# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the study

Systemic Functional Grammar is a general theory of the grammatical organization of natural languages and linguistics. For the development presentations of the theory, see journals from (Dik 1989) and (Siewierska 1991). Being a ‘functional grammar' means prioritizing the view 'from above; a resource for making meaning in grammar is a semantic kind of grammar (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). However, the focus of attention is still on grammar itself. The fundamental hypothesis of SFG is that there is a largely non-arbitrary relation between the instrumentality of language use (hence Functional) and the systematicity of language structure (hence grammar) (Mackenzie, 1991). SFG is presented as a three grammatical model involving the levels of semantics, lexical-grammar, and phonology, and comprising four clause rank system networks: Conjunction, Transitivity, Mood and the Theme system complex, which correspond to four meta-functions, or universal components along which the meaning potential of languages is in order, logical, experiential, interpersonal and textual.

When people speak or write, they produce text. The term ‘text’ refers to any instance of language, in any medium, that makes sense to someone who knows the language (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Focusing on text as an object, a grammarian will be asking questions such as: Why does the text mean what it does (to me or anyone else)? Why is it valued as it is? Focusing on text as an instrument, the grammarian will ask what the text reveals about the language system in which it is spoken or written (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

By genre, the researcher refers to (Christie, 2012) definition, “a ‘staged, goal-oriented social process’ through which people achieve some social purposes." Since "meanings are encoded in language choices," SFG examines text and genre from the global view and then supports how researcher takes up appropriate word resources and use them as expected for the given genre and context. Field identifies the subject matter and influences the language choices used for “expressing and connecting ideas” within the text.

Moreover, good writing must fulfill the principle of cohesion and coherence. According to (Halliday & Hasan 1976), cohesion refers to the relations of meaning in a text that occurs when the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on another element. Two elements exist in the cohesive relations, the presupposing and the presupposed, integrated into a text. Meanwhile, coherence refers to the ideas that hang together in a text. It means that what has been stated before in a text provides the idea of what will be coming next (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). There are two critical points of cohesion and coherence: the elements or the forms and the ideas or meanings related to the theory Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).

Furthermore, several studies are related to the present papers, such as a research article conducted by (Aguirre-Muñoz, Chang, & Sanders, 2015) entitled "Functional Grammar Instruction Impact on Writing Quality." They examined the use of SFL-inspired writing instruction in fourth-grade classrooms over the course to develop students' descriptive writing, using the ANOVA and linguistic meta-functions analysis. A journal was also conducted by (Kuswoyo & Susardi, 2017) entitled "Problems on SFG Thematic Progression in ESL Academic Writing." They conclude that the misuse of theme and rhyme in the thematic progression of their writing causes the students' problems. Their writings are analyzed based on the theory of the problems. Thus, it is necessary to do a similar study with a different focus based on previous studies. Therefore, this present study examines how the SFG course inspires writing quality in the English Education Program at a university in Garut in academic writing.

## 1.2 Research questions

1. Does the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) course affect the quality of students’ academic writing?
2. What features of writing performance and structure are affected most by the SFG course?

## 1.3 Research hypothesis

Based on the first research question, researcher states the hypothesis to find an alternative circumstance of the study results. This study is designed to assess the hypothesis that the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) course as the treatment affects the quality of students’ academic writing, shown by increases of students’ writing scores tests that assessed with the writing assessment rubric that uses SFG framework after the students have passed the course.

## 1.4 Research objective

This study examines the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) course that determines writing quality in the English Education Program at a university in Garut.

## 1.5 Significance of the study

Appropriate and accurate is essential to students, teachers, education, practitioners, and others concerned with this kind of matter. This study reveals that the SFG course in educational institutions is essential to impact writing quality. A good writing structure will be an indicator for educational purposes. This study offers theoretical, practical, and professional contributions to English teaching and learning, especially academic writing.

Theoretically, it contributes to the enrichment of existing literature. In other words, it is a supplementary reading. Furthermore, this study finds errors in students, teachers, education, practitioners, and others concerned about these texts. Thus, practically and professionally, teachers and learners in other situations who face similar problems get benefits from this study's findings, in developing and improving students’ writing quality with the SFG framework. This research expected the following researchers to observe the same topic and other problems that not covered in this paper, such as doing more preferable tests that for data and discovering other SFG problems in students’ writing on different occasions and situations.

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## 1.6 Definition of terminology

1. Systemic Functional Grammar

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is a general theory of the grammatical organization of natural languages. Michael Halliday contributes to linguistic analysis: his development of a detailed functional grammar of modern English, showing how simultaneous strands of meanings (the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meta-functions) are in clause structures. This research focuses on using SFG in educational activities as a course in undergraduate English education to develop students' knowledge, skill, and competence.

1. SFG of writing

Good writing must fulfill the principle of cohesion and coherence. According to (Halliday & Hasan 1976), cohesion refers to the relations of meaning in a text that occurs when the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on another element. Two elements exist in the cohesive relations, the presupposing and the presupposed, integrated into a text. Meanwhile, coherence refers to the ideas that hang together in a text. It means that what has been stated before in a text provides the idea of what will be coming next (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). There are two essential points of cohesion and coherence: the elements or the forms and the ideas or meanings related to the theory Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG).