).  This concept has literally included in the SFL approach(Halliday 1987, 2003) as one of the variable interest of English Clause. Within that framework, the concept of variability, which traditionally has been used consistently for statistical thinking by collecting data, quantify variation, explain variation, and then construct a shape of a conclusion( Deveux, velleman, Bock 2004)   and in language, it can be identified everywhere , at all levels, in different dialects and different registers.(Holyk, 2013) ' The variables are field, tenor, and mode. They are the source for any attempt to develop taxonomy of situation (Matthiessen & Halliday, 2014). Variability then can be implemented on measures of variables

in a particular group of participants. Theme could be inserted into pedagogy context and has worked usefully there(Forey 2012) and therefore, it has become the belief and the motivation behind this and many other studies of Theme.

The effort of improving the teaching of English in Indonesia is at the approach within the implementation of curriculum based on Permendikbud no.24 tahun 2016, 9th grade of junior high school students learns about information report text as written in KD 4.9.1. The Competence-Based Curriculum, known to recommended the Genre-Based Approach (Agustien, 2006). This approach is recognized to conduct the teaching and learning process in the classroom activity based and focuses on understanding and production of genre to be contextually purposeful and meaningful. The student could gain benefit from studying different types of texts using this approach as it is popular since 1980 (Halliday, et,al., 1985). Genre as tools for scrutinize a text has become a popular means for linguistic and pragmatic understanding of texts. Genre also supplies the possibility of pedagogical applications. Halliday (1976) defines text as a form of connected speech or writing, especially if composed of more than a sentence, formed a cohesive form. As a matter of fact, the study of genre in linguistics literacy is based on Systemic Functional Linguistic-SFL (Halliday, 1978; Swales, 1990; Hyland, 2003). Then, Christie dan Martin (2000) adds that linguistic functional becomes a basic and fundamental reference in the framework of the usage of the language in term of genre.

Research in academic discourse has investigated that report as one of the genre in language study describes the way things are, with reference to a range of natural, man-made and social phenomena in our environment. (Gerot and Wignell, 1994:196 ;Pestaria, Sinurat ,Napitupulu : 2014 ). Utilizing Napitupulu's(2014) concept of report, this study uses encyclopedia as one of the text classified as report.

The Theme is a form of "how speakers construct their messages in a way which makes them fit smoothly into the unfolding language event" (Thompson, 2014, p. 145). The Theme is the element that serves as the point of departure of the message; it is what locates the clause within its context (Halliday, 2014, p. 89). The Theme, as a tool for organizing meaning, not only actives at the local level, explaining how the writer has chosen to order information within the clause, but Theme also actives to structure the flow of information to shape the interpretation of the text as a whole (Martin, 1992, 1995).

While native speakers of English may have acquired the ability to produce coherent discourse by putting the right kind of information in Theme position (Hawes & Thomas, 2012), the non-native speakers learn English as a foreign language have not appropriately learn how to use Theme in English. (Hyland, 2004). The Theme is closely linked with nominalization and logical connectors (discourse markers), phenomena particularly relevant to ESP (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Robinson, 1991)

However, there have been a few researches regarding how Theme works in report genre (Wei, 2014), and very few studies that have developed and studied teaching materials informed by Theme (Bohnacker, 2010). Therefore the present research, by comparing thematic choices in different children's encyclopedias, aims to vary the thematic structure within the tenor of both children's animal encyclopedia entries.

## 1.2 Identification of Problems

Based on the background of study above, the researcher found problems related to the thematic structure in report text. The following are the problems:

1.  The non-native speakers learn English as a foreign language have not appropriately learn how to use Theme in English report text.

2.  There have been a few researches regarding how Theme works in report genre and very few studies that have developed and studied teaching materials informed by Theme.

## 1.3 Research Questions

Based on the previous sections, it can be concluded that the focus of the research question was how do the two Children's Animal Encyclopedia Entries vary in regard to the themes? To answer this question, the following are the sub research questions:

1.  What Themes are chosen in two children's animal encyclopedias?

2.  How do the themes function in two children's animal encyclopedias?

**1.4 Purpose of the Study**

This study was then aimed to discover the variation of the thematic structure used in different animal sections in two Children's Animal Encyclopedias.

**1.5 Scope of the Study**

The researcher focuses the study on the sentence pattern found in different Animal Encyclopedia. In SFL, it refers to the Metafunction of language. Thus, the texts analysis in this research is in Textual Metafunction, which is focused on the thematic structure. The data would be taken from "Encyclopedia of Knowledge: A complete Guide to Almost Everything" and "The Little Animal Encyclopedia.".

**1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study is considered to have some benefits. The following are the benefits:

1. As a material development in report genre to be contextually purposeful and meaningful

2. Provide as bibliographical resource for the next type of research