

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Living in present-day society, we cannot deny that racism is very rampant in every part of the world we live in. America is one of the most notable countries with a very high number of racist occurrences that happen in the country. There have been countless happenings of horrible segregation and injustice against the blacks in the past, and it still continues even until now. It hurts the black people greatly, since whether they are colored or not, they are still humans who deserve to be treated as ones, and not to be treated differently just because they come from a different race — and for that exact reason, racism should be stopped, not just in America, but everywhere.

Fortunately, there have been many attempts made to stop racism from spreading further in America. One of the most notable attempts made to combat the segregation and hate faced by the blacks was made by Martin Luther King Jr. Born in 1929, King works as a social activist and baptist minister.

Indubitably one of the most prominent figures in opposing racism in America, he is widely viewed as a hero, peacemaker, and martyr by many people around the world. There is even a holiday celebrated in America in honor of his deeds. King strived for equality and justice for African-Americans, and notably, he did it without any act of violence. He was the driving force behind many events that combated racism against the African-Americans.

Out of all of his attempts, the most significant one is the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963, an event where in front of his supporters, he delivered *I Have a Dream*, a speech that lasts for 17 minutes. The speech begins with a reference to the Emancipation Proclamation, an event where millions of slaves were promised to be freed in 1863. He continues that even 100 years later, the promise has not been realized and they are not free from the injustice that has befallen them. However, King has a dream, as told in the speech, that one day the two races can eventually be together as racism in America is erased, hand in hand and in peace with each other. This part of the speech turns out to become the most famous part of the speech, and continues to be remembered by many people, even now.

As the speech proves very popular and is a huge factor in combating hate crimes concerning racism against African-Americans, I decide to choose this particular speech of his to analyze, since this particular speech is very phenomenal. It resonates with a lot of people, and touches their hearts in a bigger scope than the other speeches do. I would like to find out how, and why the speech can have such a big impact. Besides, in the analysis I also intend to

find out how King represents the African-Americans and their problems during the oppression by the whites.

In my process of analyzing the speech, the theory of Discourse Analysis will be applied. Discourse Analysis is a study where compositions, ranging from audio to written ones will be observed and studied in the way they are used in text and contexts. In particular, I am going to use van Dijk's theory of Discourse Analysis, which is also known as Critical Discourse Analysis. Critical Discourse Analysis is a bit different from Discourse Analysis, as it analyzes texts, whether spoken or written, to expose and resist cases of injustice and social equality that happen in society and hopefully help in erasing them. This is what drives me to analyze the speech using this theory, as by analyzing the speech, which is about racism, it would hopefully help to contribute to the positive view of black people, and through that, lessening the amount of racism that happens to black people.

Hopefully, by analyzing *I Have a Dream*, this thesis can contribute to combating racism, as the analysis will help people realize why it has to be erased from society, and how it increases the exposure towards the problems of racism that tend to be overlooked by the society. It is also expected that people will understand the purpose and meaning of the speech, in a deeper level, and bring forth realization towards the erasure of racism.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The problems that will be analyzed in this thesis are:

1. How is the self represented in the macrostructure aspect of the speech?

2. How is the self represented in the microstructure aspect of the speech?
3. How is the self represented in the superstructure aspect of the speech?

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to:

1. find out how the self is represented in the macrostructure aspect of the speech;
2. find out how the self is represented in the microstructure aspect of the speech;
3. find out how the self is represented in the superstructure aspect of the speech.

### **1.4 Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis begins with Chapter One, which is Introduction. It contains Background of the Study, followed by Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, and finally Organization of the Thesis. It continues with Chapter Two, which contains the theoretical framework of the thesis. It is followed by Chapter Three, which contains the analysis of the speech used in the thesis, and finally, it ends with Chapter Four, which contains the conclusion of the thesis. References and Appendices are put at the end of the thesis.