

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1.BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

People cannot live without making some kind of connection with others. One of the means to make connection is through social network. Furht (2010) defines social network as “... a set of social actors, nodes, or members that are connected by one or more types of relations by the internet”. Castells in his study in 2001 says that the internet has become a “non-commercial communication tools” (p. 44). McQuail also has the same opinion when he says that the internet “serves as a tool for displaying and selling many goods and services” (2011, p. 44).

Forms of social networking include social media such as friendster, skype, email, path, ask, twitter and *facebook*. In its development, social media has an application called *Instagram*. *Instagram* was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger who were the CEO of technology company, Burbn, Inc., that developed cellular phone application (Wink, 2015). Systrom and Krieger make an application that focuses especially on the camera application, where people can make comments on the photo. What makes *Instagram* different from other social media is that the application is only available in mobile phones. *Instagram* allows users to add captions and hash tags using the # symbol to describe the pictures and videos. It can

also use the @symbol to effectively create a link from their posts to the referenced user's account before posting the pictures.

Yuheng Hu's study in 2014 informs that there are more than 150 million people registered as *Instagram* users, even since its launch in October 2010. In Indonesia, a survey by [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com) on the "*Instagram* users reach 500 million" in June 22, 2016 informed that on June, there were a half billion of *Instagram* users. More than 300 million people use once a day, with average 95 million photos and videos were uploading every day. In 5.5 years, the users of *Instagram* increase until it defeats the number of *twitter* users (Lee, 2016). This means that the *Instagram* application attracts Indonesian people and is worth researching since the application is created.

Nowadays, many technology companies create new gadgets with different variations which can fulfill people's needs and also be a media for entertainment. The development of technology enables people to access their *Instagram* account from their gadget easily and practically. In the *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture: Theories and Methods*, John Storey talks about popular culture as the consumption of everyday life, "...a need based on the market, on money and on profit, that consumption becomes detached from simple needs and emerges as a significant aspect of human activity" (1996, p. 113). The significances have made people feel they lack something if they are not using a popular technology. It is for this reason that in his study, that the researcher Picard said that a popular culture seller must have ways to attract consumer's interest. Picard in McQuail's

book says, “a market that consists of the seller which supplies goods or the same service, or the goods and services that almost can replace mutually to the same cluster customer” must have taken the increase of money as one of the factors for popularity (McQuail, 2011, p. 248).

One of the forms of popular culture media is that people are enjoying marketing their products with an internet, especially promoting the product in *Instagram*. With access to *Instagram*, people upload the product and promote it with attractive sentences, so people who see the picture of the product feel interested and want to buy the product. *Instagram* makes people always check on other’s status or on product that people need through photos or videos.

Some people also have developed a compulsive habit to visit their own profile several times in a day to check on how many “likes” or “comments” they get for the photos or videos they have uploaded. They also check who wants to be their followers and who wants to be followed in *Instagram*.

Based on the discussion above, the writer intends to write this thesis to see the popularity of *Instagram* through the research entitled “The Popularity of *Instagram* as a Popular Culture Product among 2014 English Department Students in the Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University.”

## **1.2. FIELD OF THE STUDY**

The field of the study is Literature, especially about *Instagram* as a product of popular culture.

## **1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This thesis focuses on the popularity of *Instagram* as data for research. The participants of the study are limited to 2014 students of the Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University.

## **1.4. PROBLEM FORMULATION**

Based on the background, the research questions of this study is, how popular is *Instagram* among 2014 English Department students of the Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University?

## **1.5. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The objective is to find out whether *Instagram* is popular among 2014 English Department students of the Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University.

## 1.6.SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is significant because it helps students understand that *Instagram* is a product of popular culture which can be popular.

## 1.7.DEFINITION OF TERMS

In dealing with *Instagram* as a product of popular culture, a number of key terms need to be defined:

- **Social network:** “a set of social actors, or nodes, members that are connected by one or more types of relations” (Furht, 2010)
- **Internet:** “the core of computer-mediated communication” (Santrock, Adolescence, 2005, p. 492)
- **Instagram:** “a popular photo or video capturing and sharing mobile application” (Yuheng Hu, 2014)