

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

In this day and age many different media have been used by writers and story tellers in order to tell their amazing story, and video game is one of it. A narrative that is implemented inside it could enhance the experience of enjoying a video game. Because not only the story could make people interested in game, they could also have an engaging experience in playing the main protagonist throughout the game.

The main protagonist in a game is considered as a main drive of the game, because without it the story could have become boring and not as interested as a game with a protagonist. By having a protagonist in the game people who play it could sometimes relate to themselves and watch as how the protagonist slowly reach his/her end goal of his/her journey in the story. The protagonist journey is always becoming the main plot of the narrative in some video game and it is not always as linear. The main protagonist sometimes faces many challenges in order to achieve the end of the story but sometimes an end of the story does not imply the end of the protagonist journey in achieving their goal.

The goal of a protagonist is also what makes the story feels interesting and fun to experience and can sometimes be changed or influenced by many elements of a story, it could be from the plot, the setting, the protagonist point

of view, or from other character in the story such as the antagonist. In most stories an antagonist is the opposer or figures working against the protagonist and creating the main conflict in the story. According to an article from (<https://www.masterclass.com>) There are couple of antagonist type in a story, a villain like *Darth Vader* from the original *Star Wars trilogy* and *lord Voldemort* from J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, a conflict creator like *Mr. Darcy* in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, an in-animate forces like the sea in *Robinson Crusoe*, and even the protagonist themselves like *Holden Caulfield* in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.

Freud (1923) Stated that humans psyche structured into three parts i.e.; The Id, Ego, and Super ego. The Id is a primitive and instinctual part of human mind that contains sexual and aggressive drives and hidden memories, the super ego is kind of the opposite that operates as a moral conscience, and the ego is the realistic part that mediates the two of it. In some stories where they have a protagonist that struggles with this kind of situation usually have a redeeming arc where the protagonist successfully holds the negativity inside him and manage to deal with all of the problem in the story, this marks a development in the protagonist psyche.

The psyche of some characters in a game could change depending on the story, there are some who change drastically, there are some that change slightly as the story goes on and some who did not and keeps it is character until the end of the game narrative of course this includes the protagonist in a video game. These changes do not just suddenly appear out of nowhere it

could appear from many different parts and characters of the story, like *Jason Brody* from *Far Cry 3* a game that was published by the same developer as the game that the writer would like to analyze. he started as a scared, insecure man that tried to survive and saving his friends in some deserted island full of pirates but soon, he met other character that influence his action towards the narrative of the game and ended up making him a psychopathic killer in the game that thinks what he has done is solely for saving his friends live.

Now, these kinds of protagonist are quite unique in the world of video gaming. The old generation of people that grew up with video games such as Pong, Pacman, and any simple arcade video games back then usually just experience the game for fun and that is the fundamental of what video games are, they are designed to be fun and simple. But as the time pass by people started to put some kind of narrative into their video game so that the players not only enjoying the gameplay of said video games but also the story. The oldest example that I could find is *Donkey Kong™* arcade game by Shigeru Miyamoto, one of the living legends of video game industry to date.

The game itself just tells a story about a princess that got kidnapped by a giant gorilla called Donkey Kong and we as the player have to rescue her by climbing to the top of the tower and avoid the barrels that Donkey Kong threw at us, and if we somehow managed to reached the top and jump on the top of Donkey Kong's head we will be rewarded with a cutscene of the player finally being together with the princess. From this description alone the writer could tell that the form of narrative in said video game above is simple and

more like an objective of the game that every game back then has, but still nonetheless unique from other video games back then. His simple idea of putting a simple story/narrative into a video game that some people back then wouldn't even bother to look to evolves into a new genre of video games, namely "adventure game" where we as a player explore the world of said video game and experience the story of said video game till the end. And one of such video game is titled *Assassin's Creed*

Assassin's Creed is an action, adventure stealth video game created and developed by a Ubisoft Montreal, a Canadian based Game studio and published by Ubisoft. The game series tells a story about a long conflict between a group of Assassin's who fought for peace, harmony and freedom against The Templar order who seek the same thing only through order and control. The series always features historical fiction, science fiction and fictional characters intertwined with a real-world historical events and figures. In most of it is games, players take control of a historical Assassin while also acting as an Assassin Initiate or someone caught up in the Assassin-Templar conflict in the present-day framing story. The first Assassin's Creed game in this series took some inspiration from the novel *Alamut* by the Slovenian writer Vladimir Bartol, based on the historical Hashashin sect of the medieval Middle East (<https://medium.com/frame-of-reference/the-order-of-assassins-that-inspired-assassins-creed>).

The series has made a lot games in the span of 13 years. With it is first instalment *Assassin's Creed* released in November 2007 to it is latest

Assassin's Creed: Valhalla released in November 2020. The main Assassin's Creed games have received generally positive reviews for their ambition in visuals, game design, and narratives, with criticism for the yearly release cycle and frequent bugs, as well as a shift toward the prioritization of role-playing mechanics in later titles. The series has received numerous awards and nominations, including Game of the Year. It is commercially successful, having sold over 155 million copies as of October 2020, making it Ubisoft's best-selling franchise and one of the most successful video game franchises of all time.

This franchise had won several awards throughout its creation. The first game Assassin's Creed won the Best of E3 for Best Action/Adventure game in 2006 and the main focus of the researcher's research, the Ezio Trilogy (i.e. Assassin's Creed II, Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood, and Assassin's Creed: Revelation) have won 7 awards from Canadian Videogame award (throughout 2010, 2011, 2012) for best console game, technology, visual arts, game design, and best audio, and E3 for best multiplayer in 2010. The data of all the Awards above are provided by IMDB (<https://m.imdb.com>), and it is quite showing that this series is quite praised from some of the critics out there and loved by its players. But in this Paper the researcher wanted to shift the focus to the series' most compelling games in their story telling, *Assassin's Creed II*, *Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood*, and *Assassin's Creed: Revelation*. These three games from the Assassin's Creed series are deemed to be the best in their story telling, especially Assassin's

Creed II. as stated in Gamerant's article published on August 09th 2021 the author stated *"Assassin's Creed II routinely shows up on lists as the best Assassin's Creed game. The game's plot helps explain why it is highly regarded"*. (<https://gamerant.com/assassins-creed-games-best-stories>).

Those three games above are known to be the longest story that the franchise had for telling a story about the life of its second main protagonist in the franchise. It is success even made the company change the name of the series into Ezio Trilogy because these series of games told a story of the most memorable character not just in the Assassin's Creed series but within the gaming community. He is known as Ezio Auditore da Firenze, a well renowned Assassin in renaissance Italy and the main focus of this research. Ezio's story captivates a lot of people because of how beautiful the story tells the journey of Ezio. Starting as a charming, bold, yet reckless teen seeking revenge of the corrupt system that plague his city and ended with him becoming a grizzled old man full of regret but grateful with what he has achieved. His character is one of the most iconic in the series so far full of flawed yet still manage to captivate it is players. The morality of his action always becomes a debate among the players debating whether he was in the right of doing what he's doing (assassinating people) or not.

There are some moments in the game where Ezio's character develop from only killing without thinking other way into considering his morality over vengeance. For example, in the final mission (sequence 14) of Assassin's Creed II Ezio have finally manage to confront and defeat the man

that has executed his father and brothers. For someone who seeks revenge, this is something that they have been waiting for but in this moment, Ezio's ego has prevented his id from killing the man, he thinks rationally and left the man bruised whilst saying "*No. Killing you won't bring my family back. I'm done. Nulla è reale, tutto è lecito. Requiescat in Pace (Nothing is true, everything is permitted. Rest in Peace)*" (ASSASSIN'S CREED 2 All Cutscenes (Game Movie), 2015, 04:10:02). Ezio has realised that revenge won't bring him any satisfaction and has grown to become a better person than he was before. The changes in character motivation and act are one of the focuses of a study called Psychosocial Development. It is a set of theories that address patterned changes in ego development, including self-understanding, identity formation, social relationships, and worldview across the life span of an individual. In this case the writer plans to analyze and try to find the success of each psychosocial development stages in the series.

B. Questions and Scopes of the Research

1. Question of the Research

Based on the focus of the study above, the writer has arranged this research through the following questions:

- a. What caused Ezio's motivation changed in the story?
- b. How is Ezio Psychosocial development depicted in the story?

2. Scopes of the Research

In conducting this research, the writer focuses on motivation of the subject through their dialogue and act that is considered to be a part of psychosocial development that the main protagonist Ezio Auditore in Assassin's Creed Trilogy has. The writer uses the theory of psychoanalysis proposed by Sigmund Freud and Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. The writer applies these theories above to get the overall data analysis appropriately. The writer chooses Ezio Auditore from the Assassin's Creed Trilogy as a main subject in this analysis because the plot and overall stories of the subject are all match and adds up with the approach that the researcher try to use.

C. Objective and Significance of the Research

1. Objective of the Research

In accordance with the research questions that have been described previously, there are two objectives of the research as described as follows:

- a. To see what events or who is the cause of Ezio's motivational change.
- b. To list all of Ezio's psychological changes in the story through the psychosocial development scope.

2. Significance of the Research

In this study, the writer hopes that there are benefit is that can be taken. It is divided into two separate parts, theoretical and practical benefit

is. Theoretically it is hoped that this research will give a contribution to the development of the literature field especially in the study of Character analyzing. It will also help the next researchers to find ideas to develop some researches about character analyzing using much better and interesting approach. Practically, this research can be used as a reference to give a contribution to society in order to give a better understanding about a development of a character not just in literary form but also real life, so that people can apply the use of it in situational events.

D. Operational Definition

To avoid ambiguity and uncertainty, the writer will describe the meaning of the important words of phrase used in this research. They are as the followings:

1. Psychosocial Development

Psychosocial Development Is a theory that proposed by a German ego psychologist, Erik Erikson that believed in social involvement on individuals' life could affect the changes in their personality development.

2. Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a psychological analysis that focuses on the conscious and un-conscious mind of human and divide it into three parts of Id, Ego, and Super Ego.

3. Characterization

The process of conveying information about characters in a fictional work.

E. Systematization of the Research

Systematization of the research means to present the paper in well-editing composition. The research is divided into five chapters as follow:

Chapter I, Introduction explains about background of the research and reason why the writer choses the research, question and the scope of the research, objective and significance of the research, operational definition and systematization of the research which consist the resume of the content of the research as a whole.

Chapter II, Theoretical description consists of literature definition, literary elements, psychology, the meaning of psychology, psychosocial development, and research of the relevance which shows the previous researches that had been conducted.

Chapter III, Methodology of the research involves procedure of the research, technique of data collection, technique of data analysis and sources of the data primary and secondary data.

Chapter IV, Research findings and discussion that shows the data description in the research, analysis of the data where the researcher analyze all the data that the writer have found in the core data, an interpretation of the data and the discussion regarding said data.

Chapter V, Conclusion and suggestion give the summary of the conclusion which relate of discussion, suggestion which relate to significant of the research