



The Study of Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) on EFL Students' Writing in Making Caption

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Abstract

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Students in Indonesian high schools reviewed a great deal of material. They need to have a firm understanding on a variety of texts. Caption text is one of the texts that the students need to be able to understand fluently. The students are still having trouble writing a caption text. In order to make this research more focused, the researcher narrowed the field of the problem being studied to investigate EFL students' writing in the process of making captions based on SFL perspectives. This research used a case qualitative method. The result showed that students worked hard to create a caption text. They found two important things about the structure and language of the genre as a whole. They have exercised good control in writing caption text in terms of generic structure. The schematic structure of the caption texts demonstrates this. There are still several spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors in the language. Learning to write cannot be accomplished in a single session. Thus, in order to successfully create a meaningful writing class, both teachers and students must maintain active communication.

Keywords: SFL, EFL students, writing, caption

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of education, writing is one of the English language skills that Indonesian students, particularly in senior high school, should be mastered. Because students in senior high school have been instructed in how to write various types of texts, including narrative texts, descriptive texts, hortatory texts, recount texts, and caption texts, and others, it is expected of them that they will be able to create their own texts. Caption text is one of the texts that the students need to be able to understand fluently. Students are familiar with captions. When they capture a moment for social media, they use captions. However, sometimes the caption does not correspond with the image. In this instance, students are required to write captions in English on paper, adhering to the guidelines for caption writing.

Literally, caption text is specifically described as a succinct description of an image, graphic, etc. The caption explanation is a small phrase that appears beneath the image (L. Grayam, 2010). Further, caption text's social function is to grab the reader's attention in order to fulfill its objective. Based on the fact, students have difficulty in writing captions that the text they are working with is simple. This is because they are required to consider multiple aspects of writing, such as grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and sentence structure. Some



components, such as content understanding, vocabulary, and grammar, are required for effective information presentation through writing (Permana, Zuhri, & Fauris, 2013). The ability to comprehend the material requires the formation and organization of thoughts. To understand a piece of writing, precise diction is required. In addition, sufficient time should be allocated to verify that the material contains correct grammar. In reality, some students had trouble in producing quality writing and explored their writing ideas, but others have barely basic English skills. Article proper grammar and the application of material to certain contexts and purposes are essential when writing. As a result, it is the role and responsibility of teachers to ensure that their students have a good understanding of how to construct a text in an appropriate manner. Teachers must be familiar with SFL, as a basis for teaching caption text, and they must be able to implement it within the teaching and learning process.

In addition, SFL enables students to recognize and see different writing choices that they are easily able to model for themselves (Linares and Zhi-Ying, 2020). Both the text and the genre are considered to be of the essential importance in Systemic Functional Linguistics (Wulandari, 2017). Systemic Functional Linguistics takes the view that language is a source of meaning and attempts to provide a description of language in context by concentrating on texts and the contexts in which they are applied (Noprianto, 2017; Qurratul, 2013). In addition, the instructor must be able to present it within the context of process-based teaching and learning (Potradinata, 2018). Regarding the present study, it can be said that the writing of students' caption texts must be discussed in order to assess their ability to learn and teach caption text writing procedures, as well as to evaluate their writing skills. It could give article teachers with particular information regarding how students use a text's structure and arrangement to create contextual meaning.

Some researchers have conducted research on caption text and SFL. The first are Lulud Oktaviani and Nina Rosiana Putri 2021, they conducted a survey regarding students' perspectives of Instagram caption usage. They discovered that the students' issues are a restricted vocabulary, a difficulty to write with proper structure, and a loss of motivation in writing. The second is Sihab Lapoto Ade Potradinata's 2018 study on students' descriptive writing in SFL perspectives. He found that the students' inability to modify the social purpose of the text, their inability to produce descriptive texts with a chronological schematic structure, and their inability to fill the text with appropriate language elements, such as the use of improper particular participants and incorrect tenses, were the root causes of the problems that he found with the students' caption writing. He also found that the students' inability to produce caption texts with a chronological schematic structure.

Previous study indicates the need for further investigation into the adoption of the SFL to improve student writing. In particular, the development of students' writing in other genres, such as explanation or caption text, has not been assessed. In order to cover the gaps left by previous research, the present study utilized the SFL in a writing classroom and assessed the progress of students' caption text writing. Concerning these issues, it is crucial to analyze the EFL

students' captioning practices in relation to a Systemic Functional Linguistic framework.

Caption Text

The meaning of caption text that can be found in (L Grayam: 2010) states that it is a simplified explanation that accompanies an image; it is a crucial element of a document that provides key information from an image. According to L. Grayam (2010), a good caption clearly explains the image without going into excessive detail, does not provide confusing information about the subject or image, uses short words or phrases, provides context based on the image, and paints a clear picture for the reader.

Systemic Functional Linguistics

The focus of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is on semogenesis, which can be defined as the examination of texts as intentional acts of meaning and function (Halliday & Webster, 2009). "language is considered as a social resource; meanings are negotiated by social beings in social contexts," according to the Social Functioning of Language (SFL) theory (Burns & Knox, 2005, p. 235). Therefore, in a class of English for speakers of other languages, SFL functions as the plaster that glues language, meaning, and context together (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). SFL offers perhaps the greatest variety of applications for improving students' ability to use language to produce meaning when learning English (Halliday, 1993). SFL has also established itself as a significant tool for analyzing and teaching academic written discourse because it offers a way for English language learners to increase their metalinguistic knowledge. This is accomplished by changing the emphasis away from grammatical forms and rules and toward the importance of using words effectively to communicate meaning (Halliday, 1978).

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is a part of linguistics that takes the view that language is a source of meaning and makes an effort to characterize language in use by focusing on texts and the contexts in which they are used (Noprianto, 2017; Qurratul, 2013).

The Three Metafunctions in Caption Text

According to Halliday (1978), there are three primary functions that language serves in the process of communication: (1) to express and represent our experience in the world (ideational metafunction); (2) to establish relationships between message senders and receivers; and (3) to organize texts into coherent wholes. Halliday and Hasan (1989) explain that experience meaning refers to how words are related with real-world experiences in a manner that is similar to what we just discussed. Similar considerations should be given to interpersonal social interaction when analyzing interpersonal interaction. Language choices are another factor that contribute to the determination of a text's genre and are relevant to the study of textual meaning. When trying to contextualize language, it is recommended to look at the terms of field, tenor, and mode. The terms of field refer to the topic of discussion in any given setting, while tenor and mode refer to the status and role of participants (channel of communication, the symbolic arrangement of the text; Halliday & Hasan, 1989; Martin, 1984).

- 1) Interpersonal Metafunction

There are two crucial terms to consider when evaluating a caption based on its interpersonal metafunction. They serve an emotional and linguistic purpose. There are three distinct types of mood: declarative, interrogative, and imperative. The most frequent tone used in creating captions is the declarative tone. As an illustration, *he swims in a pool*. Typically, the present tense is used when referring to *swim*, which is a finite verb. Adjuncts typically take the form of adverbial groups, such as typically, always, rarely, etc. Both statements and questions are used to accomplish their respective goals of providing information and requesting information. For example, *the princess is exceedingly beautiful*.

2) Ideational Metafunction

The ideational metafunction focuses on the clause's main verb. Participants, processes, and circumstances are the three aspects of a clause that are considered to be the most important. The word "participant" most often refers to a grouping of nouns, and a single sentence may have multiple participants. Processes can represent verbal groups. As a consequence of this, the expression of the circumstances is frequently done through the use of adverbial groups or prepositional phrases. Participation in the execution of a task; the state of being transitive. It is possible for transitivity to reveal the linguistic properties of a particular text because it can be used to investigate the time and location of the participant, the process, and the context of the conversation (Egins, 2004). In order to illustrate the linguistic properties of caption texts, the transitivity approach has been used in this example. In the meantime, a content analysis as well as an examination of the texts' structures according to the suggested schematic structures of caption texts (Anderson, M., and Kathy, A., 2003) were carried out (Emilia, 2014). It is anticipated that the research will provide students with a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of writing, thereby enhancing their ability to successfully compose in English.

Within the transitivity system, there are a total of six different processes (Egins, 2004). The first is a physical operation. It is the act of accomplishing something (Halliday, M. A. K., Matthiessen, C. M., Halliday, M., and Matthiessen, C. (2014). Typically, action verbs are used. For instance, *Salma drinks water*. Secondly, mental processes involve sensing (Halliday, 2004). *Affective sensing* (feeling), *cognitive sensing* (thinking), and *perceptual sensing* (perceiving with the five senses), are the three types of sensing that are involved in mental processes (Gerot, L., & Wignell, P., 1995). Example: *I like banana*. Verbal processes require stating or symbolically communicating, thirdly (Gerot, L., & Wignell, P., 1995) In verbal processes, there are described as four participants: the Sayer, the Receiver, the Verbiage, and the Target, as stated by Halliday (2004). For instance, *I (Sayer) explain the task to my friends (Receiver), my dog (Sayer) chased a cat (Target)*, Relational Attribute: *She (Carrier) is a teacher*. Relational identifying: *Her name (Token) is Tasya*. Fifth, the processes of behavior that occur in psychology are behavioral processes. The primary actor is referred to as the behavior, and they are required to be an intelligent entity (Egins, 2004). *A camel (Behaver) lives (Behavioral) in the desert (Circumstance)*. Sixth, existential processes are "existence processes." In existential processes, only existence itself is present (Halliday, 2004). For instance, *there are several shoes*.

3) Textual Metafunction

The textual metafunction analyzes how the speaker employs a series of phrases to establish internal consistency in the message. *Theme* and *Rheme* are the two categories of textual metafunction. The theme is the opening element of the phrase, while the remainder is referred to as the Rheme. The theme of the caption text is expressed in declarative form. For instance, *an ant has three bodily components*. The remaining subjects consist of thematic equivalence and experience theme. This is an example of a theme equivalence: *he enjoys the beach*. The experiential element is illustrated by the fact that *he feels happy*.

METHODS

This study was conducted as a research study in order to facilitate further exploration of issues related to the study of SFL perspectives on EFL students' writing in making caption. This research used a case qualitative method. A qualitative case study design is ideally suited for examining social phenomenon explanation questions (Hamied, 2017). The case is not representative of the entire population and should not be used to infer conclusions about the entire population. The case study's conclusion is limited to the case. Since the aim of this research is to investigate issues that arise in the classroom, a case study approach has been chosen as the appropriate methodology. The researcher will attempt to reveal the findings of an analysis of the student's systemic functional linguistic (SFL) when producing a caption text.

Participants in this research were 12th grade at 1st-semester students at one of senior high school in Karawang, West Java, Indonesia. The researcher has considered the study participants to be used to provide the data needed. This consideration is seen from the participants seen in the background of the problems that were previously stated. The participants of this research were students who studied caption text. The number of participants were 6 students with 3 female students and 3 male students based on their ability.

The students' texts that were selected for a document analysis are the instrumentation that was used in this study. This text is a caption that was written by students attending senior high school in Karawang, which is located in the province of West Java, Indonesia.

The following are the steps that need to be taken in order to collect the data: a) asking permission to the teacher to collect the data; b) preparing the instrument; c) making the instrument of the research; d) consulting the instrument to the adviser; e) giving the instrument to the teacher; f) collecting the instrument writing task for the students; g) the students' worksheet to be analyzed by researcher.

The analysis of the qualitative data needed to be completed in three stages. According to the explanation provided by Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative data analysis is something that can be accomplished through a series of steps. These were the reduction of data, the data display, and the conclusion (drawing and verifying).

a. Data Reduction

This is a reference to the process of reducing and organizing a large quantity of qualitative data, such as interview transcripts, field notes, and

observations, through the use of methods such as coding, creating summaries, deleting irrelevant material, and other similar techniques.

b. Data Display

In order to make sense of the vast amount of data, conclusions must be drawn in the form of tables, charts, networks, and other graphical representations. This is a continuous procedure rather to something that is done only when the data is finished.

c. Conclusion (Drawing/Verification)

The conclusion was reached based on the text of the interview, field notes, observational results, and student participation numbers. The reduced data is used by the researcher to draw conclusions.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The subject of this particular research was a piece of writing referred to as a caption that was produced by students who were enrolled in the third year of senior high school. The student writing was evaluated by the researcher based on common grammatical errors, generic structures, and social purposes, as well as the student writing's three metafunctions.

Grammatical Errors

Students need to have a strong understanding of grammar in order for them to be able to communicate their ideas in a caption in an effective manner. The examination of grammatical errors will concentrate on the types of errors that appeared frequently in the text. These types of errors include unsuitable sentence structure, incorrect word order, incorrect formation or usage of passive, unclear meaning, and errors in subject-verb agreement. The issue with the singular or plural form of the noun, as well as the incorrect or missing article.

In the first written text, the student makes a number of grammatical errors in the process of making a caption, like using clauses. According to the provided evidence, the student was still having difficulties with the following grammatical rules: errors in clauses, for example in the sentence "*when I go to different areas, I always admire the mosque I pass and visit*". Clauses do not fit with grammatically with the connector. The connector is incorrect. The connector should be shown the adverb of frequency. It should be "*whenever I go to different areas,....*". Additionally, another example in the sentence "*I always admire the mosque I pass and visit*". There was missing connector between '*the mosque*' and '*I pass and visit*'. It should be "*I always admire the mosque that I pass and visit*". Additionally, the student still had problem with grammatical rules, namely missing clause. The evidence is shown in the sentence "*especially when you were served ice tea on a hot day*". In the sentence there was '*when*' which means dependent clause. The sentence need independent clause to make the sentence clearer. The sentence should be "*especially when you were served ice tea on a hot day, you should be grateful*". As a result, it might be assumed that students struggled with grammar.

Generic Structures and Social Purpose

According to what was explained, the focus of the study was on general or schematic text structures or the organization of text elements. According to the findings, the first text discussed the author's experiences right at the beginning of

the text “*when I go to different areas, I always admire the mosque I pass and visit*”, the clause is continued with: “*I feel calm and peaceful in the mosque*”. Then followed by credit which means caption source. Then the second text talked his positioning as a person who offers advise at the beginning of the text “*don’t compare your process with others*”, the clause is continued with: “*because every flower doesn’t grow and bloom at the same time*”. Then followed by credit. The third text talked his confidence at the beginning of the text “*my twilight never leaves*”, the clause is continued with: “*because he always comeback next days*” then followed by credit. The fourth text talked about God favors that have given. The text beginning with the question “*what other favors of God would you deny?*”, the clauses is continued with: “*especially when you were served ice tea on a hot day*”. Then followed by credit. The fifth text talked about life. At the beginning of the text, he used simple sentence “*Life is like a roller coaster.*” Then followed by compound sentence “*it has ups and downs but it’s your choice to scream or enjoy the ride.*” Then followed by imperative sentence “*just be positive*”. The last is credit. The sixth text talked about why he want to stop his trip “*in the middle of this trip, I want to stop for a moment on a shore of quite lake, wash all wounds that are perfectly scratched.*” In the sentence, ‘*wash all wounds that are perfectly scratched*’ it means that treat his broken heart by looking at the lake. Then followed by credit. From this summary, it is evident that EFL students have the necessary knowledge and abilities to fulfill the requirements for writing caption text.

Language Features from SFL Perspectives

The lexico-grammatical analysis of the text was discovered by investigating the structure of the mood, transitivity, and theme as components of interpersonal metafunction, experiential metafunction, and textual metafunction. During this session, we are going to take a look at the different ways that clauses can be combined to convey the meaning of different metafunctions.

1) Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis

The interpersonal metafunction looks into the connection between interaction semantic organization and the grammatical variations in mood structure introduced by the clause differences (Eggins, 2004). You can think of the different mood choices as different clauses and sentences. The following diagram illustrates how the student's authentic handwriting caption text is structured in terms of the number of sentences and clauses.

Table 1. The distribution of sentences and clauses in texts

Total of clauses/sentences	Total
Clauses	14
Sentences	10
Declarative sentences	14
Positive declarative sentences	10
Negative declarative sentences	3
Interrogative declarative sentences	1

According to the table, there are a total of 14 clauses in the 10 sentences in texts, with 10 positive declarative clauses and the rest negative and interrogative declarative clauses. According to the table, there are a total

of 14 clauses in the 10 sentences that make up the text. Ten of these clauses are positive declarative clauses, while the remaining four are either negative or interrogative declarative clauses. It gives the impression that students regard readers either as recipients of the information or as potential acknowledgers (Eggins, 2004). It was discovered that they write captions in declarative moods, and this finding is thought to be relevant to the attributes of caption texts that provide information to readers. Because they convey an idea that is associated with a picture, the great majority of the clauses are written in the present tense with the finite verb serving as the base verb. However, there are a few instances in which students get the Finite tense wrong.

Figure 1. The error Finite (verb II) in the mood structure

When	I	Go	To different areas	
Adjunct	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Adjunct
Mood			Residue	
I	Always	Admire	The mosque I pass and visit	
Subject	Adv. of frequency	finite	Predicator	Complement
Mood			Residue	

Students should write captions in the present tense. According to the figure, the sentence employs a connector 'when' where the past tense should be used. The first finite should be 'was going,' and the second 'admired.'

Furthermore, errors in subject-verb agreement have been found. The subject does not match to the verb in a grammatical sense. The verb used here is incorrect. The correct form of the verb to use here is the singular form. As an example:

Figure 2. Errors in subject-verb agreement

He	Always	Comeback	Next day	
Subject	Adjunct	Finite	Predicator	Adjunct
Mood			Residue	

Another inconsistency can be seen in the examples in figure 2 in the form of positive declarative mood. There is a lack of compatibility between the subject and the verb in this case due to carelessness in compiling the essay or making revisions. However, writers are more likely to use a singular subject with a plural verb or a plural subject with a singular verb. They are unsure of the number of subjects because they misinterpreted the general rule or because other words between the subject and the verb obscure the true subject. When the predicator 'comes back' is replaced by 'comeback' after the singular subject 'he,' an error occurs. Overall, she has described her confidence in someone in complete sentences and appropriate sequences. However, the inconsistency of the Finite may influence the text's mood choice.

2) Experiential Metafunction Analysis

People are able to express themselves through the use of language. The majority of people are only concerned with the information that is conveyed in the message, and not the reason that the speakers have expressed themselves. Because of this, users of the language are able to place their full value on the overall meaning of the clause as it relates to interpersonal communication. On the other hand, an experiential perspective "includes a set of resources for referring to entities in the world and the ways in which those entities act on or relate to one another." cited in Thompson (2014).

There is a strong possibility that transitivity differentiates between verbs with and without an object. The meaning of verbs is expanded when considered in this contexts. It is a technique for describing the entire clause, as rather than only the verb and the object that it refers to. It complies to traditional values, which place a higher priority on the group that communicates verbally. The label assigned to the participant is decided by the verbal group (Thompson, 2014). One interpretation of the transitivity system describes it as "the study of what people are shown to be doing and refers to who goes to whom and how." Emilia and Christie (2013). Transitivity reveals who is important in a specific clause and who is affected by the action (Emilia, 2014).

From the Experiential metafunction Transitivity system, in which the text is realized through an action process involving the role of participants (Butt et al, 2003). The students' clauses were organized by material process with 8 clauses, mental process with 2 clauses, relational process with 2 clauses and 1 clause for attribute, and verbal process with 1 clause.

The clauses in the text that describe the action carried out by the participant are primarily focused on describing the material process. The material process example presented in the second text is depicted in the figure that can be found below.

Figure 3. The material process in the second text

Because	Every flower	Doesn't	Grow	and	Bloom	At the same time
	Actor		Process: material			Circumstance

During the attribute process, he had the realization that he needed to describe and explain the functions of the participant in order for the readers to understand the topic that he chose when writing a caption text. This was the case even though the carrier or token that he used was not in the form of a particular participant. The figure below depicts an example of an attribute process from the fifth text.

Figure 4. The attribute process in the fifth text

Life	Is	Like a roller coaster
Carrier	Process: attribute	Attribute

To sum up, the first text describes the feeling in the mosque using mental process, while the following text describes it using material process. The second text uses verbal process to describe verbal expression and

material process to describe an expression. The third text employs a material process to describe her twilight. The fourth text employs a material process to describe God's favors. The fifth text uses attribute process to describe the functions of life, relational process to give additional participant's state and signal ownership, and material process to describe the functions of life. The final text describes his trip through the use of material process.

3) Textual Metafunction Analysis

After analyzing the interpersonal and experiential structure to determine the clause's topic, textual metafunction is derived. Theme and Rheme are textual metafunction expressions (Gerot & Wignell, 1994; Thompson, 2014). The majority of the clauses in the sample text were found to be unmarked, and the students correctly used marked textual theme by correctly using conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs to link ideas in old information to new ideas in new information, which resulted in a text that was clear and easy to read. In contrast, the following example shows a marked sentence:

Figure 5. The theme structure of the text

Because	Every flower doesn't grow and bloom at the same time
Theme	Rheme

As shown in figure 7, there are several clauses. The student may need to use a more effective transition to improve the organization and emphasis of their writing. The theme When I go to different areas, it is highlighted because it is considered the most important left part of the expression. The writer may desire to emphasize both the explanation of time and his activities. In the event that a topical shift is recognized, it is possible for the sequences of the theme to deviate from the typical distribution of the theme-rheme structure.

Figure 6. The theme-rheme in the first text

When	I go to different areas,
Theme 1	Rheme 1
I	Always admire the mosque I pass and visit
Theme 2	Rheme 2
I	Feel calm and peaceful in the mosque
Theme 3	Rheme 3

The time sequence in the figure indicates that the first clause is marked. Following the clause is an unmarked theme. Although the majority of the theme is written with the pronoun I, there is one marked sentence that emphasizes specific parts of the clause. The lack of pronouns like it, this, that, or those to refer back to the theme or rheme in the preceding sentences creates a new topic from the first to the second sentence. He has made an effort, however, to provide clear information that can still form coherence. As a result, both caption texts cover the necessary schematic structure and organization.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the overview that the students put in a lot of effort in order to produce a caption text about their experiences. However, they discovered two significant things regarding the general language and structure of the genre in general. To resume, they have demonstrated a high level of control in terms of the generic structure of the caption text that they have written. This is demonstrated by the schematic structure of the caption texts. The language still contains a number of typos that can be found in its spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. When it comes to the interpersonal metafunction, errors typically take place in the finite because there is overlap between the past and present tenses. In a general sense, the atmosphere choices that were derived from the text are suitable for the declarative nature of the caption text. It was discovered through the use of the transitivity structure that the majority of the clauses are written in the material process and that the theme-rheme structure does not contain any references to these clauses. The roles that teachers play in facilitating the writing process are extremely important. In conclusion, the process of learning how to write cannot be completed in a single session. Therefore, in order to successfully create a writing class that is meaningful, it is necessary for both the teacher and the students to maintain active communication. The results of this study, which focuses on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students and writing instruction, cannot be generalized to all EFL students. As a direct consequence of this, more extensive investigations are required.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Concerning the investigation, authorship, and publication of this paper, the author(s) have reported that there are no potential conflicts of interest.

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