CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language, as a system of communication, contributes to such an essential role in every aspect of human's life, notably in human's nature as a social-being. As one of the most influential features in community, language itself is multifunctional. It allows us to express our ideas, thoughts, feelings, as well as to show one's representation. According to Hall (2013), "representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people" (p. 1). On the basis of showing representation, language can be used to depict the ideology that one has brought towards certain things, either in a positive or negative way.

In this thesis, in terms of analysing the language academically to create one's representation, I apply one linguistics theory, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by a famous linguist, Teun A. van Dijk. According to van Dijk (2015), CDA is defined as "discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (p. 466). CDA is

divided into three major approaches: macro level analysis, meso-level analysis, and micro level analysis; however, the scope of my research will only be limited on the micro-level analysis, focusing on the macrostructure, microstructure, and superstructure analyses.

With regard to showing the issue of social-power abuse and inequality in a social and political context, one of the media that can be chosen is a newspaper, in which the report belongs to a news report genre. According to Vocabulary (n.d.), a news report is "a short account of the everyday news", having the purpose of informing the readers what is happening in the world around them (Wettropics, n.d.). To maintain the objectivity in a news report, a journalist should portray the issue in a neutral and unbiased manner, regardless of his or her personal belief. However, once subjectivity is involved in writing a news report, the writer's ideology and belief is conveyed to a certain party, group, or individual, increasing the possibility of the news report to be biased. Considering this reason, I decide to use a news report as the data source because this will be an intriguing source for my research.

One recent event that catches my attention is George Floyd's death in 2020, which may be one of the biggest news that attracts the most attention, reaction, and action all over the world. On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a black man who was arrested for the report of using a counterfeit of $20 bill, died in the hands of white police officers after continuously shouting 'I can't breathe' for approximately nine minutes (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2020). Supported by the high level of social media use nowadays, the video of Floyd's dying in police custody was spread widely through YouTube, Instagram, and other similar platforms only in a short

period of time, which also led to more and more videos showing police brutality towards black men that apparently had happened before.

Despite those similar cases resembling Floyd's, George Floyd's case turns out to be the climax of this long-standing issue. It triggers criticism against the US Police Department, which questions the police's systemic racism and brutality. This also leads to massive protests done by numerous groups of society and it is considered to be the biggest Black Lives Matters movements in the US history (Waite, 2020). For the reason that it is such a controversial issue, I find that analysing the representation of the United States Police Department in a news report will be an interesting topic to be discussed.

I decide to examine a news report taken from a foreign newspaper *The New York Times,* published on 10 June 2020 with the title "George Floyd's Brother Pleads with Congress: "Make It Stop"". *The New York Times*, founded in 1851, is a worldwide recognized daily newspaper distributed throughout the United States (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). It is said that the purpose of *The New York Times* is "to help people understand the world through on-the-ground, expert and deeply reported independent journalism" (Nytco.com, n.d.).

In addition, it is recorded that *The New York Times* has so far won 130 Pulitzer Prizes (nytco.com, n.d.), an outstanding journalistic achievement (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), and considered to be one of the world's greatest newspapers for its editorial excellence (Britannica, 2020). For the facts stated above, I believe that *The New York Times* article is adequately trusted and credible to be taken as the source of my data.

By doing this analysis, I believe that people can be more critical and analytical in taking information from the media, realizing that media may intentionally reflect a particular ideology. This critical concept, as a result, is expected to be beneficial in minimizing the possibility of one's being easily stirred up in their daily life, especially in the process of receiving information. To sum up, this thesis is significant as it may build people's awareness of how they should respond to certain issues more wisely and critically.

Total: 835 words

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In doing the analysis, I would like to find out:

1. What is the representation of the United States Police Department in the newspaper article based on the macrostructure analysis?

2. What is the representation of the United States Police Department in the newspaper article based on the microstructure analysis?

3. What is the representation of the United States Police Department in the newspaper article based on the superstructure analysis?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

By doing this analysis, the aims of this research are:

1. to find out the representation of the United States Police Department in the newspaper article based on the macrostructure analysis.

2. to find out the representation of the United States Police Department in the newspaper article based on the microstructure analysis.

3. to find out the representation of the United States Police Department in the newspaper article based on the superstructure analysis.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis will be divided into five chapters. It begins with Introduction, which consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, and Organization of the Thesis. Then, the second chapter is Literature Review. Here, the theories that are used in my research are elaborated. The next chapter is Methods of Research, containing four subcategories: Research Design, Data Collection Technique, Framework for Analysis, and Data Analysis. Then, in Chapter Four, the analysis of the representation of the United States Police Department is presented. The last one, the fifth chapter, is Conclusion, containing my personal opinion and comments regarding the findings. This thesis ends with References and Appendices.

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