

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Many significant events are happening around the world every day, along with these circumstances there are also multiple ways to spread information about them. News becomes a very important thing in human life since it is a factual report of an event that gives the newest information for its audiences. Moreover, Jorge (2015) argued that for making any news, two components determine the concepts and the quality of the media product, where the news is taken and the organization that produces the news. The first aspect refers to the group of people who become the informants for the journalist. Therefore, the organization that produces the news refers to the institution that manages and controls the media itself. It could be argued that the product of media can influence the consumers' perception of the constructed narrative or information given.

Million people around the world consume news in their everyday life. Therefore, the objectivity in the news production is important to help the audiences shape their own opinions about the presented story. It could be achieved only by providing the facts and allowing the audiences create their own interpretation. Objectivity in the news is intended to present the issues in a neutral and unbiased manner, despite the news producer's personal beliefs. However, journalists and news organizations often present specific ideologies on purpose. Their work routines and resource availability are frequently the driving forces behind those

decisions. The media influences public opinion by framing events and issues in specific ways. The society almost consume news that contains patterns or frames created by the institution to help its audiences see the issue in just the exact way the producers presented.

The concept of framing theory has a strong relation with agenda-setting but broadens the study by putting the focus on the essence of the issues at some parties rather than a particular topic. Furthermore, framing theory enlarges its point of view in which the presented products create a frame for the specific information. It often becomes a conscious decision of the media, journalists, or the filmmaker. Moreover, framing theory explains the effect of media on citizens' perspectives of politics. It can influence the audiences by stressing certain aspects of reality and pushing others into the background they have made (Lecheler and Vreese, 2012). In these aspects, framing the media can create a certain point of view that contributes to people's choices, decisions, and judgments. On the other hand, the frames created by the media are the abstraction that constructs some meanings or purposes. According to Azahar and Adibah (2018), framing is an expression that creates a pattern or a classification in the audiences' mind. As a result, news framing can have a significant impact on society's attitudes and behaviours toward a given issue. According to Lechler and de Vreese (2019), framing primarily influences people's interpretation of something, which includes cognitive responses, emotional reactions, attitudinal effects, and people's behaviours.

This study will analyze the news videos produced by ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) News, *Exposing China's Digital Dystopian*

Dictatorship | Foreign Correspondent (2018) and *Hacked China Blacklist Includes Australian Citizens and Uyghur Children* (2021). Relations between China and Australia have become fraught over the past year after Canberra pushed for an international probe into the origin of the coronavirus without diplomatic consultations beforehand, and Beijing eventually responded with a number of trade blocs. China and Australia, two of Asia-Pacific's biggest trading partners, have been locked in political conflict for the past year resulting in a series of many problems that have not yet been resolved. Li (2012) believed that the news presented by ABC has brought frames and tried to influence its audiences about Chinese Government's system and innovation. It could be seen that news produced by ABC about China's political issue were presented negatively by the news institution.

Furthermore, ABC has become one of the leading producers of good quality local and international news and current affairs coverage in Australia. This company has been number one Australia's leading international current affairs since 1992. Its specialisation is in covering major international issues and investigating those that received negative comments from the foreign government (Li, 2012). However, it is believed that this public broadcaster is hardly independent from the state engagement. The interference from Australia's government can be seen on the appointment of the company executive boards. ABC has a statutory body run by a board of directors, who regularly reports to the parliament with consideration of government policies and the organizations' strategic changes (Li, 2012). In this case, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) argued that the content of media

would contain the elites' ideological viewpoint the more closely the institution connected to them. Therefore, it is believed that *Exposing China's Digital Dystopian Dictatorship | Foreign Correspondent* (2018) and *Hacked China Blacklist Includes Australian Citizens and Uyghur Children* (2021). created by ABC news enclose Australian Government's point of view regarding China Government's system.

The analyzed video criticized the newest system created by the Chinese government to monitor citizens' behavior. These videos talk about China as the largest country with the largest video surveillance network in the world. The innovation is equipped with advanced technology, such as facial recognition and artificial technology to help the government monitor its citizens. There the new tracking innovation has been developed to support the country's Social Credit System. According to Amanda Lee (2020), it is a set of national databases that track and assess the trustworthiness of people, institutions, and government entities. This system gives a score for each individual and offers better treatment for those who get a positive social credit score. People with a good score will gain many benefits, like priority health care and deposit-free renting of housing. On the other hand, the lower score could make individuals get banned from public transportation.

The first video is entitled *Exposing China's Digital Dystopian Dictatorship* uploaded by ABC News In-depth. This video shows the development of China's system and related technology. It stated that China has combined Big Brother with Big Data. Therefore, the government would monitor citizens' behaviour. This system of social control gives scores or credit to every situation and acts in everyday

life. This video is published in 2018 in ABC News In-depth. It was arguably a response to several events that happens between Australia and China in that year, including the banning of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) in China.

Moreover, ABC News also uploads a video entitled *Hacked China Blacklist includes Australian citizens and Uyghur Children*. This video shows that leaders of the Australian Uyghur communities have been blacklisted by Chinese authorities as suspected terrorists. Furthermore, it is published in 2021 on ABC News' youtube channel. Australia and China relations have had their ups and downs for several years, but in 2021 their relationship is heating up again due to some political issues. At the time, China was going through several international problems, including the condemnation of many countries against the Uyghur community. In relation to the previous video, it also criticized the Chinese Government's Social Credit System. The video focuses on how this system became a treat for the Uyghur community. Nevertheless, this video affirms Australia's disagreement with the Chinese government and its system in the previous video.

In this study, ABC News becomes the representation of International media, since its news are published globally. ABC News is a national television service developed by the Australian government. Therefore, construction of the news will receive a huge influence of the state engagement. Li (2012) stated that since 1992, Australian Broadcasting Corporation has been Australia's leading international current affairs program. This suggest that this company plays a vital role in shaping perceptions of China to the Australian and the global citizen. This is supported by the use of English in the media contents, making their media consumers people

around the world. However, the narration about this country is often fundamentally biased and frequently represents foreign media as a part of wider plots to discredit China and its citizens (Hewitt, 2020). These media often contribute to alienating Chinese people. Moreover, the news they make also delivers the tension between China and the other country.

Overall, those videos seem to explain the information about the new system that was implied in China. However, it could be argued that there are frames presented for the audiences regarding the issues. The frames in those videos surely will affect international perspectives about China and its system. It would seem that Australian Broadcasting Corporate as the producer news agencies would put the focus on their beliefs and perspectives, rather than analyzing the issue objectively from the Chinese government's side. It could be argued that ABC news tried to convince their audiences about which outlook is better by using one of the issues in China. It could be argued that the ABC News Channel has agenda-setting in narrating the Chinese government system and technology, not only for their audiences but also for people in China. This study will use Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis in identifying types of frames and frame-building process on both news videos. Therefore, the analysis of the frames is based on the theories of generic frames matrix developed by Semetko and Valkenburg: the conflict, attribution and responsibility, economic influences, morality, and human interest frames. It also examines the textual and contextual factors that shape the frames of both news.

Several studies have been examined to get a deep understanding of the theoretical framework of this paper. Most of them used the generic frame matrix created by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), which contains the conflict, attribution and responsibility, economic influences, morality, and human interests frames. There is still no research towards the application of frames on ABC as international news agencies towards the new policy of the Chinese Government. Moreover, it is believed that contextual factors between those agencies and countries might have a great contribution to the production of news. Nuri and Balas (2010) also proposed that the political challenges that are put on the media product, the contribution of political and cultural perspectives of the news agencies have become strong influences for the audiences. The studies have created a clear classification about the implication of media framing theory for the current study.

This study will explore media framing about China's government created by ABC as the representation of white media. It proposes to find the implication of news framing by using the theory of Semetko and Valkenburg. Then, the external and internal causes of the frames will be analyzed. In this phase, the perception of the news institution towards the government would be the most important thing to achieve the results.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

1. How does ABC News frame China's social credit system and its supporting technology in *Exposing China's Digital Dystopian Dictatorship* | *Foreign Correspondent* (2018) and *Hacked China Blacklist Includes Australian Citizens and Uyghur Children* (2021)?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To elaborate news framing about China's Social Credit System and its supporting technology in ABC News' *Exposing China's Digital Dystopian Dictatorship | Foreign Correspondent* (2018) and *Hacked China Blacklist Includes Australian Citizens and Uyghur Children* (2021).

1.4 Significance of the Study

Nowadays, media framing has become the most significant tool in shaping people's perspectives. Furthermore, it could be argued that news media has the power to alter how people think about an issue or event. However, media framing is not an automatic process, how it forms and influences people will depend on the condition at that time. In some cases, a substantial influence of political perspective on news production has been found. It could be a propaganda tool by some institutions who control that media since news media has the power in shaping audiences' perceptions.

In this paper, the media framing toward China will be analyzed. It is believed that those frames have created the Chinese Government's international image, especially about Social Credit Systems and their technology. Moreover, those news productions could distribute the judgments regarding the issue. The study aims to find the implication of news framing by using the theory of Semetko and Valkenburg. Then, the external and internal causes of the frames will be analyzed. In this phase, the perception of the news institution towards the government would be the most important thing to achieve the results. By using the

theory of media framing, this research is expected to be useful as a practical source for the future research of English literature students at Universitas Airlangga.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

This study will focus on analyzing the media or news framing created by International media, such as ABC News towards the new policy of the Chinese Government. It is believed that the implication of the framing often constructs an ordered story or information, which truths are included, excluded, or emphasized (Krosnick, 1991). In this case, it could be argued that International News Agencies have created strong frames regarding the Chinese Government's Social Credit System and its innovation. In this case, the study will focus on investigating the party behind these frames and what things influence the formation of the frames. Furthermore, this study also examines the effects of news framing on audiences' perception of the issue.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

News Framing : The verbal and visual information in an article that directly or implicitly suggests what the problem is about, how it can be addressed, and who is responsible for creating and solving it (Tewksbury, 2015).

Frame-building : How frames create societal discourse about an issue and how different frames are adopted by journalists (Scheufele, 1999).

ABC News : A public news service produced by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Broadcasting within

Australia and the rest of the world, the service covers both local and world affairs.

Social Credit System : A national blacklist being developed by the government of the People's Republic of China under General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Xi Jinping's administration.