

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Presently, video game designers, players, and even developers of the game approach the representation of symbol in video games as intuitive and uncomplicated. Obviously the game publisher uses the symbol contained its name as a sign of every hidden meaning which it communication between the player and the game publisher itself. Vara (2009: 213) argues that, “by giving cues to the player, the simulation can communicate what to do without being explicit or overbearing, thus designing the experience while giving the player enough leeway to explore the world.” The statement above is supported from development of technology which makes a better performance for all genres of game to make communicate easier and its graphic design is the special thing to make the gaming impression more interesting although it uses some symbols to describe something.

Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag is an action-adventure video game developed by UBISOFT MONTREAL and published by UBISOFT. This genre of game let the player control the actions of a character who is exploring some area for finding goods and gold like common adventurer does. McGath (1984: 91) argues that, “a close relative to the text adventure is another kind of adventure game, frequently called an ‘action adventure’.” In action-adventure game there is a lot of optional mission that the player must know how to communicate with NPC (none player character) in order to make the mission successful. According

to Killworth (1984: 17) “the player of an Adventure will need a vocabulary with which to communicate.” Words, images, gestures and objects are the forms which are already taken by symbol and signs. Human uses the sign and symbol to communicate to each other who has same feeling, idea and desire. The sign and symbol itself is agreed by the communicator.

The researcher is interested in analyzing symbols in UBISOFT's game *Assassins Creed IV: Black Flag* because the symbol can actually be found in textual word. Besides, the researcher choose the Assassin's Creed game because the game is still popular, more famous than the other games and there are so many symbols in the game. The more interesting thing is the game allows the player for a free exploring of the Caribbean Sea. Due to this fact, game creators prepared several symbols which appear along the journey. This could mean the symbol is defined by the object in which it appears in limited to a particular clue.

There are many forms of the language symbol in video game. The language symbol depends on who uses the symbol, for example the developer used symbol language in logo, icon, and a piece of clue in some chapter of the game and so on. Holdcroft (1991: 42) argues that, “an ideogram and as spoken word are both symbols of an idea; to him writing is a second language, and if two words that have the same sound are used in conversation, he may resort to writing in order to express his thought.” Each symbol is every form they used which designed a hidden meaning in every design that made. The symbol of design gives a message to other people whom read and view the design.

A clue that uses a symbol and design of language expression is icon. Icon design is the process of designing a graphic symbol that represents some real, fantasy or abstract motive, entity or action. Those whose relation to their objects is a mere community in some quality, and these representations may be termed likeness (Adams and Searle. 2005: 10). In the context of software applications, an icon often represents a program, a function, data or a collection of data on a software computer system. Icon designs can be simple, with flat two-dimensional drawing or a black silhouette, or complex, presenting a combination of graphic design elements such as one or more linear and radial color gradients, projected shadows, contour shades, and three-dimensional perspective effects.

Pierce (in Chandler 1999: 39) declared that an iconic sign represents its object 'mainly by its similarity'. A sign is an icon 'in so far as it is like that thing and used as a sign of it'. Indeed, he originally termed such modes, 'likenesses'. He added that 'every picture (however conventional its method)' is an icon. For Peirce, a symbol is 'a sign which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object'. Pierce also said that a symbol is a sign 'whose special significance or fitness to represent just what it does represent lies in nothing but the very fact of there being a habit, disposition, or other effective general rule that it will be so interpreted.'

In order to persuading the player, the adventure games should be made as attractive as possible. Usually, there is a simple text, object, context or a picture of sign that player will be more interested to play the adventure game. All of those

aspects are used to deliver the message to the player. The Signs take the form of words, images, sounds, acts or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning (Chandler. 2007: 13). In other hand (Zoest. 1993: 86), all texts are iconicity, especially in the text that used beyond the conversation situation. It can be explained that in situations where the sender and receiver communication are equally present, semiotic systems other languages can be replaced. For some people, icon has become a part of important things as facilitate in game communication but there is still many people sometimes do not understand about the meaning of icon. In some game, the publisher of the game sometimes uses some icons, especially in written form, such as computer, application, in order to make the meaning delivery shorter or faster.

The researcher takes some similar research before. The first research entitled "*Analysis of Emoticon in Blackberry Messenger*" (2015) by Muhammad Ismail T.N. This research tells how to analyze the emoticon using C.S Peirce theory and how the emoticon works in communication and repetition as verbal message. Trough this research, the researcher is able to find out how to analyze the text based on Pierce's theory using. The second research entitled "*An Analysis of symbol in Nathaniel Hawton's 'The Scarlet Letter': A Study of Semiotics*" (2014) by Ghazali Gani. Through his research, Gani is able to find out the symbols and meaning are used by Nathaniel Hwthorne. Trough this research, the researcheris able to find out how to analyze the relationship among the symbols, their text and also their meaning.

Semiotics is the study of interpretations in all cultural aspects of human life. This discipline can be used to interpret the linguistic symbol on icon. Actually, the theory of the general linguistics is usually applied to interpret the meaning of every sign and symbol. This study is aimed to detect the function and semiotic meaning of every text that is used in *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* as form of communication non-verbal between the game publisher and the gamer. Based on the point of view above, it is necessary to have further research about finding out what the true meaning related to the game in each symbols. The form of the paper with will be elaborated in the research entitled: **"A Semiotic Analysis of Symbol on *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*."**

1.2 Statement of Problem

This research, the way of interpreting the game based on symbol of Pierce's semiotics theory is focuses on the signs of several icon's name. The signs (text, object, and context) are focused on the names of icon. Some of the icon's name are easy to understand by the player and some of them are none.

In this research, the researcher will be focus on finding out what the representamen, object, and interpretant appear on the names of icon, and how are the relation between text and icon on *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* game. Based on the background of research above, the questions are formulated for getting more specific purposes. The research questions are:

1. How is the process of triadic relation in each text based on C.S Peirce theory?

2. How are the relation between text and icon on *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*?

1.3 Purpose of Research

In accordance with the problem of the study above, the purposes of this research are as follows:

1. To find out the process of triadic relation in each text based on C.S Peirce theory.
2. To find out the relation between text and icon on *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*.

1.4 Significance of Research

Based on the background of research, this research is expected to provide scientific input and contribution to the linguistic study especially the study of semiotics. Theoretically, this research is expected enrich the study of semiotics, particularly in interpreting the meaning or messages. Practically for *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* player itself, this research can give them information about meaning or messages in every icon's name at *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* which that usually the players have encountered at the game.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. Semiotics

Semiotics is a study of signs and symbols and of their meaning and use (Hornby, 2008:1342). Semiotics become study area that learn about meaning from a sign or symbol human by the instrumentally marking.

2. Triadic relation

Triadic relation is a model of the sign created by Charles Sanders Peirce. He formulated his own model of the sign, of 'semeiotics'. In contrast to Saussure's model of the sign in the form of a 'self-contained dyad', Peirce offered a triadic (three-part) model consisting of representamen, object, and interpretant (Chandler, 1999: 29).

3. Symbol

Chandler (2007: 27) argues that the symbol or symbolic is a mode in which the signifier does not resemble the signified but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional - so that the relationship must be learnt: e.g. language in general (plus specific languages, alphabetical letters, punctuation marks, words, phrases and sentences), numbers, morse code, traffic lights, national flags.

4. Icon

Icon design is the process of designing a graphic symbol that represents some real, fantasy or abstract motive, entity or action that would be expected to be instantly recognized as famous by any fully fledged member of a particular culture or subculture.

5. Action adventure games

Action adventure game is a type of game that let the player control the actions of a character who is exploring some area for finding goods and gold like common adventurer does. McGath (1984:91) argues that,

“a close relative to the text adventure is another kind of adventure game, frequently called an ‘action adventure’.”

6. *Assassins Creed IV: Black Flag*

Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag is a 2013 action-adventure game, and the sixth main installment in the Assassin's Creed series. The game has the player take on the role of an Abstergo Entertainment research analyst as they explore the story of Edward Kenway. *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* is set primarily on and around the islands in the Caribbean sea during the Golden Age of Piracy.



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