

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

It is an undisputable fact that human beings are social beings. A human needs to be part of at least one society and interact with others within that society. One form of human interaction is the exchange of information, which is commonly known as communication. Generally, communication is considered successful when the information is conveyed and exchanged correctly by whatever means necessary.

There are two kinds of communication; one-way and two-way communication. Unlike two-way communication, in which each participant has relatively an equal proportion or a similar role, in one-way communication, the information flows to one direction only: one side acts as the information giver while the other side acts solely as the information receiver.

Mass-communication is a form of communication that involves many people (public). Most of the time, mass-communication utilizes the presence of mass media such as television, magazines, newspapers, and radio, for the reason that its foremost purpose is to spread information to the “mass.” In mass-communication, the information goes from one side (the giver) to the other side (the receiver) and

it hardly ever goes the other way round. For this particular reason, it is clear that mass-communication is a form of one-way communication.

In one-way communication, the fact that the information-receivers are not in the position to make inquiries or to confirm their vague understanding makes them have to accept the information just as it is and thus, they may come up with their own interpretations. Such a situation can be abused by the information-givers by intentionally giving blurred information to cover up the fact and lead the public (the audience) to believe what they want them to believe for their own sakes. In other words, they mislead the public. One way of doing it is by using doublespeak (Lutz, 1990), which is part of Pragmatics. “Pragmatics is a study that deals with three concepts: meaning, context, and communication” (Schiffin, 1994: 190).

Doublespeak is a method of presenting speakers’ meaning to others in a certain way to get a certain response and understanding as well. Doublespeak is a language deliberately constructed to disguise or distort its actual meaning, often resulting in communication bypass. Such language is associated with governmental, military, corporate institutions, and advertising language. (Lutz, 1990: 153)

Doublespeak is not a matter of subjects agreeing with the verbs. It is a matter of words and facts agreeing. As long as there is some truth in the words, basically, it is considered the fact. Basic to doublespeak is incongruity, that is the incongruity between what is said or left unsaid, and what it really is. It deals with the incongruity between the word and the referent, between seem and be, between the essential function of language, communication and what doublespeak does:

give the wrong impression, twist, delude, exaggerate, elude, and complicate. (Lutz, 1990: 1, 2)

Spotting and recognizing the presence of doublespeak could be a tricky thing to do. However, once found, it may help to give a better understanding of what someone is really talking about and to learn the truth that is probably hidden under carefully arranged words.

I think misleading information caused by doublespeak in mass-communication especially in some governmental speeches and some advertisements is an interesting yet challenging topic for a thesis. This thesis sees the whole communication act as a trip in which the speaker or the information giver is the place of departure and the receiver's understanding or interpretation is the destination. The hub of this thesis is the journey during which the speaker or the information giver cleverly shapes an understanding or an interpretation in the receiver's mind while communicating by means of doublespeak.

In writing a thesis on this subject, I find the data in the form of speech transcriptions, which are downloaded from the Internet; and some advertisements, which are gathered from both local and imported magazines.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The problems in this study are formulated as follows:

1. What type(s) of doublespeak is/are applied?
2. What is the more transparent meaning behind the doublespeak?

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Following the statement of the problems, the purposes of this study are:

1. To classify the kind(s) of doublespeak found in the data.
2. To figure out the more transparent meaning behind the doublespeak.

## **METHOD OF RESEARCH**

I search for the data from magazines and the Internet. The data are in the form of speech transcriptions and advertisements. The following steps are selecting, listing, analyzing the data, and concluding the analysis. Some theories from textbooks and the Internet are used to analyze the data.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

The thesis includes four chapters. The Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis are presented in Chapter I, which is the Introduction. What is presented in Chapter II is the Theoretical Framework of the Study. In Chapter III, the data analysis is presented. The last chapter, Chapter IV, states the Conclusion. The Bibliography and the Appendices are both put at the end of the thesis.