

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Modality is a part of interpersonal elements that can be considered as comment or attitude (Fowler, 1991:85). It is a broad expression of a speaker's or writer's attitude toward the situation or event described by a sentence or in regard to the proposition expressed by the sentence. Fowler (1991) states that modality is differentiated into four types of comment namely truth, obligation, permission and desirability. Truth means that the speaker or writer indicates a commitment to the truth of any proposition is uttered. Then obligation means the speaker or writer stipulates the participants to perform the action to the proposition. Permission means that the speaker or writer gives permission to do something. Next, the last, desirability means that the speaker or writer indicates agreement/disagreement of proposition.

The explanation above brings us to some important functions of the language; firstly, language is used as the purposes of communication and social cooperation. In this function language enables us to influence people's behavior in detail, thereby makes communication and social cooperation possible. Secondly, language can also function as an instrument of thought. A philosopher, for example, uses language to clarify and develop his ideas on subject so here language is used as an instrument of thought. Thirdly, language can also be used for an expressive purpose. As an outcome of human social activities, language plays a variety function in human communication. Halliday (1994:10) has identified three functional components of meaning in language which is called

metafunction namely, ideational function where language is used to represent ideas, interpersonal function where language is used to exchange ideas and textual function where language is used to organize ideas.

As explained above, one of the functions of language as purposed by Halliday is interpersonal function where the language is used to enable us to participate with communicative acts with other people. It means here in this function we use language to interact to other, to establish and maintain the social link with them. In interacting with other, we usually tell things for purpose such as influence people's attitude/behavior, provide information, explain our attitude, etc. In other words, we use language to exchange the transaction between speaker and listener.

Moreover, since modality is referred to as "a form of participation by the speaker in the speech event", and since it is through modality that "the speaker associates with the thesis an indication of its status and validity in his own judgment" (through the comment whether it is truth, obligation, permission or desirability), thus "intruding" and taking up a position (Halliday 1970: 335), modality is placed as part of the *interpersonal* function. This is the case since it expresses "a role relationship between the speaker and hearer" in the sense that "the speaker is taking upon himself a particular communicative role" through which he determines both his own role as well as the hearer's in relation to each other (Halliday 1970:325). Therefore as one of the realizations of interpersonal function, modality is divided into modalization and modulation. Modalization concerns with giving some options to express judgments of probability and frequency of proposition. Thus modalization divided into two types of meaning

that are probability (how likely it is to be true) and usuality (how frequently it is true). For example *it is naïve to deny Jokowi's presidential aspirations. He has been in politics since contesting-and winning- the Surakarta mayoral election in 2005. His surprise win in the Jakarta election last year must make the move up the ladder tempting.....(opinion column of The Jakarta Post, Sunday, 28 July 2013)*, the writer here exchanges the information to the reader and gives judge that Jokowi' winning in the election must make the move up the public confidence. The speaker conveys confidently in the truth of what he/she is saying based on a deduction from the facts he/she known. On the other hand, modulation deals with option to express judgment of obligation and inclination. For example *“Another bombshell in the hydrocarbon industry: The Jakarta Corruption Court this week jailed three executives from Chevron Pacific Indonesia, the largest oil producer in the country, in a controversial case that should have been handled as a civil case” (opinion column of The Jakarta Post, Sunday, July 21, 2013)*, the modality used in this sentence indicates obligation, means that the Jakarta Corruption Court obligates to handled the case of the bombshell in the hydrocarbon industry as the civil case.

Modality has been originally understood as the truth value of the proposition logicians. It also might be construed as the relativization of the validity of sentence meaning to a set of possible worlds or way in which people could conceive the world to be different (Kiefer, 1994:2515). This means that, modality allows the language users to express what is, what would be, what may be and what should be. It can be said that, interpersonal function is realized by using a delicate modality system, by which something can be affirmed or denied,

doubted or contradicted, insisted on or accepted with reservation, etc. what stance a speaker or a writer takes depends largely on the modality system underlying the clauses. In other words, modality will express different degree of the speaker or writer commitment to proposition.

It is realized that the principal function of the language is a tool of communication. Language that used in communication is not only in form of spoken language but also in written form. When we use language, whether it is orally or writing, our main purpose is to convey some sort of message to other people. The message may be kind of informative or inquiring but it may also be persuasive, attempting to influence the hearer or reader, implicitly and explicitly, toward a desired attitude or behavior.

There are many kinds of written form of communications and one kind of it is newspaper. Knowing the features in news can help us get more accurate information around the world, and can fully enjoy the fastness and convenience of the information age. Newspaper contains a range of items; news, comment and analysis, advertising, entertainment, editorial, opinion and many other. Newspaper as one kind of form of communications enables the writer and the reader to communicate through the writing. One of important factors in communication strategy is we should know to whom that language is used or what is the aim of the communication. In this case, the writer should know how to use the language in order to reach the aim of communication.

In reading the newspaper, there is an interaction between the speaker and the reader. In this kind of interaction it would be quite natural that the writer-encoder of the message-attempt to anticipate how the reader is likely to respond to

what she/he has to say and employ accordingly all the language resources available to help the reader interpret the message as successfully as possible. This should hold true whether the writer's objective is to entertain readers in narratives or to convince them of the points in his/her argument in expository text.

The writer effort in writing to help the readers decode and interpret the message successfully, could be motivated by his/her not so entirely conscientious to win them over to his/her particular view of an issue and in fact could manifest itself in the form of language manipulation (Mineshima,2009). Newspaper can report one and the same incident of a demonstration quite differently based on their ideological or point of view of the writer.

Thus this study addresses the use of modalization in the opinion column of The Jakarta Post. The researcher chooses this newspaper because as the largest English language newspaper in Indonesia much information delivered to the reader. Nowadays more and more people read The Jakarta Post newspaper. The Jakarta Post is considered as the leading national newspaper published in English. Since its conception in 1983 the daily has developed into a prestigious newspaper respected for its independent view and bold coverage of various national and international events. In 1994, The Jakarta Post became the first Indonesian newspaper to go global. The Jakarta Post is the first and so far the only Indonesian newspaper that internationally acknowledged. With its system, The Jakarta Post now reaches not only certain class of people who live in big cities but also any citizen who is interest in reading the news.

As mentioned above, there are some items contained in the newspaper, and one of them is Opinion Column which is appear in kind of argumentative writing.

Opinion Column exists to allow the reader to comment, give view on or draw conclusion from an event. It contains people opinion in the sign of protest, criticism, even their response toward tangible phenomenon. Word and expressions are tools writer used to impress other with their writing. It is not easy to write, especially by using the language that is not belongs to us, in this case English. As modality relates to human's conceptualization, while English is not a mother tongue of Indonesian, it can be said that Indonesian writer will have different conceptualization with English. For example the clause in the opinion column of The Jakarta Post, "*often times, an election is no more than a showoff ....*" This clause is categorized as modalization-usuality because of the use of word "often". But there will be different perception for the word "often" for native and non native speaker. This differentiation was caused by many things, which one of that is the culture of native and non-native speaker. So the writer of this column should pay attention to the meaning of words and expression and know how to use them accurately, clearly and appropriately. Selecting precise words and using language distinctly allow the reader to catch the idea immediately.

Modality provides more step in the analysis, showing that it links not only between form and content, but also between content and function. When a certain type of modality is chosen, a writer is not only expressing an attitude or demanding an action, a bigger concern also taken to enhance interpersonal relationship and invite discussion. Halliday and Matthiesen state there are three basic values for modality high, medium and low (2004:148). With these values a writer can signal their degree of certainty about the validity of proposition. They will be used to investigate the writer's commitment to the validity of what they

are saying. In other words, different modals express different degree of commitment by the user of those modal verbs. In other words, Modality is a sign that the writer is presenting a personal view rather than objective facts.

As explained above, modality, in simplest sense, indicates a speaker's or writer's special way of conceptualizing a world view. According to Fowler in Bonyadi (2011), language does not allow us to say something without conveying an attitude to that something. In other words hardly one can find a piece of written and spoken text as purely objective, neutral, or value-free. It is basically the writer's point of view, angle of vision, angle of telling, or authorial interest that determines the essence of a story style and that provides the story with its particular feel and color (Simpson, 1993 in Bonyadi, 2011). It means there are cases when different modal verbs are used by different newspaper or writer to report the same pieces of news. This is happened as the consequences of different writer that will have different point of view. In such cases, each of the modals used contributes to the formulation of a certain communicative context within which the readers of the news process that particular piece of news. Research has shown that writers use of modal expression to communicate their stance toward their statements and their constitutes a rhetorical feature crucial to writing (Biber, 2006). The use of lexical verbs involves lexical, tense and voice choices that most non-native writers are not able to make.

Authors of similar studies on modality have also noted the difficulties face by non-native writers in providing evidential justification for their claims (Carlson, 1988, Hyland and Milton 1997 in Salazar). The above facts urge the writer to analyze further on modality especially modalization on the opinion

column of The Jakarta Post. Discourse of analysis on the news has had many years of history and most of the analysis is about vocabulary, features, rhetorical and grammatical features of English news. It seems it is significant to analyze the modality (modalization). Its role in the opinion text is the writer tend to make use of this property of modalization to establish either a favorable or unfavorable bias throughout the text to manipulate the reader's opinion. it can be used to find out how the opinion writers express their opinions and it can help people understand about the opinion writing. And this is also important to ease the process of communicative interaction between the writer and the reader. Thus, this study seeks to ascertain the connection between meanings of different modal used by the writer in opinion column. Modality that involved in this study is modalization (how valid the information).

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

Based on the background of the study the problems are formulated as in the following.

1. What types of modalization are used in the Opinion Column of *The Jakarta Post*?
2. How is modalization used by the writer in the opinion column of *The Jakarta Post*?
3. Why is modalization used the way it is in such context in the opinion column of *The Jakarta Post*?



### **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this research are.

1. To find the types of modalization used in the Opinion Column of *The Jakarta Post*
2. To describe the use of Modalization used in the Opinion Column of *The Jakarta Post*
3. To investigate why modalization used the way it is in the Opinion Column of *The Jakarta Post*

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

The study applies the concept of modality in systemic functional linguistic (SFL) proposed by Halliday. SFL is particularly suitable for the type of this research since it is enable us to analyze any passage and relate it to its context in the discourse, and also to the general background of the text; who it is written for, what is its angle on the subject matter and so on (Halliday, 1990:34). This research will be focused on the occurrences of modalization covering probability and usuality and the values of modalization used in opinion column of The Jakarta Post. Thus, there are some realization of modality (modalization) such as modal verb, modal adverb, adjective, etc, here this research is focused on the use of modal verb as the indicator of it. Since the opinion column consist of many topics to be discussed, this study focused on the topic of political opinion text as the most genre that accused of using language manipulatively. Therefore politic is a very interesting topic that always is a topic of discussion, especially in Indonesia.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

Findings of this research are expected to be relevant and useful theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the findings are useful for linguistic development. It enriches discussions about the application of functional grammar in media text. Practically, the findings are expected to be useful for the students and those who are interested in language of newspaper or mass media. From the pedagogical point of view, this research is also expected to be useful to the teacher in teaching English especially in skill of writing consider the growing number of students majoring in English language studies in Indonesia. Certain characteristics of newspaper such as varying genre, standard language use will encouraged the use of newspaper language as input to language teaching material. The students also can profit from this study since it may enhance their rhetorical awareness in media discourse. Thus the finding of this study on modalization can provide the English teacher and student with the required knowledge about the discourse in a certain genre, making them ready to use the newspaper text in the classroom. Through this, it is possible to provide the students with the logic of the ideas and the organization and development of the argument/opinion in the text of opinion column.

