

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The COVID-19 is known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The disease it causes is called coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). In 2019, a new coronavirus was recognized as the cause of a disorder outbreak that originated in China. It is still unclear where this virus originated. The World Health Organization (WHO) classified the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic in March 2020. US intelligence and national security officials claim that the US government is looking into the possibility that the novel coronavirus originated in China rather than a location that is more closely related to the problem and warn that it is too soon to draw any conclusions (CNN, 2019).

The new coronavirus may have its ecological origin in *Rhinolophus* (horseshoe) bats, but that another intermediary animal was likely to be responsible for transmission to people (WHO, 2020) This virus came from the Wuhan market that selling a lot of animals. The first man recorded as dying from the disease came into contact with the market, but his wife — who was also hospitalized with the disease — did not. (Lancet, 2020).

The international trend of *Sinophobia*, or prejudice towards Chinese people, has arisen since the Covid-19 outbreak (Kong et al., [2021](#); Borja et al., [2020b](#); Schild et al., [2020](#)). Since the pandemic begin, there is some negative stigma towards Asians and Chinese who were believed as the cause of this pandemic that

creates hate towards them. Hate crimes and violence during the Covid-19 outbreak were widely recorded. The FBI issued a warning about the rise in hate crimes against Chinese persons in the USA (ABC March 27, 2020) Although calculating the exact number of such crimes is usually challenging, it was stated that anti-Asian hate crimes have increased by 21% in the UK since the pandemic began till May 2020 (The Guardian May 13, 2020). Another study found that the probability of ethnic Chinese people in London becoming victims of hate crimes increased from about 3 percent in February 2020 to over 16 percent in March 2020, whereas there was no significant increase in hate crimes against other ethnic groups during the same time period (Gray and Hansen 2020). From early February to early May 2020 in Italy, the civil society organization Lunaria gathered over 50 instances of assaults, bullying, and discrimination against Asians (Human Rights Watch May 15, 2020). Hatred toward China because of this virus becomes the cause of the racial slurs that happened in the social media world right now. They are started to forbid them to walk around the neighborhood, force Asians to go back to their countries, and the worst part is some Chinese are getting physical abuse from strangers when they walk pass the street or they are in the public areas. Hate incidents and crimes during the Covid-19 outbreak were widely recorded. Chinese not also get hates in real life, but also in social media life. In a few weeks and months since the virus spread around the world, there are many discrimination against the Chinese, or even Asians.

Social media websites in this case, facing the issue of distinguishing and controlling risky posts. Numerous of abuse in Social Media are exposed and

obvious. Among all the social medias, Twitter is widely known as place for aspiration where people can easily speak what's on their mind through their tweets. This issue that currently happened in the world can easily found and discussed on Twitter. People can share their positive or even negative comments about something through their finger and post it on twitter. Al Jazeera discover that there are almost more than 10,000 tweets about "Kung-flu" only in March. The total of tweets probably much higher since there are many variations in the tweets on twitter. People in social media has to separate between hate speech and an actual hate crimes since their tweets can actually provoke other people which leads their hate speech from twitter, into the real hate crimes in real life.

Twitter have some features to interacts such as retweets, replies, comments, and mentions. This features helps to spread the informationi, spread collecting ideas, and mases similar interest in social media such as twitter. Symbolic interactionists suggest that human conduct is to be seen as a process in which individuals shape and govern their conduct by taking into account the expectation of others with whom they interact (Mulyana, 2012:114). Social media users often take on the role of virtual personality (Hogan, 2010) This is what buzzers are used for. Buzzer is a Twitter actor who accepts a brand owner's invitation to update tweets about a certain good or service in exchange for compensation. In this investigation, everyday people act as the buzzer. The buzzer's followers will read his tweets and retweet them to their own followers. Buzzing's primary goal is to spread positive word of mouth on social media. As a result, in order for a buzzer to exist, there must be followers who can be cared for and kept together like a

community (Edwin, 2012). Buzzers have more followers than non-buzzers, and their tweets frequently become trending topics because they receive hundreds or thousands of retweets..

The hashtag spreading all over the world and become the Trending Topic Twitter Worldwide or we know as TTWW since 2019 - now. Besides, numerous terms with similar settings to "china" and "Chinese" in Twitter dataset are as still about governmental issues. Twitter information, these political-related terms are identified with COVID-19, e.g., "ccpvirus," and a portion of these terms even pass on the importance of retribution and discipline towards China, for example, "boycottchina." For example, a Twitter user posted: "#ChineseVirus is chinesevirus. One name. #BoycottChina #ChinaLiesPeopleDie." There are plenty of hashtags spreading all over the twitter since the pandemic begin to raise. Hashtags #ChineseVirus, #ChinaVirus, etc, can easily found on twitter and it's easy to see how the hate speech spreading all over twitter.

The perpetrators of hate speech usually the majority people that attacking the minority one. The perpetrators of the hate speech towards Chinese in twitter mostly are people who are in lockdown situation and they blame China because think they cause of this chaos around the world. Like previous epidemics and pandemics, the unpredictable consequences and uncertainty surrounding public safety, as well as misinformation about COVID-19 (particularly on social media) can often impact individuals' mental health including depression, anxiety, and traumatic stress (Cheung et al., 2008; Zandifar and Badrfam, 2020).

Appraisal Theory describes how authors use language to communicate their engagement with others (Carol J, 2010). Appraisal Theory shifts sentiment classification further and considers the appraisal expression – a basic grammatical unit by which an opinion is expressed. Counted from 11th to 30th March, 2020, more than 4 million tweets a day have been captured mentioning the word Coronavirus/Covid19 (Rathi et al., 2020). Due to the disease, the emotional amounts of texts are growing rapidly. It associates with user's opinion, emotions, and attitudes towards the condition at that time. For this reason, Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) can assist identifying attitudes in written text including the concealed emotive content of discourse performed on the tweets during Covid19 disease. Those tweets will be categorized into positive and negative attitudes. To some extent, human personality can also be undertaken through the appraisals besides the evaluation. Thus, it has been pretty obvious that there is something special about virtually text expression.

This research pertains to how language is used to express people's emotions, feelings, opinions, comments, and so on. This matter is called as appraisal systems in which Martin & White (2005) have divided into three categories namely attitude, engagement, and graduation, as described in the previous chapter. In conducting this research, the writer found several previous studies that discussed similar topics contained within this research. Thus, this chapter will thoroughly explain previous studies that have similar topics with this research as mentioned and described below.

The study entitled *Analysis of Commentary of "A Farewell to Arms" Using Appraisal Theory* was conducted by Iswara (2016). This study was published by International Seminar Prasasti III: Current Research in Linguistics, Semarang State University. This study aimed at examining the language used by Great American Bathroom Book (GABB) Volume 1 writer in conveying commentary to *A Farewell to Arms* novel written by Ernest Hemmingway, specifically on the page 5-A2. Appraisal theory proposed by Martin & White (2005) was used to investigate the expressed language. Based on the data presentation, the writer applied qualitative method. Meanwhile, the results showed that the commentary did not present any negative opinion or unfavorable comments to the novel. Most of the comments were positive appreciation in which the writer appraised the novel is good to be read and recommended.

Bontisesari & Hapsari (2017) with the title '*To Hide or Not To Hide*': *An Appraisal Analysis on Young Homosexuals' Coming Out Stories in Melela.org*. This study was published in Universitas Airlangga, and it aimed at examining markers of linguistic on *Coming-Out* stories published by young homosexuals that examined how the linguistic markers were functioned to build up the sexual identities of the writers' within the context of heteronormative society. The writers chose two articles from *Melela.org* that they also became the data for the study. It applied purposive sampling and qualitative method to conduct the study. Meanwhile, the theory used within this study was Appraisal theory proposed by Martin & White (2005). The results showed that there were 299 linguistic markers found within the two articles. They were identified as attitude markers with the

percentages in each elements: judgement (50.4%), affect (30%), and appreciation (19.6%). This demonstrates the struggles confronted by the young homosexuals in acquiring self-acceptance from both their surroundings and themselves in which it becomes the main outcome of their *Coming-Out* process presented by the positive attitude markers.

Appraisal Analysis in Media Conference between the Government of Indonesia and Australia towards Bilateral Relations Normalization was conducted by Amalia & Hakim (2017). This study was published from Intermestic: Journal of International Studies and categorized as descriptive study. It was aiming at identifying and analyzing the appraisal types found in media conference of Indonesia and Australian government happened in 2013. The study applied Appraisal theory proposed by Martin & White (2005). The result showed that there was found no negative appraisal towards both government. Each of the representatives did not bring up any indications of unfavorable statements regarding the scandal happened between two governments. Both government representatives were agreed to restore and continue the bilateral relation among Indonesia and Australia.

Appraisal Analysis of the Attitudinal Perspective in Texts Written by the Indonesian Migrants in Hong Kong for their mothers was conducted by Nurdiyani, Djatmika, Sumarlam, Wiratno & Santosa (2019). The purpose of the study was to describe the language applied by Indonesian migrants in Hong Kong within *Iqro* and *CahayaQu* magazines published in 2014. It focused on the attitudinal perspective found within the written works of BMI HK. Based on the data, this

study used qualitative method to describe the analysis results. The theory applied was Appraisal theory proposed by Martin & White (2005). The results show that there were many migrants or BMI HK who had problems with their parents. The calculation showed the negative attitudinal perspective held higher data than positive ones. It is shown in; from 164 data, it was found 27.4% of positive attitudinal and 72.6% of negative attitudinal perspective with detailed calculation; 46.4% (affect), 32.4% (judgement), and 21.3% (appreciation). The writer collected the data from five pieces of writing published in several rubrics such as *Curahan Hati*, *Berbagi Hikmah*, *Konsultasi Keluarga* and *Surat Pembaca*.

Fake News in Social Media: An Appraisal Analysis was conducted by Hasibuan (2019). It was published in Universitas Sumatera Utara. This study aimed at finding out several appraisal contents applied in fake news, describing authors' positions in their own writings, and analyzing appraisal systems' influences on readers. By applying the theory of Miles and Huberman (1984) as research methodology, the writer classified and analyzed the data based on their division and subdivision. There were 144 sentences taken from namely fifteen fake news. They were made during the election of American presidential between Trump and Hillary. The fake news were written to exaggerate and sensationalize the situation during the election. The study applied Appraisal system theory proposed by Martin (2000), and Martin & White (2005) in which it is stated that the person who divided the appraisal systems into three categories namely attitude, graduation and engagement. Therefore, the results showed that the most system commonly found in the texts was attitude system, and followed by judgement, negative affect, and

appreciation. However, there were lots of heteroglossic engagement with the percentage of 69% within the fake news. Meanwhile, the graduation appraisal system was found around 59% of *sharpen-focus* followed by *raise-force*, *soften-focus* and *lower-force*. Appraisal expressions were dominated by engagement rather than graduation and attitude. This shows that the readers of fake news were persuasively brought to believe what the authors wrote by giving the similar perceptions about the news from several sources. Besides, the writers of the fake news, exaggerated one side of the candidates, the man candidate to be specific by possessing positive thoughts or opinions about the male candidate which was considered ‘picking a side’ or bias. In addition, several writers strengthen their opinions or thoughts as they hoped the readers would believe them by choosing several strong phrases to support their arguments.

The other one is Hadidi & Mohammadbagheri-Parvin (2015) in their study entitled “Systemic Functional Linguistics as Interpersonal Semantics: Appraisal and Attitude in the Stylistic Analysis of an English Novel.” The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald was chosen as the writer corpus for this study, and the entire novel was analyzed discursively, linguistically, and aesthetically through one of the subsystems of appraisal, namely attitude. The findings suggest that attitudes are placed in the expected order of appreciation, judgment, and influence, as well as that attitudes are stylistically portrayed and work in accordance with the characters and circumstances in the novel.

There are similarities between this research and those five previous studies. Several studies were conducting the same topic that is appraisal systems or analysis, though, with different objects, yet, same form (texts). The first study used commentary as the object, second study used articles, third study utilized media conference, fourth study was conducting the analysis with written works by Indonesian migrants, and last study was using fake news as the object to be analyzed. These objects are vary and have its own benefits while applying the appraisal theory. Besides, the theory mostly used within those several studies was the Appraisal theory which is proposed by Martin & White (2005). Therefore, the state of art of this study is to examine the appraisal analysis on the recent issue regarding hate speech which happened currently in twitter towards China during recent pandemic Covid-19.

1.2 Research Question

This study will be talking about the hate that China and the Chinese get because of this COVID-19 Pandemic. The question that arises in this study is:

How attitude, graduation, and engagement are used on people tweets towards Chinese people?

1.3 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to find out how attitude, graduation, and engagement shows in tweets and used to classify the hate speech towards Chinese on Twitter.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study is examine about hate speech towards China or Chinese that happened on twitter because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The tweets that are used are based on the trending tweets that has hashtags related to Covid-19 and hate speech towards China or Chinese. This also gives information about the latest issues that happen in the world right now and can be a reference for those who want to discuss the same topic. This study is expected to broaden the repository of studies in appraisal theory and twitter and will give an important contribution for the next students who have same interests of topic discussion. So, this research can be useful for future researcher.

