

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Film provides a story about human existence by showing characters in various action sequences using visual effects and a complementing musical composition (Simanjuntak et al., 2021). Movies can express a variety of messages, including moral, humanitarian, social, political, economic, and cultural themes. As a result, they have the potential to cause more complex and significant negative consequences (Sartika, 2014). These films not only entertain, but also help to shape audiences' worldviews, social norms, and identities. According to Simanjuntak et al., (2021), films have a dual purpose: they provide amusement while also serving as a literary medium for illustrating many aspects of life and moral concepts. They teach essential life lessons, urging viewers to emulate virtuous behavior and avoid negative role models (Simanjuntak et al., 2021).

Nowadays, social identity aids in self-awareness and societal acknowledgment, granting us a feeling of presence and validation within our community. Social identity define as constitutes an integral aspect of an individual's self-concept, originating from their affiliation with a particular social group (Tajfel, 1978; Trepte, 2013). The notions of in-group (referring to one's own group) and out-group (pertaining to other groups) within the framework of social identity is elucidates how individuals identify themselves with specific social groups and how this identification influences their perceptions and behaviors. Additionally, social identity contributes to the formation of social bonds, enabling us to discover like-minded groups and communities, and it also shapes our interactions and attaining group goals (Mols, et al., 2015). Social identity is important for people's behavior because numerous studies in social psychology examine the impact of group identity on individual actions and investigate whether individuals exhibit differential behavior towards in-group and out-group members. The majority of these experiments are supported by Shih et al. (1999; Charness & Chen, 2020) that when an individual identifies themselves as a member of a group, they gain self-confidence from

belonging to that group and tend to embrace actions that align with the customary expectations and preconceived notions linked to that specific group identity.

Other than that, the rule of power and hierarchy also can be considered as a reflection of the worldview faced by society. Power refers to an individual's ability to affect the behaviors, beliefs, or actions of others. Power is something that is dispersed throughout society, emphasizing the distribution of power and the ways in which power creates knowledge (Foucault, 1977). Foucault said that power is not possessed by specific individuals or institutions; rather, it is dispersed across various social interactions and structures. Power may be viewed as malevolent or unfair. The rule of power can also be regarded in a positive light, as something received or bestowed for the purpose of pursuing humane goals that assist, inspire, and uplift others. In essence, it arises from the interplay between two entities and their surroundings. Also, hierarchy is the concept of hierarchy is a broad theory designed to simplify and enhance our understanding of complexity by utilizing the principle of near-decomposability (Wu, 2013). The rule of power and hierarchy is also important for society in terms of attitudes, values, and social behaviors that contribute to the reinforcement of group hierarchies, while others work to diminish these hierarchies. Power imbalances within various types of group hierarchies are determined by the interplay of these factors across three levels of analysis: within societal institutions (macro level), in intergroup relations (meso level), and among individual interactions (micro level). The authors not only examine how social comparisons influence the outcomes that either strengthen or weaken hierarchies at each level but also how these outcomes, in turn, can mitigate the natural consequences of power comparisons based on group identity (Bergh, et al., 2020).

Like mentioned in the study of Sobur (2004: Simanjuntak, et al., 2021), certain movies capture the actualities present in society and subsequently project them onto the screen. As popular media, Marvel films can be a reflection of the values and social norms that exist in society. The portrayal of social identity, the rules of power, and hierarchy within society can be further analyzed in the Marvel's film "The Avengers." The diverse group of superheroes who initially operate as individuals with distinct backgrounds and abilities can describe the value of social identity. The dynamics between the Avengers and the antagonists, such as Loki and the Chitauri describe how the rules of power. Also,

the characters represent a spectrum of abilities, experiences, and backgrounds, and their interactions reveal elements of social hierarchy. Hence, the movie "The Avengers," which extensively depicts social identity, the rule of power, and hierarchy, has been chosen for analysis.

The concept of Marvel films has become a popular phenomenon in the global entertainment industry. Marvel movies exert a substantial impact and enjoy widespread adoration (Liu, 2021). Among other Marvel films, 'The Avengers' film was chosen as the object of research because it is one of the most commercially successful Marvel films and has a large number of fans. The avenger movie is very unique because what sets the series apart is not primarily the storyline but rather the themes it explores and the way it weaves its narrative (Ussolichah, et al., 2021). In "The Avengers," team members with unique social identities collaborate to achieve common goals. Leadership dynamics and the sacrifice of power emerge in facing shared threats, reflecting hierarchical structures in role allocation and responsibilities. The audience tends to view a film positively when it conveys moral values that resonate with them. In this particular film, the narrative closely relates to the community, drawing inspiration from real-life struggles (Wardaningsih, et al., 2022).

Kress and Leeuwen (1996) state that film is one form of popular media that is highly influential in shaping worldviews and social norms in society. They emphasize the importance of text analysis in understanding how films reflect and reproduce worldviews and social norms that exist in society. Van Dijk (1990; Nurwahyuni & Samelia, 2020) highlights the importance of critical discourse analysis in understanding the influence of mass media in shaping worldviews and social norms in society. By using discourse analysis, we can gain insights not only into the textual content within a discourse but also into the intended message, the reasons behind conveying it, as well as the structure and understanding of the message. He argues that mass media can influence the way people think, act, and speak, so critical discourse analysis can help uncover how the influence of mass media occurs.

Additionally, while research has confirmed the role of media in reinforcing social identity messages (Harwood, 1999; Trepte, 2006; Trepte & Kramer, 2007), the formation of social identity through popular culture has not been widely explored, even though

"social identity shapes the way we see the world." This indicates the need for more research into how popular culture, particularly film, plays a role in shaping and reinforcing social identity in society. In this context, popular media such as films not only serve as a source of entertainment but also become a powerful tool in shaping perspectives, values, and norms that prevail in society, including in Indonesia.

In the Indonesian context, research on the influence of popular media on worldviews and social norms is still very limited, so this study is expected to contribute to understanding how popular media influences worldviews and social norms in Indonesia. This study will employ the critical discourse analysis method to understand the influence of popular media on worldviews and social norms present in The Avengers film. The critical discourse analysis method will be used to analyze the dialogue in the film and identify how language is used to reflect and reproduce power, social dynamics, and ideology.

1.2 Problem Identification

Discourse analysis on The Avengers film faces various identification problems that need to be explained. First, the characters in the film represent various kinds of social identities such as gender, race, and ethnicity, so it is necessary to identify how these representations influence how the audience perceives these social identities. Second, power and hierarchy in films are influenced by the actions and behavior of the characters, so it is necessary to analyze how this affects the audience's view of power and hierarchy in real life.

1.3 Research Question

1. How do the characters in Avengers represent various social identities?
2. How are the roles of power and hierarchy in The Avengers film reflected in the actions and behavior of the characters?

1.4 Research Objective

1. To analyze how the characters in The Avengers represent various social identities.

2. To investigate the roles of power and hierarchy in The Avenger's film reflected in the actions and behavior of the characters.

1.5 Research Scope

This research focuses on the film The Avengers, the first film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) series. The study will examine the dialogue and actions of the characters in the film using a discourse analysis approach. This approach focuses on language aspects and will explore how social identities, such as gender, race, and ethnicity, are represented in the characters, along with the influence of power and hierarchy on their behavior and actions. Additionally, the research will emphasize micro-level analysis, particularly focusing on language features such as metaphors and other linguistic elements. The study will also explore major themes in the film, including justice, friendship, and sacrifice, and the influence of technology and science on the film. The social, cultural, and political context for the analysis will be Indonesia, examining how this context influences the audience's understanding and interpretation of The Avengers. A qualitative approach will be employed in data collection and analysis, including methods such as observation, interviews, and document analysis. Respondents for the interviews will be audiences of The Avengers in Indonesia, particularly from groups whose social identities are represented in the film, such as women and ethnic minority groups. This research will explore how The Avengers reflects and reproduces power, social, and ideological dynamics in society and how these dynamics influence the audience's understanding and views.

1.6 Significant of the study

The significance of this study revolves around the critical discourse analysis of social identity, power dynamics, and hierarchy within the context of dialogues in The Avengers movie, including the following:

1. Analyzing how social identities are portrayed and integrated into the dialogues of The Avengers.
2. Uncovering the nuances of individual characters' social affiliations and group dynamics.

3. Understanding how power relationships are articulated and contested within the narrative.
4. Examining how roles and responsibilities contribute to the establishment of hierarchy within the team.

