CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a linguistics framework developed by linguist Michael Halliday from the 1950s to the 1960s. SFL is one of the theories that has been widely used in educational settings around the world, both from research and pedagogical perspectives, especially in English teaching. As EFL teachers, having a good knowledge of SFL is necessary because it is part of the English language and may bring a significant change to EFL teaching and learning. Systemic functional linguistics has advantages and can facilitate EFL students' success in academic registers if EFL teachers figure out an excellent way to teach its concepts sequentially (Feng, 2013). Research conducted by Mingsakoon and Srinon (2018) proved the success of SFL implantation in teaching writing recounts for EFL students. The results of their study showed different results at the pretest and post-test. The students' pretest writing works of personal experience recounts did not conform to the structure of the general personal experience recount texts. Interestingly, when the students were exposed to writing this genre with the teaching stages under the framework of the SFL genre-based approach, the generic structures of their final drafts of the personal experience recount texts were significantly different from the ones they wrote in the pretest. In conclusion, SFL, as a socially oriented theory, has proven to have a powerful and positive impact on learners, teachers, teachers' educators, researchers, and even educational institutions.

Systemic functional linguistics has three metafunctions: ideational meaning concerned with clauses as representations, interpersonal meaning concerned with clauses as exchanges, and textual meaning concerned with clauses as messages. The focus of analysis in this study is on textual meaning, considering that clauses are messages in terms of the departure point of the message and the arrival point. The departure point of the message is called Theme and the arrival point is called Rheme.

Yan (2015) explained that different people will generate different themes and thematic progression in their writings. This indicates that analysing theme-rheme and thematic progression benefits language teaching and learning. It mainly helps students get rid of illogical and disordered threads of thought. Besides, by analysing the theme-rheme in a text, students can learn to do the same analysis in their writing and thus increase cohesion in their work. Theme and rheme topics have been researched in several studies, such as Dashela (2021) who researched the theme and rheme in the short story Sleeping Beauty using a systemic functional linguistic approach. Moreover, Dejica and Cozma (2013) explored theme and rheme analysis in translation studies to improve coherence and cohesion in the target text. This research also discussed the same topic as the previous researchers did. The different part of the research is on the text analysed. The researcher used a text in the form of fanfiction.

Fanfiction is an imaginative story or fictional story created by fans. It is supported by Barner (2017) that fanfiction is written within and for a community of fans, a "fandom" rather than by individual fans for a more widespread audience. With fanfiction, the readers (the *fans*) can change and create the narrative meaningfully for themselves and their identity. Fanfiction offers something interesting in terms of the storyline and characters that have been developed. This allows readers to escape the story without learning all the new characters. Fanfiction also gives readers a fun way to explore their fandom. Because a simple concept used in fanfic is "what if," the theme and rheme system on textual metafunction is used to analyse the fanfic. The researcher analysed fanfiction entitled A New Hope. The researcher chose this fanfic because this fanfic inspired by the American teen drama television series entitled 13 Reasons Why. It is a popular drama television series in America which has four seasons. Duraivel and Lavanya (2019) conducted a study on 13 reasons why and the result showed that 13 reasons why can increase self-esteem in young adults who show a lack of self-esteem and confidence. It was interesting for the researcher to analyse the fanfic using the theme and rheme system.

The study of theme and rheme is essential for the students to build a good organization in a paragraph, which leads to a coherent paragraph (Kartini & Farikah, 2015). Since theme-rheme is essential to make a well-organized sentence, theme-rheme is also helpful in creating a coherent and cohesive paragraph for students to build their writing. This study will analyse the theme-rheme of each clause in fanfiction. Therefore, the texts containing sentences will be segmented into clauses and will indicate a theme and rheme element in every clause. The purpose is to know the thematic progression patterns applied in the text. Specifically, the study is intended to analyse: 1) the theme and rheme in students' fanfiction, 2) the thematic progression patterns in fanfiction. The current study is expected to contribute to the development of linguistic studies. This study may also give English teachers beneficial information about the thematic progression patterns. Given the background of my research, the researcher titled this study "Systemic Functional Linguistics Analysis of Textual Meaning in EFL Students' Fanfiction".

1.2   Formulation of the Problem

This present research discussed the textual meaning produced by student formulated in question:

1. What types of themes and rheme are realised in the text?
2. What types of thematic progression patterns are applied in the text?

1.3   Operational Definitions

Fanfiction	:	Fanfiction is a type of creative writing in the form of fictional stories made by fans based on the story, character or background of their favourite celebrity.
Systemic Functional Linguistics	:	It is a linguistic instrument for analysing text, concerned with the mechanism of text structure, function, and meaning.

Textual meaning	:	Textual meaning is an interpretation of language as a message, which functions as a form of text in language. The textual meaning of language in its function as a message is realised through the language theme system. The theme system of a clause is represented by a thematic structure of clauses consisting of Theme and Rheme.
Theme	:	It is the core of a sentence, located at the beginning of the clause, and functions as a subject with a message.
Rheme	:	It is the development of the core of the sentence that is located in the rest of the clause.
Thematic Progression	:	Thematic progression is the process of creating themes and rhemes in clauses. In other words, thematic progression is a strategy or technique for improving the effectiveness of writing.

1.4 Aim of the research

This study aimed to examine the types of themes and thematic progression patterns discovered in students' fanfiction.

1.5 Significances of the Research

1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution

In terms of theory, the results of this study are expected to provide readers with a better grasp of thematic structure and thematic progression and to encourage more research in this area.

1.5.2 Practical Contribution

In terms of practice, the concept of theme-rheme and its thematic progression pattern will help students write a cohesive and coherent English text and give the teacher an idea of how to assess the coherence of students' writing. Therefore, this

study hopefully facilitates the teacher candidate's understanding of the concept of theme-rheme and its thematic progression pattern.

1.5.3 Empirical Contribution

This present research contributes to researchers' knowledge about types of themes, how to use theme-rheme analysis, and how to remember the position of the theme easily.