CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides some general description and rationale related to the transitivity system that is used in research journal articles. This part consists of background, research questions, purposes, and significance of study.

A. Background of the Study

Language is a means of communication. People communicate orally and written in daily life such as discussing, talking on phone, debating, sending an email or letters, bargaining the price, giving instruction or suggestion, ordering food in the restaurant, and so on. Those activities use the language. Using the language means creating text (Eggins, 2004: 1). Text denotes 'instance of language that makes sense to someone who knows the language' (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:3). Jones and Lock (2011: 1-2) urge that text must be meaningful either in spoken or written.

Linguists have different point of view to describe language. Some of them emphasize on form or structure that separates its meaning. That viewpoint is called formal language. On the other hand, some linguists concern on meaning and function that are called systemic functional language. They reveal that forms or structures of language represent

meaning (Bloor and Bloor, 2004:10). Halliday (1994:xiii-xvii) also urges that language is a system that makes meaning (semantic) and describes how it is used (functional).

Systemic Functional Grammar has ideas to provide unlimited way to make language choices to construct meaning in order to achieve communicative purposes between speaker and listener or writer and reader. For instance, when someone wants to borrow something, she/he can use language choices such as: *"Can I borrow your pencil*?" or "*Borrow your pencil, please."* Those examples use different forms; first sentence uses interrogative and latter is imperative form. These instances also can be seen that systemic functional grammar has relationship between forms and meaning (Bloor and Bloor, 2004:3-10)

Language conveys three meanings that are called metafunction based on systemic functional approach: ideational or experiential, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004: 29-30; Eggins, 2004:11-12; Bloor and Bloor, 2004:10-11). Ideational meaning describes language that represents experience or reality. It focuses on content of clauses in term of processes involving participants and circumstances (Thompson, 2004:87). Interpersonal meaning concerns on personal relationship with other people. It means how the language is used to interact with others such as giving and asking information, and expressing opinion, ideas, feeling, attitude, and so on (Humprey and Droga, 2005:53). Humprey

and Droga (2005:1) also describe textual meaning that focuses on the message that is organized smoothly in written and spoken language.

Those three meanings are analyzed in different way (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:64-168). Ideational meaning can be analyzed through the transitivity system. Textual meaning is analyzed through theme-rheme. Mood analysis is for interpersonal meaning. These analyses are seen from the structure of the clause (Halliday, 1994:19; Bloor and Bloor, 2004: 34).

Clauses have meaning as a message, exchange, and representation. A clause that has meaning as message concerns on information. A clause as exchange means the interaction between listener and speaker. The last is clause as representation referring to some process that realizes the human experiences or reality (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004: 59-60).

This study focuses on the ideational meaning that refers to the clause as representation that interprets human experiences by applying transitivity system. The transitivity system comprises kinds of processes that involve participants and circumstances (Halliday, 1994:106). Various processes give different contribution of experiences in the text. It can be seen at some registers such as interview, procedural texts, and news sports. Interview is dominated by material and relational process.

Procedural texts are mostly material process, but news sports are verbal process (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004: 174-175)

This study explores research journal articles because it is very important for scientific communities (Swales, 2001 cited in Zheng et al, 2014: 12). Even though it is considered as crucial genre but researchers had difficulty to write research articles especially Non-native researchers (Zheng et al, 2014:12). Similarly, Mirahayuni (2013: 1-2) found that Non-native researcher especially Indonesian researchers have lack participation to publish their research writing internationally. One of the reason is they have lack ability to write research journal articles. She reveals that writing research journal articles that are published are very important in order to give the contribution in academic area (2013:9). In addition, Johns (1997) cited in Heinkel (2004:4) discovered that many Non-native graduates and undergraduates were not able to write academic writing well. Their writings were unstructured well and unclear and tended to personal. They felt frustration to accomplish their task. On the other hand, it is strong demand to write research writing to TESOL professional (Biber, 2002:4).

The research journal articles are one of scientific writings (Galanis, 2014). They have special structures from the other genres. The structures consist of introduction, methods, results and discussion. The previous

study undertaken by Wiratno (2012:88) revealed that there were not adequate explanations to describe scientific writing from linguistics' point of view and theories. He stated that the characteristics of scientific writing hadn't had enough empirical evidence. Therefore, he analyzed scientific writing and the result indicated that scientific text used identifying and attributive relational (2012:90). The other previous study that was conducted by Kazemian et al (2013:146) showed that scientific writings were hard to understand because of the complexity in form and meaning and difficult technical terminology that were used. They analyzed 10 scientific writing and found that material and relational process were dominant. Zheng et al (2014, 12) also investigated the research articles specifically English medical texts and the result showed that transitivity system has essential role to describe the characteristics of research articles. They found material processes have high percentage in describing experimental designs, discoveries, and contribution. The second processes that dominate in research articles are relational processes. From those explanations can be seen that their findings just showed the dominant process types. They did not reveal what verbal groups, participants, and circumstances are used dominantly in order to characterize the features of published research journal articles. Thus, this study is important to be conducted in order to investigate the

characteristics or features of published research journal articles in terms of analysis of processes involving participant and circumstances.

This study analyzes and interprets 6 research journal articles consisting of 3 fields, medical, language, and teaching language that each of them comprises native and non-native English speaking. Those texts are published in international research journals. They are analyzed by applying transitivity system.

B. **Research Question**

The research questions are divided into two- major and minor. The major research question of this study is: How is transitivity system used in research journal articles?

The minor research questions consist of:

1. What processes types are used in research journal articles?

2. What participants are used in research journal articles?

3. What circumstances are used in research journal articles?

C. Purposes of the Study

This study has purposes to investigate the transitivity system in research journal articles by analyzing:

1. kinds of processes that consist of material, behavioral, mental, verbal, identifying relational, attributive relational, and existential.

2. participants that comprise actor, behaver, senser, sayer, identifier/identified, carrier/attributive, existent, goal, recipient/beneficiary, range, receiver, and verbiage.

3. circumstances that are categorized into time, location, cause, purpose, reason, manner, accompaniment, condition, concession, extent, contingency, role, matter, and angle.

D. Significance of the Study

This study investigates kinds of processes that involve participants and circumstances in research journal articles. Each process has different characteristics of participants and associates kinds of circumstances. Analyzing those processes involving participants and circumstances through breaking down the clauses from 6 research journal articles, the study can discover types of processes dominantly which are represented in the verbal groups, participants that are expressed in nominal groups, and circumstances that are realized in adverbial groups or prepositional

phrases. It means that this study shows verbal groups, nominal groups, and adverbial groups or prepositional phrases that are used mostly in research journal articles.

This study will be beneficial for Non-native or ESL students who intend to write and publish their research journal articles internationally. The result of this study discovers the characteristics or features of published research journal articles especially the kinds of the verbal groups, nominal groups, and adverbial groups or prepositional phrases that can give them the description in writing research articles and hopefully can successfully publish the articles.

The writer also gets one of new knowledge how to write the research journal articles by analyzing the transitivity system. The previous experience, the writer did not get the information about what verbal groups, nominal groups, and adverbial group or prepositional phrases are appropriately used to write the research paper in academic writing course. Moreover, this study not only benefits for the writer herself but also gives the contribution in academic writing course in English Department.

Conceptually, the findings can be used as a theoretical basis that continues the previous research related to transitivity system. The transitivity system not only concerns on six process types but also

participants, and circumstances especially in published research journal

articles.