

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Video games are one of the most popular, profitable and important types in the USA and all around the world (Squire, 2003). Video games are something we often hear about, especially in today's digital world. In fact, video games has become an activity that is often carried out at all ages, especially in the US itself (Kim & Shute, 2015). Video games can be define as a games that played with an audio visual and can be based on a story-line (Espasito ,2006). Many of today's popular video games use stunning visuals, great music, and interesting and varied story lines (Anguera & Gazzaley, 2015).

Video games also has many genres such as FPS (First Person Shooter), Action, Adventure, RPG (Role-Playing Game) and many more and some of them require a specific skills to play (Reynaldo; Christian; Hosea & Gunawan, 2021). Even though video games are a form of popular culture that is known by many people (Reid, 2014) but, many research founds that video game can cause a violence behaviour for the player (Ferguson & Wang, 2019). In fact, video games can give an information about the present social and culture people and they can influence the players view and interact with the social and culture issues (Răzman, 2020). Video games are also can represent somethings in real life, for example is representing past event based on real historical event.

There are numerous video games that representing about past event based on real historical event. For example of video games like, *Civilization*, *Age of Empires Series*, *Crusader King II* can be labeled as historical simulation games which focused on strategy gameplay and carries the historical theme of the medieval era (McCall, 2018). Not only historical in medieval era, there are numerous video games that carries the modern historical theme like World War I and World War II. For example like *Battlefield I* that focused on simulation of World War I with (FPS) First Person Shooter gameplay, and *Company of Heroes 2* which focused on simulation of world war II with strategy gameplay. Some of the video game also create a counterfactual history like *Wolfenstein: New Order*, where Nazi Germany conquers the United States in 1948 (McCall, 2019). There are many more popular history-based games such as *The Total War Series*, *L.A. Noire*, *Red Dead Redemption*, and *Assassin's Creed Series* (Spring, 2015).

From many historical games, *Assassin's Creed Series* is a video game series in which players are placed in historical settings at different periods in the past (Fishbune, 2018). *Assassin's Creed* is a series of stealth-action video games that developed by Ubisoft Montreal (Van Nuenen, 2017). *Assassins' Creed Series* takes a historical background based on real event, for example like a popular past event in Ancient Egypt from the time of the arrival of Julius Caesar, focusing on his involvement in Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII's struggle for the throne in *Assassins Creed : Origins* (Texeira-Bastos, Carneiro & Bondioli, 2019), The French Revolution in 18th century in *Assassin's Creed Unity*, until the industrial

revolution in England, London in the middle 19th century in *Assassin's Creed Syndicate* (Fishbune, 2018).

However in this research, the researcher use *Assassin's Creed III* as object of research. *Assassin's Creed III* (2012) is the fifth game in the *Assassin's Creed Series* that sets in American Revolution war (Shaw, 2015). *Assassin's Creed III* take the player as Desmond Miles that evolving against the Templar Knight by using a machine called the *Animus* that memorize of Desmond's ancestors (Berger & Staley, 2014). In *Assassin's Creed III*, players will play with two important characters in the storyline, namely Haytham Kenway who is British heritage and Connor Kenway or *Ratonhnhaké:ton* who is someone of Native American and British heritage also the son of Haytham Kenway. *Assassin's Creed III* also introduces characters who are original figures from American history who played an important role in the American Revolution. For example like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and others. However, in this research the researcher will focus on the representation of American resistance and oppression toward colonizer that depicted in the video game *Assassin's Creed III*.

As previously explained, *Assassin's Creed III* takes a real historical background in America, namely the American Revolution. According to HISTORY.COM, American Revolution is developed as a result of rising tensions between the colonial power, which represented the British throne, and the citizens of Great Britain's thirteen colonies in North America. Thirteen of Great Britain's colonies in North America carried out the American Revolution, which started in 1775 and ended in 1783 with a peace treaty. Then after gaining political freedom,

the colonies united and become the United States of America (Wallace, 2024). Many historians view the American Revolution primarily as the initial stage in forming the American nation. They emphasize the nation-building process, highlighted by establishing republican political systems in both individual states and the nation as a whole (Greene, 2000). In the American revolution, there were many events in it, such as the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the Battle of Monmouth. All these events are described and inspired by these historical events in the Assassin's Creed III game.

In this research, researchers will examine the representation of Americans resistance and oppression in the video game Assassin's Creed III. To help research this research, researchers will use qualitative methodology. The theory that will be used in this research is the postcolonial theory by Edward Said and Semiotic theory by Roland Barthes, using a sociological and semiotic approach.

B. Problem Formulation

- a. What is the denotative and connotative elements that represent of American resistance toward the colonizer in video game *Assassin's Creed III* ?
- b. What are depiction of resistance and oppression towards colonizer that in video game *Assassin's Creed III* ?

C. Objective of Study

- a. To analyze the denotative and connotative elements that represent of American resistance toward the colonizer in video game *Assassin's Creed III*.
- b. To describe the depiction of resistance and oppression towards colonizer in video game *Assassin's Creed III*.

D. Review Related Studies

In this research, there are several previous studies that have similar discussion topics. Firstly, previous research on 2018 which was conducted by Lagace Naithan discussed the complexity of digital representation that evolving indigenous people through video games. which aims to find out how digital games in corporate identity, culture, and relationships in diverse and intellectual ways and provide new spaces for Indigenous agency and semiotics. This research used Qualitative Method to analyze almost ten video games that has relation with indigenous representative, including *Assassin's Creed 3*. This research using the Game Theory and Native studies to answer the research question. This research found that with the development of digital technology, especially in the 20th century, it is again representing indigenous society through various kinds of pop culture, one of which is video games. Not all pop culture media introduces Indigenous society with bad stereotypes but also introduces positive sides too (Lagace, 2018). In this previous studies, there is a gap between this research. This previous research has differences in theory and research objects, Lagace Naithan's

research used Game Theory and Native Studies theory and used more than one game related to Native Americans as research objects.

Then, previous research on 2018 which was conducted by Nicholas Wisniewski discussed the representative and historical accurate toward Indigenous people in some of video games which aims to evaluate the representations of Native Americans portrayed within them and answer the research questions of whether the imagery is historically accurate, what these representations reveal about the relationship between Native Americans and Western society, and whether the themes and stereotype they create are more positive or negative. This research used Qualitative and Quantitative method to analyze almost 30 games that researcher already list for the data source. This research using the theories of Orientalism, Post-colonialism, and Critical Race Theory. This research found that some of the games that has a representation of Native America has a positive representation, but according to the researcher, the majority of the games that researcher use is fail to transcend the simplified patterns of representation which are common in the video game industry (Wisniewski, 2018). In this previous studies there is a gap between this research. This previous research has differences in theory and research methods, research from Nicholas Wisniewski, although both use post-colonial theory, there is also Critical Race theory used in his research and used qualitative and quantitative research methods while in this research only use qualitative research method.

Next, previous research on 2021 which was conducted by Elizabeth LaPensée. The research aims to describe the game's design, the development

process related to game writing, and the themes that resulted from Indigenous writers' participation in self-determination representations. This research used Qualitative Descriptive method to analyze *When Rivers Were Trail (WRWT)* video game. This research found that The researchers found that the *WRWT* game shows how a video game can express indigenous culture through the representations included in the video game. *WRWT's* game story writers interestingly depict native culture from California to Minnesota. Even though the representation is limited, in fact there are many indigenous people involved in *WRWT* in representing various countries and their indigenous communities (LaPensée, 2021). In this previous research there is a gap between this research. This previous research has differences in the research object, Elizabeth LaPensée's research uses the video game *When Rivers Were Trail (WRWT)* as the research object in examining the representation of indigenous people in video games, while in this research uses *Assassin's Creed III* as the research object.

Then, on previous research on 2019 which was conducted by John R. Ess discussed about the stereotype of Native American that portrayals in media especially in video game *Assassin's Creed III* in which aims to fill the gap in other research on portrayals of Native American in media during the American Revolution also integrate video games into discussions. This research used qualitative method to analyze video game *Assassin's Creed III*. This research found that presenting a Native American as the main protagonist brings a stereotype of Native American issues to the surface. According to researchers, With *Ratonhnhaké:ton* (Connor Kenway) as the main character of *Assassin's*

Creed III, Ubisoft wrote a narrative centered on an American Indian, rather than one led by just another white Western hero with a Native sidekick. Where most of the main characters in visual works are white, and apart from that (including Native Americans) they are only support characters or minor characters in the sense of having little contribution to the storyline (Ess, 2019).

Previous research on 2018 which was conducted by Samuel Martínez Linares discussed the representation of Native American from literature to video games which aims to analyze how video games strengthen racial stereotypes, and how they can also be used to subvert such oversimplified conventions. This research used qualitative method to analyze almost six games that has native American inside. This research found that despite being frequently criticized for their violent content, video games could potentially serve as a highly effective means to challenge conventional stereotypes and promote positive values and equality. This metamorphic process can be achieved by providing a platform for those who have historically been marginalized and suppressed to express themselves (Martínez Linares, 2018).

E. Research Methodology

In this research, researchers used descriptive qualitative methods in analyzing research objects. When conducting qualitative research, one must recognize that it is a skill, characterized by the difficulty of conducting original research and the pursuit of three crucial goals: openness, methodic-ness, and adherence to evidence. In addition, researchers may use their own worldview or

set of beliefs as the driving principle behind the initial definition and conduct of their research (Yin, 2016).

1. Data and Data Sources

a. **Primary Data,** This research is using video games Assassin's Creed III as primary data source. The researchers will play the video game to collect the data.

b. **Secondary Data,** The secondary data obtained by through a research articles, journals, online articles, and books that has related with the research.

2. Data Collecting Technique

This research will use observation technique to collecting the data. According to Robert K. Yin (2016 pg. 150), "Observation" can be a valuable method for collecting data because what you witness directly, using the researcher's eyes and senses, is not changed by the accounts of other people or documents from different sources. Thus, researcher observations are a form of primary data that should be respected. In collecting data by observation, there are illustrative data types such as people gestures, social interactions, actions, scenes, and the physical environment. Then the observation data collection method contains specific example data, such as communication between two people, group dynamics and spatial arrangement (Yin, 2016 pg. 139). The Researcher

will observe data from the *Assassin's Creed III* video game through various scenes, actions and social interactions related to this research topic.

The procedure for collecting data is as follows :

1. Playing the Assassin's Creed 3 video game.
2. Observing the element of resistance and oppression in the video game Assassins Creed.
3. Capture the scene that will used as the data related to the research question.
4. Analyze the data by implementing theory that used in this research.

3. Method of Analyzing Data

According to Robert K. Yin (2016) in data analysis using qualitative research methods there are five-phased cycle, there are *compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding*.

The first phase commences by *Compiling* and categorizing the field notes gathered during the fieldwork and other data collection efforts. However, the informal analysis should ideally have been initiated during the data collection process itself, as evaluated the sufficiency and quality of the data as it was being collected. Then, the second phase is *Disassembling* which for breaking the compiled data into smaller, more manageable segments or components. In this phase may giving a label or code to the smaller fragments or other components. The third phase is *Reassembling* which is considered to be reorganizations and combinations

that can be made more accessible by visually representing the data or by presenting them in lists of tabular and various structured formats. The fourth phase is *Interpretation* which can be seen as part of the process of interpreting the restructured data. This phase includes utilizing the reorganized content to construct a fresh narrative. This narrative may include tables and graphics where appropriate, and it will serve as the central analytical component of your initial manuscript. The fifth phase is *Concluding* which involves wrapping up your entire study. These conclusions should be closely connected to the interpretation phase in the fourth stage, and, in turn, should tie together all the previous phases of the process.

In this research, the researcher used qualitative research methodology to analyze and describing the objective of research. In this research the first step is to compiling or collecting the data in the form of various scene, dialog, and action. The second step is to disassembling the data and categorize the data to become more manageable and suitable with the research questions. The third step is to analyze the data that has been categorized with suitable theory that used in this research. The final step is to conclude the research findings.

F. Presentation

This research will be divided into four chapters. The first chapter will contain research background, problem formulation, objectives of research, review of related studies, research methodology, and presentation. Then it will continue

with the second chapter, which contains an explanation of the theoretical framework and theoretical approach that will be used in this research. Then the third chapter will continue with analysis and finding related to the objectives of research. The final chapter will end with suggestions and conclusions.