

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the Research

Language is one of the most important elements in human life as a social creature. Good communication between humans can be established because language exists as a medium of communication. According to Verderber (1999), language is the collection of words and the method for using them in communication shared by people from the same community or nation, geographical location, or cultural heritage. Moreover, Sapir (1921) states that "Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols." Based on these statements, it can be seen that language is indeed one of the most important things in communication.

Language as a communication tool always comes with context. According to Morley (2004), context refers to the surrounding situation in which language is uttered. Context helps the speaker avoid misunderstandings with their audience by allowing them to shape their message clearly and accurately. Halliday developed the study of context in the 1960s with a context of situation. He defines the context of situation as the social and situational environment in which the discourse occurs, and was studied through three parameters of register: field of discourse, tenor of discourse, and mode of discourse.

The study that deals with human language is called Linguistics. It has several branches, including syntax. In the formation of spoken and written language, syntax plays an essential role since this branch of study deals with how sentences are constructed.

Syntax has a very close relation with syntactic analysis. While syntax sets rules on how sentences are formed, syntactic analysis uses those rules to analyze the structure of the sentences that have been formed. Two approaches can be taken to examine syntactic analysis: formal and functional. Formal syntax is a syntactic approach that mainly focuses on the formation and structure of a sentence. Functional syntax, on the other hand, focuses on how the smaller functional elements contained within the sentence work together to convey a specific meaning and serve specific communicative purposes.

Clauses, phrases, words, and even sentences are five formal units of syntactic structure. A sentence is the largest unit among the other units in the rank scale hierarchy of formal units since it expresses a complete thought. A sentence consists of one or more clauses. This statement indicates that in the formation of a sentence, a clause holds a crucial role as the main foundation in the formulation of a sentence. Moreover, to compose a well-formed sentence, an understanding of clause structure is very much needed.

The clause refers to the group of words that contains a subject and a predicate and expresses a complete thought. In the rank scale hierarchy of formal units, a clause is the second-largest unit next to a sentence. Morley (2000) points out that, in meaning terms, clauses serve to express a single idea or proposition. A subject and a predicate contained in a clause are considered the elements of clause structure.

Clause structure is the internal structure of a clause that involves the arrangement of elements that come together to produce a complete thought. Morley (2000) states that traditionally, clause structure has four primary elements: subject (S), predicator (P), complement (C), and adjunct (A). The elements of clause structure share the same

syntactic function, which is classified into four broad groups of functional elements: verbal, nominal, adjectival, and adverbial functioning elements. However, this research will focus mainly on the nominally functional elements of clause structure.

A nominal function element is a function element that serves as a noun within a sentence. According to Morley (2000), this function element is associated with the representation of a syntactic participant or entity and answers the question of “Who?” or “What?”. Morley (2000) adds that three different roles can be performed by the nominal function element. Those three roles are Subject, Object, and Complement.

This study is conducted to determine the nominal functioning elements of clause structure and to discuss the context of situation in a book called *The Twits* by Roald Dahl. The analysis of nominally functioning elements of clause structure breaks down a sentence into smaller function roles, namely subject, object, and complement. Comprehending each function role and the context of situation behind it helps the reader better understand the meaning contained within the sentence. Other than that, understanding the function element and knowing the context behind it also helps the reader improve their reading comprehension and writing skills.

*The Twits* is a fictional, humorous children’s book in the form of narrative text that tells the story of an old, ugly, filthy couple who love to play nasty tricks on each other and others. This book was published as an illustrated novel in 1980 by a famous British author, Roald Dahl, featuring Quentin Blake as the illustrator. Roald Dahl is a well-known children’s literature author with several incredibly successful and famous works, including *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964) and *Matilda* (1988). Apart from being known as a talented and skilled writer, Dahl is also known for his dark humor and wild

imagination, which offer a distinct take on children's literature. By analyzing the clause structure and the context of situation in one of Dahl's books, *The Twits*, the researcher hopes to help readers to be able to comprehend and recognize the content and messages contained in literary works, especially in fictional works.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

The problem of this study is formulated into several questions:

- 1) What are the elements and the most dominant functional elements of the nominally functioning elements found in the book *The Twits* by Roald Dahl?
- 2) What is the context of situation in the book *The Twits* by Roald Dahl, and how does it relate to the dominant use of a particular functional element?

## **1.3. The Objectives of the Research**

Based on the formulation of the problem that has been made, the objectives of the study are:

- 1) To identify the elements and the most dominant function elements of the nominally functioning elements found in the book *The Twits* by Roald Dahl.
- 2) To discuss the context of situation in the book *The Twits* and to reveal its relation to the dominant use of a particular functional element.

## **1.4. Focus of the Research**

The discussion of this study focuses on the analysis of the nominally functioning elements of clause structure and the context of situation in the book *The Twits* by Roald Dahl. This study is conducted using the context of situation study developed by Halliday

in the 1960s, and a functional analysis study by G. David Morley in his books *Syntax in Functional Grammar* (2000) and *Explorations in Functional Syntax* (2004).

## **1.5. Method of the Research**

In this section of the study, the research method was discussed. The research method is the procedure used in research to analyze and interpret data to solve the research questions that have been designed. Those procedures include the discussion of the source of data, the data collection procedures, and the data analysis.

### **1.5.1. Data Collection**

A data collection procedure is a step or process in research where data are gathered using specific methods and techniques. Several methods can be used to collect the data for the research, depending on the type of data sources. For this study, the data were taken from a narrative children's book, *The Twits*, by Roald Dahl. *The Twits* is an illustrated, humorous children's book in the form of narrative text that tells the story of an old, ugly, filthy couple named Mr and Mrs Twit. The couple loves to play nasty tricks on each other and others. This book comprises 29 chapters and 81 pages with a total of 698 sentences to analyze.

Since the data for this study were derived from a book, they were collected using a close reading and note-taking method. Close reading involves a detailed examination of a text. The data examined are then written down using the note-taking method to mark the key information needed for the research.

The data was collected by following several steps. First, the researcher would read the book thoroughly by applying the close reading method. Then, texts that possibly contain the elements of nominal function were marked or underlined using the note-taking

method. The researcher then identifies those selected texts and sorts them according to their function elements using the theory of nominally functioning elements of clause structure proposed by G. David Morley.

### 1.5.2. Data Analysis

Data analysis is a step in research where the collected data is examined to answer the formulated research questions. For this study, the data were analyzed to identify the most dominant function type and to reveal the interpretation of the dominant functional element related to the register. Data analysis was conducted by following several steps. First, the data was divided into sentences and numbered. Then, using the line marking scheme, each sentence, clause, and phrase was separated by triple, double, and single lines. The nominally functioning elements were then identified within each clause. The elements that were analyzed are written in bold, underlined, and labelled based on their function, such as **S<sup>NOM</sup>** for the nominative subject, **O<sup>DIR</sup>** and **O<sup>OBL</sup>** for direct and oblique object, and **=C<sup>DIR</sup>** and **C<sup>DIR</sup>** for the identifying and non-identifying direct complement. After that, a functional syntactic analysis was conducted to examine how each nominal element operated within the clause. After all the data was gathered, the analysis result was displayed in a table, and the frequency of each element was counted. This step aimed to answer the first research question, which is to identify the elements and the most dominant function element found in the book *The Twits* by Roald Dahl.

After identifying the elements and the most dominant functional element of the nominal element, the analysis was then continued to discuss the relation between the most dominant functional elements and the context of situation. Guided by G David Morley's book, which was published in 2000 and 2004, the theory of context of situation developed by M.A.K. Halliday was applied.

## 1.6. Definition of Key Terms

**Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL):** A theory that examines the relationship between language and its functions in social settings. M.A.K. Halliday developed this theory of language in his early work in the 1960s.

**Context of Situation:** The social and situational environment in which the discourse occurs. The context of situation is studied through the parameters of register, which investigates how language adapts to various situations and communicative purposes. Register has three parameters: field of discourse, tenor of discourse, and mode of discourse.

**Functional Syntax:** One of the two approaches known in syntactic analysis. Functional syntax is mainly concerned with how different parts of a sentence, such as the subject, object, and complement, function and relate to one another to convey meaning.

**Clause Structure:** The system structure that investigates the internal structure of a clause, which involves the arrangement of elements that come together to produce a complete thought.

**Nominally Functioning Elements:** Any clause element, such as subject, object, and complement, functions as a noun or noun phrase within the clause structure.