

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The United States of America is a multiethnic country. The people who live there come from various countries with various cultures. Thus, a lot of differences can be found among them. These differences can lead to the subordination of members of various groups based on their race. Paula S. Rothenberg states in her book Race, Class, and Gender in the United States that:

One of the first things we notice about people when we meet them (along with their sex) is their race. We utilize race to provide clues about *who* a person is. This fact is made painfully obvious when we encounter someone whom we cannot conveniently racially categorize, someone who is, for example, racially “mixed” or of an ethnic or racial group with which we are not familiar. Such an encounter becomes a source of discomfort and momentarily a crisis of racial meaning (14).

This tendency of people categorizing others based on racial differences is the reason why people are discriminated. This fact naturally leads to racism.

Racism is defined by Martin N. Marger in his book, Race and Ethnic Relations, as “the belief that humans are subdivided into distinct heredity groups that are innately different in their social behavior and mental capacities and that can therefore be ranked as superior and inferior...” (27).

In America, racism has been a major problem since the day America was founded. One of the undeniable proofs of racism in America was the practice of slavery in the early days. Besides, racism has often played a central role in conflicts between groups of people. And yet, it has been particularly used against minorities such as Native Americans, African-Americans, and many other races. Among the groups which are promoting and continuing the terrible problem, there is a group named Ku Klux Klan.

The history of Ku Klux Klan began in the middle of the 19th century. The group was founded by the veterans of Confederate Army, and the purpose is solely to react against Radical Republican by attempting to restore white supremacy in the wake of Civil War. With a lot of records of intimidation and violence aimed at the colored people and the Jews, the group was prosecuted under the Civil Rights Act in 1871. However it rose again, reaching a membership peak of five million in the 1920s. In the times of the Great Depression in 1929, the group was slowly diminished. During World War II, the group began to revive because the idea of white supremacy was again popularized by the Nazi. At the same time, the American society seemed to consciously turn against the group during this period as never before. As a result, law enforcement agencies were successful in bringing down the group in the 1970s. The present Ku Klux Klan is composed of small independent groups that spread all over America. However, since Pastor Thomas Robb became the head of the group, the group has been very well-organized.

Thomas Robb, the current national director of the Knights of Ku Klux Klan, was born in Detroit, Michigan in the year of 1946. He is a father of three and a grandfather of seven. Thomas Robb is a pastor at the Christian Revival Center and he is an ordained Baptist minister. For the past 30 years, he has been a powerful spokesman for the white rights movement. He has committed his life to speaking up for the rights of white Christians while traveling all over America.

Pastor Thomas Robb and his Ku Klux Klan people tend to think of themselves as superior and all too often racism is used “to legitimate the unequal distribution of the society’s resources, specifically, various forms of wealth, prestige and power” (Marger 27). White-skinned people of European origin like them view themselves as innately superior in “intelligence, temperament and other primary attitudes, beliefs and behavioral traits” (Marger 28). This tendency is strengthened by the fact that they outnumber the native American and other races that inhabit America. This fact leads Pastor Thomas Robb, together with his Ku Klux Klan people, to think that they are innately superior to others and it creates a thought in their mind of legitimizing the use of power to oppress the minority.

In terms of transparency, it seems quite interesting to study the practice of Ku Klux Klan nowadays. In the early days, they obviously were very transparent in practicing racial discrimination, but it was not the same as it is in the present day. The acting director of the group, Pastor Thomas Robb, and his Ku Klux Klan people tend to go “soft” in an attempt to be accepted publicly. They try to spread issues that they have logical reasons why they do so and why they should not be claimed entirely wrong. For that reason, I analyze the practice of racial discrimination by Pastor Thomas Robb that is especially targeted at the minorities in America.

In making the analysis, I will apply text analysis as the major linguistic theory in my thesis. The reason why I choose text analysis is that this study device seems to be very helpful in revealing how the speaker represents himself and others. The study of text analysis covers structure, diction, and coherence. The three linguistic areas help me a lot to elaborate my data in order to have more detailed analyses. Therefore, the significance of my study is to show that Pastor Thomas Robb is undoubtedly a racist, and why he is the kind of person. This is my reason for choosing the topic of this thesis. Basically, I am challenged to know more about Pastor Thomas Robb and the Ku Klux Klan because in my opinion he, as well as the group, is very interesting to study.

For the data, I choose a speech of Pastor Thomas Robb's that I have searched from the Internet. The data I have chosen present a discourse that is linguistically analyzable. I will first analyze the data in the text by scanning and detecting anything that is categorized as text analysis. In the process, I use the subfields of text analysis such as structure, diction, and coherence to elaborate my analysis. In the end, hopefully, my analysis can be of great help in contributing more on the study about racism to Indonesian linguists who are interested in discussing a similar topic.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In this thesis, I would like to analyze the following problems:

1. How is the self represented in the text?
2. How is the other represented in the text?
3. What are the linguistic instruments used to represent the self and the other?

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of my study is:

1. to know how the self is represented in the text.
2. to know how the other is represented in the text.
3. to know what linguistic instruments are used to represent the self and the other.

1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The method used is library research. I begin the research for this thesis by finding and reading some books that are relevant to the topic discussed. I also search for some further explanation about the concept of text analysis on the Internet. After that, I browse and collect the data from the Internet. I mainly focus on finding the data in Ku Klux Klan's official website in order to avoid irrelevant and misleading information. Finally, I draw a conclusion of what has been discussed.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

I divide the thesis into four chapters. The first chapter is Introduction, which consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problems, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter two contains the theoretical framework, in which I present some approaches that I use to analyze the data. Chapter Three is the analysis of the text. The last chapter, Chapter Four, is the conclusion of the analysis. At the end of the thesis, I put the bibliography and the appendix.