CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Webtoon or webcomic is a hybrid form of art and literature (Meskin, 2009: 239). It contains storytelling or formal aspects of literature such as point of view, setting, characters, and plot that are presented visually to the readers using the combination of sets of illustrations and literary elements such as words, phrases, and clauses in the dialogues and monologues. It is often the work of one creator that acts as both the author and the illustrator, or a small team alongside the author in which the members are assigned roles that ensure the publications of the webtoons are done properly, such as the project manager, the illustrator, and the illustrator's assistants (Halsband & Grimm, 2018: 120). However, it can also be the adaptation from an original novel, light novel, or web novel that the webtoon publisher has reached out for them to "republish" the literature in a new hybrid form.

Like a pure form of literature, webtoons have a range of genres: romance, action, adventure, fantasy, slice-of-life, horror, etc. (Halsband & Grimm, 2018: 120). Amongst the genres, it is noted that the fantasy genre has one of the highest amount of webtoons available on webtoon publisher websites, such as Webtoons.com (420 webtoons). It is possible because a fantasy setting enables a sense of escapism for the readers, mainly young adults, to escape from the real world filled with stressful expectations for a limited time. One of the fantasy

subgenres that is best to provide this sense of escapism is Isekai. The name "Isekai" /iːˈseɪkaɪ/ is derived from Japanese 異世界, meaning "different world" or "other world". This terminology "other world" can be defined as a different planet or land, a different timeline, or anything that can be considered to be different from the world the writer is living in (Price, 2021: 59). It is particularly popular in Japan and the United States in the present time where webtoons have begun to enter the mainstream media (Price, 2021: 58).

One of the webtoons categorized as an Isekai is Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint (ORV), which is an ongoing webtoon from 2020 that is adapted from a web novel written by a Korean author, SingNSong, in 2018. The reason behind the writer of this thesis's decision to pick this webtoon as the corpus instead of its novel version is that the original novel's language is Korean and has no official English translation. However, the webtoon version already has the English translation in Webtoons.com, leading the writer to make the decision to make this the corpus of this study.

It is a magnificent piece of literature, unlike any other webtoons of the same genre that the author has read—such as "The Villainess's Stationery Shop", "The Player Hides His Past", "I Was the Final Boss", "Doctor Player", and "The Novel's Extra"—because it clearly shows the depiction of how humans behave under control of otherworldly beings. In ORV, those otherworldly beings control the human population in intricate ways, with one using absolute "rules" the humans must follow in the form of challenges known as scenarios (named Dokkaebi) and

the other using transactions so the humans can have an advantage while surviving the scenarios at certain costs (named Constellation). If this aspect is looked at closely, it can be said that there is a governmentality at work in the narrative.

The webtoon tells the story of a person named Kim Dokja who likes to read a novel titled "Three Ways to Survive in a Ruined World". However, the world of the novel is unexpectedly synthesized with the reality that Kim Dokja is living in. This makes the world integrated with the nature of the novel, being a gamic world that contains elements of games so that the world Kim Dokja lives in resembles exactly the world in the novel with its gamic features. He is the only one who knows how the novel ends because he is the only one who finishes reading the novel. Thus, he intends to change the course of the story by surviving and playing along with the scenarios to reach his ideal happy ending. Being a human who knows everything that is going to happen, he already knows certainly how the authority figures (the otherworldly beings) impose their influence on the human population and control them. In other words, he already has background assumptions about the governmentality of the otherworldly beings before the world is altered. This background assumption, according to Yule's theories of Pragmatics (1996: 25), is named "presupposition".

However, before discussing further topics in this thesis, it is important for the readers to understand that Kim Dokja and these otherworldly beings are completely fictional. They are the characters that only exist within this fictional story (Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint) and are not a real representation of real figures in reality. Kim Dokja is a fictional human character who reads a fictional

novel whose fictional world is synthesized with a fictional world of the novel in which two kinds of fictional non-human characters who are the otherworldly beings that authorize people from the novel (Dokkaebi and Constellation) come into being into the fictional world Kim Dokja is living in. Thus, the mentions of Kim Dokja, Dokkaebis, and Constellations in this thesis refer to fictional characters in the webtoon "Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint".

A presupposition is defined by Yule (1996: 25) as information assumed by the speaker before they produce utterances. An utterance that contains a presupposition could help the receiver of the information to point out the existence of something, factual information that happened before the utterance, habits, imaginary or false information, etc. For an utterance to be classified as having a presupposition, the utterance should have presupposition-generating linguistic items which are also known as presupposition triggers (Levinson: 1983, 179).

Governmentality is a term Foucault uses to define a form of activity that is centred around how to govern three aspects: self, family, and state (Foucault et al., 1991: 3). It is also interchangeably called the Art of Government by Foucault (Foucault et al., 1991: 3). The art of governing self is connected with morality, while a family with the economy, and state with politics (Foucault et al., 1991: 91). In the context of the otherworldly beings that control the human population in ORV, it can be said that this research will focus only in the family governmentality and state governmentality because of the different methods each being deployed. Dokkaebis control humans by establishing absolute rules and surveillance in the form of scenarios that directly control how humans behave should they want to survive (in

other words, through politics). By doing this, the Dokkaebis will gain profit because the scenarios will be broadcast to the audience (Constellations) as if they have a reality show starring humans. The more interesting the show, the more famous the Dokkaebi become due to the possibility of the rise in viewership. In addition, this established broadcast channel then allows the audience to sponsor the humans (in simpler terms, donate their money to support the humans). This nature is in line with Foucault's thoughts about governing a state (1991: 92), in which he states that to govern a state is to manage the economy of the state which is controlling the wealth and behaviour of the population and establishing surveillance and control. On the other hand, Constellations control humans by establishing a transactional connection for those who catch their interest, allowing the players to gain many benefits for them to survive the scenarios but also making them their "pawn" in which the humans should only do something that is favoured by the Constellation (in other words, through economy in familial connection). This is in line with Foucault's argument about governing a family (1991: 94) in which he states that it is not exclusively protecting the family property, but also their wealth and prosperity from all possibilities that could affect them in the future. In addition, the two categories are the focus because the point of view in which the governmentality can be seen is through Kim Dokja's point of view which contains his omniscient knowledge of the novel world. This leads him to have a background assumption (presupposition) in his utterances regarding the governmentality of Dokkaebis and Constellations.

Thus, it can be noted that from the perspective of governmentality, it can be said that Kim Dokja (even if he is considered omniscient and knows how to manoeuvre through the authorities' ruling to reach the ending of the story he desires to see) is considered to be the representation of the people that is the subject of both character kinds. On the other hand, looking at the discussion earlier, the description of the behaviour of Dokkaebis matches the description of Althusser's Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) (2001: 142-143) because they govern the State by violence. It is stated by Althusser that RSA includes the government, the administration, the police, etc. (2014: 92). The description of Dokkaebis' activities that enforce the "rules" (scenarios) and give penalties to those who fail to clear it makes them the "Police" which is the repressive representation of the State. On the other hand, the description of Constellations matches the description of Althusser's Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) (2001: 144-145), because they govern the family in which the familiar bonds are established the moment they construct the transactional relationship with humans while also spreading their ideology, making them their family head. This relationship causes the humans to rely on the Constellations' power to survive the scenario, building a dependence on them that is also a sign of submissiveness, which is a virtue taught in the family (Althusser, 2001: 156). It is also apparent that the Constellations will not allow humans to use their power if they use it with an intention that is not in line with their ideology, furthering the nuance of dependency to submit to their will if they want to survive the scenarios with the Constellations' "help".

This research mainly focuses on Linguistic, analysing presuppositions. However, to relate the analysis with the theme (issue) of the webtoon, this research also uses a concept in Culture Study, namely Foucault's Govermentality.

Several studies related to presupposition as well as governmentality before this study. However, it is noted that no research has studied the combination of the two. Thus, the writer studied two journal articles and one undergraduate thesis related to Presupposition to study its flow of logic in studying Yule's and Levinson's theories of Presupposition and Presupposition Triggers in utterances, and one undergraduate thesis related to governmentality to study the governmentality in narrative corpus.

The thesis titled "Presupposition of The Narrator's Utterances in Silet Infotainment" written by Winda Astuti (2015) utilizes the combination of Yule's theory of Presupposition Types and Levinson's theory of Presupposition Triggers to find out the functions of each presupposition in the narrator's utterances. This research serves as a guide on how to analyze presupposition and presupposition triggers in an utterance.

The journal article written by Kristy, Deliana, and Harefa's research (2020) titled "Presupposition in Beauty and The Beast Movie Script" deploys Yule's presupposition types in investigating the meaning of the characters' utterances which are implicitly stored in the presupposition. This research serves its role as research which can be analyzed to know how analyzing presuppositions is done. It

is important to note that this research's nature is limited to the utilization of Yule's presupposition types.

Another article written by Prasetyani, Fitriana, and Febrian (2022) titled "Showing Leadership through the Types of Presupposition in *Patriots Day* Movie" utilizes Yule's types of presupposition and interprets the reason why the main character uses majorly a certain type of presupposition which is related to his character. Similar to the study conducted by Kristy, Deliana, and Harefa, this research's framework only uses Yule's presupposition type. However, it is noted that the presuppositions analyzed come from the utterances that are uttered by the main character.

Aside from the other two articles, the article written by Saputra, Arifin, and Ariani's research (2021) titled "An Analysis Of Presupposition on Brad Cohen's Character in *Front of the Class* Movie" focuses its study on the usage of presupposition by Brad Cohen. It has the nature of a one-character focus similar to the research made by Prasetyani, Fitriana, and Febrian but offers no other novelty similar to others. In other words, all four of the research can be said to be monodisciplinary. Despite the monodisciplinary nature and the limited novelties, it can be said that the four pieces of research in the Presupposition field serve as a reference for the writer to conduct research that utilizes presuppositions as an integral part of the theoretical framework.

To study governmentality in a narrative corpus due to the nature of this research which establishes a webtoon as the corpus, the writer studies an

undergraduate thesis with the same base concept of Foucault's Governmentality titled "The Governmentality System in Dystopian Society in Veronica Roth's *Divergent*" written by Nurul Adha Kurniati (2015). This thesis's theoretical framework focuses solely on the field and from the perspective of Cultural Studies. Utilizing Deconstruction, Kurniati (2015: 5-6) seeks to analyze the way governmentality is depicted in the dystopian society in *Divergent*. It is found that contrary to the original process explained by Foucault in which to achieve a good state, there should have been a harmony of continuity between the three aspects: self, family, and state, the dystopian society of *Divergent* fails to do so and thus create a social gap and a high tension between the government and the society (Kurniati, 2015: 42-44).

Synthesizing the information extracted by studying the studies above, the writer could tell that there are gaps in the study of Linguistics which based on the reading that the writer has conducted, there is no research concerning presupposition that has the nature of being a multidisciplinary study. It is also apparent that there has not been a study that researches the Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint webtoon as its corpus. Realizing these research gaps, this research then will utilize Levinson's Presupposition Triggers to find out the presupposition in Kim Dokja's utterance with the topic of Governmentality in mind with the subject matter of the otherworldly beings (Dokkaebi and Constellation), then classify the presupposition-containing utterance according to Yule's Six Types of Presupposition. Then, the writer will uncover the implied meaning in the utterances

to construct the governmentality of the otherworldly beings (Dokkaebi and Constellation).

1.2 Research Question

This thesis has the following questions of this study:

1. What are the types of presupposition assumed by Kim Dokja as the representation of people in his utterances regarding the governmentality of the two kinds of characters (Dokkaebi who is the "Police" and Constellation who is the "Family head") in the webtoon "Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint"?

2. How do the implied meanings in the presuppositions-containing utterances portray the governmentality of the Dokkaebis as the "Police" and Constellations as the "Family head"?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Regarding the background and the research question of this study, this thesis has the following purposes:

1. Finding out the types of presupposition assumed by Kim Dokja that contain the fragments of the otherworldly beings' governmentality. using Levinson's presupposition triggers.

2. Analyze the way the implied meaning created by the presuppositions portrays the governmentality of the otherworldly beings (Dokkaebi and Constellation).

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses and limits its object of analysis to the presupposition assumed by the main character of the Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint webtoon, Kim Dokja, in his utterances that regard his assumptions towards the governmentality of the otherworldly beings (Dokkaebis and Constellation). Thus, it will not analyze the presupposition uttered by other characters. It will only study the governmentality in the category of family (Constellation) and state (Dokkaebi). In terms of presupposition theory, this study will be limited to the application of Levinson's presuppositional trigger and Yule's six types of presupposition that will be connected to find the governmentality assumed by Kim Dokja. In addition, due to the webtoon being still ongoing, this thesis will not study the entirety of the webtoon's episode and will focus on the first 111 episodes.

1.5 Significance of Study

In terms of significance, this study has two standpoints of significance:

1. **Theoretical**

This study contributes to the knowledge of presupposition by offering an introductory perspective in which the theories of presupposition can be linked to the concept of governmentality.

2. **Practical**

The result of this study offers a perspective that can help deepen the understanding of the concept of presupposition and its implementation in the corpus type of webtoons.

a. **The lecturer**

This thesis can be utilized by lecturers who are focused on the field of linguistics, mainly Pragmatics, as a tool for demonstrating the way of analyzing presuppositions in the corpus type of webtoons.

b. **The student**

This thesis can be treated as a reference point for students who are interested in understanding the concept of presupposition and its implementation in terms of social concepts such as governmentality

c. **Future researcher**

This research contains gaps that the writer of this thesis is not able to cover, which are beyond the types of presupposition and presupposition triggers. Thus, this thesis can serve as a reference for future researchers who are interested in analyzing the area of

presupposition, whether or not the corpus comes from the same

webtoon the writer of this thesis uses.