CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of study

Online games are one of the media to fulfill human needs for entertainment now. But as time goes by, games are now not only a vehicle for fulfilling human needs for entertainment but also a vehicle for conveying messages from the game developer to the players. Now, online games are developed to the point where the game has a storyline, meaning, and ideology hidden behind the story. Many game developers display signs to convey their message to the players of the game. This is as Sobur said "With signs, humans can communication with each other" (Sobur, 2004).

Online games are one of the innovations created due to the rapid development of technology. Online games continue to develop from time to time. Which was originally only available on computers, and then developed into a game console, until now online games are present in gadgets to make it easier for people to access them. From time to time, online game fans continue to experience a significant increase. The increasing number of online game users makes many game developers compete to develop their games or even create new games to attract the interest of gamers. This various innovation offered by game developers makes online games popular in various circles. Moreover, many types of online games that are available to play also become one of the reasons online games have become so

popular. Types of online games can be divided into action games, fighting, shooters, racing, sports, adventure, RPG (Role Playing Games), and strategy (Sibero, 2009).

One of the online game genres that are often played now is multiplayer online battle ground game (MOBA), this genre also well-known with action real-time strategy or RTS. This genre is a game where one player in a team competes against another player on the opposite team in one arena. One of the best-selling and most popular MOBA games is Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (MLBB). Mobile Legend was recorded to have been downloaded more than 100 million until May 2021 based on Play Store. This number is very large if compared to similar games such as League of Legends: Wild Rift and *Garena* AOV: Link Start which both of them are only has been downloaded approximately 10 million times. It shows that Mobile Legends Bang Bang is the most popular MOBA game until now.

Mobile Legends: Bang Bang consists of many heroes who are divided into 6 types (assassin, fighters, mage, tank, support, and marksman) based on the style of play and usability of these heroes. According to one of the famous game news platforms, *UniPin* (2020) said in his article that one of the most unique and strongest heroes in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang is Sun. Mobile Legend designed Sun with a half-ape human with a stick as his weapon. In the depiction of the character Sun on mobile legends, there are many signs that can be examined in semiotics, for example, appearance, name, voice, skills during gameplay, and others.

Sun is one of the characters presented by Moonton in the Mobile Legend Bang Bang game. Sun is an adaptation of the famous Chinese folk tale "The Monkey

King: Sun Go Kong" which originates from Chinese literature by Wú Chéng'ēn (1506 - 1582). Both of them have similarities in terms of appearance and background story. Sun in Mobile Legend is described by Moonton in the story page as an immortal creature who has been sleeping soundly for thousands of years in a rock. The sun is said to have been created from the essence of the mountain spirit frozen in the rock. Sun has a very unusual appearance. His entire body is covered in golden brown fur. His body is very muscular and decorated with Buddhist ornaments, such as the prayer beads around his neck and the robe he wears. As in folklore, Sun in Mobile Legend also has a red crown on his face. There are many signs of the Sun in Mobile Legend: Bang Bang that can and need to be analyzed more deeply.

Semiotics is a systematic study method for studying signs. According to Saussure (1993), semiotics is a science that studies the relationship between signified and signifier. The relationship between the signified and the signifier is mutually just linked without any explanation which is logical. This linking is not even personal but is based on agreement/convention. Roland Barthes continues this thought but emphasizes the interaction between the text and the personal and cultural experiences of its users, the interaction between the conventions in the text and the conventions experienced and expected by its users. Roland Barthes distinguishes denotation and connotation by using the term *orders of signification*. This concept includes denotation (actual meaning according to the dictionary) and connotation (multiple meanings born from cultural and personal experience) (Barthes, 1983). This is where the point of difference between Saussure and

Barthes, although Barthes still uses the term signifier-signified that was brought up by Saussure.

A large number of visual signs and interesting background stories that appear in Sun's character in Mobile Legend make the researcher interested to find out the connotative, denotative, and myths of these signs, and the theory of Rolland Barthes semiotics study (1915-1980) is the most suitable theory to achieve the objectives of this research.

B. Problem formulation

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the research problem as follows:

1. What are the denotative meanings found in Sun in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang?

2. What are the connotative meanings found in Sun in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang?

3. What are the myths that built in Sun in Mobile Legend: Bang Bang?

C. Objectives of study

Based on the formulation of the problems above, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To find the denotative meaning of Sun in Mobile legend: Bang Bang.

2. To find the connotative meaning of Sun in Mobile legend: Bang Bang.

3. To find the myths that is built of Sun in Mobile Legend: Bang Bang.

D. Scope of the study

The scope of the study will explain what areas will be observed in this research or the limitations of this research.

This study focuses on analyzing the signs contained in Sun in Mobile Legend using Rolland Barthes' semiotic theory to find out the denotative and connotative meanings of these signs, as well as the myths that were built there.

E. Review of related study

This chapter includes the ideas, finished thesis, generalization or conclusions, methodologies, and others. Those that were included in this chapter help in familiarizing information that is relevant and similar to the present study.

The first research has been conducted by (Latifah & Kristiana, 2021), their research entitled Visual analysis of the Gatotkaca character in the Mobile Legends Bang Bang game. In which discusses how are the visual characteristics and visual meaning of the Gatotkaca character contained in Mobile Legends Bang Bang. This study aims to describe visual physical characteristics and analyze the visual message of the Gatotkaca character contained in Mobile Legends Bang Bang. The authors use the theory of Rolland Barthes and qualitative approach which is presented in the form of a descriptive analysis with a design review stage in analyzing the data. Furthermore, from the analysis process, the authors found that in general the physical characteristics, nature, and story of Gatotkaca in the wayang story are the same as the characteristics of Gatotkaca in the Mobile Legends Bang Bang game.

Second study has been conducted by (Alfian & Kusumandyoko, 2020), the study entitled Representation of the meaning of Kadita's character in the online game Mobile Legend Bang Bang. In this study, the authors examine how the visualization of Kadita's character in the Mobile Legends game and how the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth in the Kadita character in the Mobile Legends Bang Bang game is formed. The purpose of this study is to analyze the visual elements in more detail, as well as the existence of mythical elements that can be associated with contemporary phenomena, based on the character values of feminism, masculinity, science, and success. The authors of this study used a qualitative descriptive method and uses Roland Barthes' semiotics research method because it refers to two stages of sign significance, which allows the author to analyze visual elements in more detail. At the end of the study, the authors draw conclusions from the analysis that Kadita's character is a representation of the Indonesian folklore "*Nyi Roro Kidul*". She is visualized as a beautiful and brave woman who is able to represent today's gender equality. Although there is masculinity in Kadita's character, there is still a feminine side that comes with the makeup she wears.

And the third research was conducted by (Khairina, 2016), a study entitled A semiotic analysis on Grand Theft Auto 5 game posters. This study focuses on game poster of GTA V to find out the denotative, connotative, and myths that appear on the GTA V game poster. The author applies Rolland Barthes' theory of denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings. This study also uses descriptive qualitative to analyze the data. Based on the analysis and discussion phase, the researcher found

that each sign in the game poster reflect messages to communicate related to the story of Grand Theft Auto game. The author also found the mythical signification is about masculinity. Masculinity is set of attributes, behaviors, and generally associated with boys and men

Based on the three studies above, it can be concluded that the difference with this study is the object being studied. Unlike previous studies, this study aims to analyze and reveal the denotative, connotative, and myths of the signs that appear in the character Sun in Mobile Legend. However, previous research also has similarities with this research, which is using the theory of Rolland Barthes as a theoretical basis for analyzing an online game. The results of previous studies that have been researched can help this research and can be additional data that researchers need.

F. Research Methodology

This research will use a qualitative approach which is the object are the signs that appear in character Sun in Mobile Legend. According to Bogdan and Taylor (1975), where they mean that qualitative research also includes the methodology used for research procedures that produce descriptive data. Qualitative research methods emphasize more on intuition, feelings than on numerical data. Qualitative research methods focus more on writing descriptive words rather than using numbers. The use of a qualitative approach in this study aims to make it easier for researchers to describe data analysis, considering that the main data of this research is visual signs.

The type of this research is descriptive research. The data that has been collected will be analyzed semiotically and explained descriptively to find the denotative, connotative, and myths of the Sun in Mobile Legend. The technique of collecting data for this research is observations. The researcher will observe the object of the research and then will be collected became a note and other tool which will become the data of this research. The data will also come from analyzing the documents that are related to the object of the research such as photos and scripts.

    1.   Data and data resources

Data is one of the important components of research. Research data are all facts and figures that can be used as material for compiling information (Arikunto, 2002). The data in this study are classified into primary data and secondary data:

    a.   Primary/main data

Primary data is data obtained by researchers directly (firsthand) from the object of research. The primary data in this study will be obtained from the main object of research, namely Sun in the game Mobile Legend: Bang Bang. The main data will consist of signs contained in objects and in the form of photos and also Sun's background story in the game.

    b.   Secondary/supporting data

Secondary data is data obtained by researchers from existing sources. Secondary data is useful to make it easier to classify problems, create benchmarks for evaluating primary data, and

fill information gaps. The secondary data of this study were obtained from the researcher's study literature on previous journals/research which has similarities with this research.

2. Method Of Collecting Data

Data collection techniques in this study used observation techniques. Observation is a data collection method used to collect research data through observation and sensing (Bungin, 2003). The following are the steps of researcher in collecting data:

   a. Watching Sun on the display presented in the game

   b. Researcher will collect and select scenes to be used as research data.

   c. Taking and collecting screen captures and text of Sun's character.

   d. sorting the most relevant data used as primary research data

3. Method and technique of analyzing data

The researcher uses a descriptive qualitative approach in analyzing the data to get the meaning of the signs obtained from Sun in Mobile Legend. Qualitative data is the descriptive and conceptual findings collected through questionnaires, interviews, or observation. Analyzing qualitative data allows us to explore ideas and further explain quantitative results. Qualitative analysis is important because the rich detail shared by individuals is extremely powerful in thinking through complex systems and can illustrate how the implementation of our programs and policies are

working in real life and ultimately lead to change (Ivan, 2021). In this study, the qualitative analysis process consists of the data collection stage, data classification, and interpreting data. These stages are carried out so that researchers can analyze the data more deeply and the research results will be more detailed. the steps of the researcher in analyzing the data are:

     a. identify data originating from the Sun character

     b. implementing main data in the form of screen captures in tables based on Roland Barthes' theory

     c. analyze the data through the table to answer the research questions.

     d. make conclusions based on research results to achieve research objectives

G. Signification of Study

The significance of this research is expected to provide useful information for both Mobile Legend game players and the public. This researcher is expected to be useful as a reference for others who will conduct similar research. In addition, this research is also expected to contribute to people who want to study linguistics, especially semiotics.

H. Presentation

This paper is presented in four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. It consists of the background of the researcher conducting this research. It also includes the scope of research, research objectives, review of related studies, research methods, research significance, and presentation.

The second chapter consists of a theoretical approach and a framework that describes the approaches and theories that can support the validity of this research. The third chapter deals with analysis and discussion and the last chapter is conclusions and suggestions. in the last chapter there is also a reference.