

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This first chapter explains background of the research, statement of problems, research objectives, research significances, definition of key terms and organization of writing.

1.1 Background of the Research

Video game is an electronic game that people play via a computer, a game console or a phone. According to Rollings and Adams (2003:34), “a game is a form of participatory, or interactive and entertainment”. A video game, like most other source of entertainment, can be categorized into genres. Game genres, however, are defined by the style of play, with little thought for the criteria that define a film genre (Ince, 2006: 22).

Currently, there are seven genres in video games including action, adventure, role-playing, simulation, strategy, sports and puzzle (Apperley, 2006; Rollings, & Adams, 2003; Despain, 2009; Wolf, 2001). According to Rollings and Adams (2007), there are many action games without any clear subgenre, such as Frogger, as well as other types of genres like adventure or strategy that have action elements. As explained by them, there is a subgenre of game called “action-adventure”.

Action-adventure is a video game genre has a mix of elements from an action game and adventure game. According to Despain (2009: 29), adventure games is focusing on puzzles and story and rarely use action to entertain their

audiences. Unlike adventure genre, action-adventure genre has action element which allows players to fight the enemies while exploring places. Despain (2009: 29) argues action-adventure games steal gameplay from the adventure genre to serve the needs of the story of the game. In addition, McGath (1984:91) states, “a close relative to the text adventure is another kind of adventure game, frequently called an ‘action adventure’.

The object of this research is an action-adventure video game developed by Crystal Dynamics and published by Square Enix. This game is the tenth title in the Tomb Raider franchise and it was released on 5 March 2013 for Linux, Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 3, PlayStation 4, Xbox 360 and Xbox One. This title has sold one million copies within 48 hours of its release and it becomes a best-selling video game in the history of the franchise based on pcgamer. The writer chooses Tomb Raider because the writer thinks choosing video game as the object of the research can attract people’s attention to learn about the masculinity and femininity of female character through video game and another reason is because not so many people choose video game as the object of their researches.

Characters are the main elements of the story. Just like novels and movies, video games are also a source of entertainment that serve a story. Duffy and Petit (1953) define character as “Character is a person in a story or a play”. Whereas, Sudjiman (1990: 58) states that “characterization is the way to create the image of character, then the portrayal of characterization can be seen by the action of character, the statement of character, the thought of character, the physical of character and what the character says and thought about himself or herself.”

The game industry has always been overwhelmingly dominated by men (Rollings and Adams, 2007: 92). It is not only the playerbase, but also the characters in video games too. Beasley and Standley (2002) identified 597 characters in their selection of 47 games. Most characters were male (72%); a minority of 14% was female, and 15% were of an undeterminable sex. However, Dietz (1998) also found a similar result. She found that 41% of 33 games were devoid of female characters. Only 15% (5 out of 33) portrayed women as heroes or as action shooters, while 21% (7 out of 33) portrayed women as victims or as so called “damsel in distress”. At the same time, in 28% of these games, she argued women were portrayed as sex objects based upon physical appearance or sexually-oriented actions.

Back then when male characters in video games are usually portrayed as masculine or as heroes with muscular physiques and female character portrayed as weak, as victims, or as sex objects in the past. Meanwhile, Mile and Summers (2007) argue that male characters in video games were also be able to use more weapons, have more abilities, and were muscular and powerful than female characters in video games. From the explanations above, the reason why video games with a female protagonist is a rare thing in the gaming industry is because video game industry is dominated by males. Even though female characters in video games are still in the minority, currently, there are some example of action games with female protagonists as follows *Tomb Raider*, *Left 4 Dead 2* and *Warcraft III: The Frozen Throne*.

Masculinity and femininity are the terms that related to gender. The term “femininity” is stereotypically attributed to women, is associated with empathy,

sensitivity, loyalty and a caring disposition (Kolb, 1999; Heilman, 2012). Meanwhile, masculinity is a set of attributes, behaviors and roles that associated with men. Gender scholar Judith Halberstam (1998) in his book entitled “An Introduction of Female Masculinity” defines female masculinity as “masculinity has been produced by and across both male and female bodies”. It means not all masculine people identify as men. In addition, the aspects of masculine can also be found in women.

The similar researches were done previously by some researchers. The first research had been done by Nida Khofiya (2016) entitled “*The Portrayal of Woman in Veronica Roth’s Divergent*” who analyzed the portrayal and the role of women in Veronica Roth’s *Divergent* by using the feminist literary criticism by Lois Tyson. For the result, the researcher explains that Beatrice is a main character and she is portrayal of independent and strong woman.

The second research had been done by Dede Yulia (2016) entitled “*Female Masculinity in Veronica Roth’s Divergent*” who analyzed the masculinity and femininity in *Divergent* by using the theory of Judith Halberstam. For the results, the researcher found five from fifteen attributes of masculinity which have been put to the women characters. Firstly, the women characters become interested in technology. Secondly, women will be described as strong and brave women. Thirdly, dueling can be done by women. Fourthly, thinking rationally can help women to not to use emotions. Besides, there are six traits of the femininities of the masculine women. They are emotional feelings, dependent on men, subservient, motherhood, weakness and love.

The third research had been done by Elsha Marshus (2017) entitled “*The Masculinity of Heroine in Suzanne Collin’s Adventure Novel’s The Catching Fire*” who analyzed the heroism and the female masculinity in *The Catching Fire* by using the theory of Bernstein and Hourihan. For the results, the researcher explains the masculinity of heroine as reflected by the main character (Katniss) in the novel. The first analysis explains that Katniss can be fitted as the heroine since she follows the stages of the hero’s adventure. The second analysis explains that through her character, Katniss shows heroism as female masculinity.

Those researches are different from this present study, this research will use video game as the object of the research. Meanwhile, those previous studies used novel as the object of the research. In the previous studies, there are some theories that supported this present study.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Lara Croft is one of the female characters in Tomb Raider game who has an important role. She is biologically a woman but she is seen as more masculine than feminine. As a woman, she can do what men usually do because she knows how to fight, climb, handle dangerous situations and use a gun or bow properly. In accordance with the problem, the research questions can be formulated as follows:

1. How aspects of femininity of Lara Croft are portrayed in Tomb Raider?
2. How aspects of female masculinity of Lara Croft are portrayed in Tomb Raider?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the background of study and the statement of the problem mentioned above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To find out how aspects of femininity of Lara Croft portrayed in Tomb Raider.
2. To find out how aspects of female masculinity of Lara Croft portrayed in Tomb Raider.

1.4 Research Significances

Academically, this research intended for the students of English Literature, the reader and other researchers. For the student of English Literature, this research can be used for the comprehensive study about femininity and masculinity. For the reader, it can be used as knowledge which showed the femininity and masculinity of female character in Tomb Raider game. Meanwhile, for other researchers, this research can be used as a reference.

Practically, this research intended for those who like playing video games especially for the people who prefer action-adventure video game with a female protagonist.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

In order to have the shared understanding, it is best to define the key terms as follows:

- a. Video game: Video game is an electronic game that people play via a computer, a game console or a phone.
- b. Action-adventure: An action-adventure game genre is a video game with a mix of elements from action game and adventure game that serves story which allows players to collect items, solve puzzle and fight the enemies while exploring places.
- c. Lara Croft: Lara Croft is the main character in Tomb Raider.
- d. Character: Character is a person in a story or a play (Duffy and Pettit: 1953).
- e. Characterization: Characterization is the way to create the image of character, then the portray of characterization can be seen by the action of character, the statement of character, the thought of character, the physical of character and what the character says and thought about himself or herself (Sudjiman:1990).
- f. Masculinity: Masculinity is a set of attributes and behaviors that are generally in men.
- g. Femininity: Femininity is a set of attributes and behaviors that are generally in women.
- h. Female Masculinity: Masculinity has been produced by and across both male and female bodies (Halberstam:1998).
- i. Crystal Dynamics: Crystal Dynamics is a video game developer which created Tomb Raider titles.
- j. Tomb Raider: Tomb Raider is an action-adventure video game developed by Crystal Dynamics and published by Square Enix. This

game is tenth title in the Tomb Raider franchise and it was released on 5 March 2013 for Linux, Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 3, PlayStation 4, Xbox 360 and Xbox One.

1.6 Organization of Writing

In this section, the writer would like to discuss some terms in chapter I into chapter V as followed:

Chapter I: The first chapter is introduction. It consists of the background of research, the statement of problems, research objective, research significance, definition of key terms and organization of writing.

Chapter II: The second chapter is a foundation of theory. It contains theory related to the study.

Chapter III: The third chapter is research methodology. It consists of research design, sample of data, source of data, technique of collecting data, and technique of analyzing data.

Chapter IV: The fourth chapter is the analysis of how aspects of femininity of Lara Croft portrayed in Tomb Raider and how aspects of female masculinity of Lara Croft portrayed in Tomb Raider.

Chapter V: The last chapter is about the conclusion of the research and suggestion.