

## 1. Introduction

Characters play an important role in literary work, as they can reflect complex point of views through the social interactions which are portrayed by the author. They have internal and external aspects of personality which are gradually exposed through the interplays with other characters as the story progresses. These interplays primarily realized through the activity of exchanging meanings and significations in the form of dialogues between the characters (Rashid, 2016 p.1). The method of portraying characters through their dialogues is an example of indirect characterization. Indirect characterization is a literary device which reveals a character's depiction, both in terms of appearance and personality, without explicitly stating them; which typically demonstrated through the character's actions, speech, thoughts and how other characters reacted to them (Ellis, 2022).

This highlights the role of language in the form of dialogues, which is pivotal for elaborating the characters who are important in delivering the narrative aspects of a literary work. Gee (2005) argued that language that is presented in literary work enables the characters not only to communicate, but also to show their identity. In fact, language is used so that people are recognized as taking on certain identity or roles, which is imparted by how a speaker/writer configure and choose on what they are saying/writing. The choice of language can also embody other's identity (Isti'anah, 2019 p. 223). Halliday (2014) expressed that language enables us to construct meaning using specific choice of words particularly about social identity, as well as to construe other's personality based on our own perspective. As Bloor and Bloor (2004) said, "When people use language, meanings are constructed." (Syed et al., 2021 p. 57).

Current advancement in the Linguistics field have given the opportunity for scholars to examine how certain lexico-grammatical choices present in a product of language are used to shape meaning in achieving specific purpose. This novel idea views language to be functional, as if language selection is based on the context of its use (Dwiprasetyo et al, 2022). This laid the foundation for Halliday (1985) to propose *Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)* discipline, contributing greatly to the Linguistics field by

opening vastly huge opportunities to perceive language in a brand-new way. Halliday pioneered the idea that language has the functions as a set of resources to achieve meaning for construing reality and experience – both inner and outer; maintaining and enacting social relations; constructing and connecting situationally relevant discourses. This is described by Halliday (2014) as the three *metafunctions* of language: *ideational function*, *interpersonal function*, and *textual function* (Van, 2020). Eggins (2004, p.12) added that ideational function is mainly concerned in how we represent the experience of the world through language; a theory of human experience (Prakoso, 2022). The study of ideational function employs a system called *transitivity* which enables scholars to explicate the pattern of lexico-grammatical choices in clauses (Gebhard & Accurso, 2020). Transitivity system is mainly utilized to examine and reflect the patterns of clauses with regards to explaining how a being construe the world according to the inner, outer, and in between experiences (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

As characters' dialogues possess a significant role in literary works, using transitivity analysis may shed light towards the process of characterization. Therefore, Simpson (2004) argued that transitivity system may help revealing the explanation of why specific structure and word are favored in establishing characterization on account to his/her perspective and experience about the world (Salayo et al., 2019).

Concerning transitivity analysis in literary works, several studies had been conducted previously. Some of the studies suggest that transitivity analysis provides linguistic evidence to support the interpretation of character's portrayal in a more objective way (Nguyen, 2012; Rashid, 2016). Transitivity system is also proven to be useful in terms of reconstructing characterization in literary works as in the study that is conducted by Nurhayati (2018). Her study highlighted the importance of the prominent process type in describing and depicting the characterization of the working women as the protagonists of '*I Stand Here Ironing*' by Tillie Lerner Olsen (1961). Similarly, Tanusy et al. (2022) tried to investigate the female representation in a collection of different narrative texts about the story of the Legend of Tangkuban Parahu Mountain. The study found that the majority of analyzed texts share similarities in representing Dayang

Sumbi – a significant female character in the story, as a powerless passive being. Another study that focuses on analyzing a specific character using transitivity system was conducted by Mahmood et al. (2020), in which the study incorporates corpus-based approach as the tool for examining the protagonist's characterization of '*The Stone Woman*' novel – Nilopher. The finding of the study shows that Nilopher is developed as an emotional character with a tender but corrupt nature. Although slightly different in terms of the aim of the study, Boukari et al. (2018) investigated the prominent process type that is occurring in Gabriel Okara's novel *The Voice*. He found that the novel dominantly uses material process which conveys the message about the man's perpetual need to take action and to set a fair society. This extends further the versatility of transitivity analysis which can also be used for analyzing data from more than one character.

While studies regarding transitivity analysis of literary characters have been studied many times by researchers, many are lacking variety in terms of the type literary works which become the data source. The majority of previous conducted studies have only been concerned with analyzing characters that are present in novels, short stories, and films. Moreover, what is considered to be a literary work nowadays is not limited to conventional books or films; it has becoming diverse and is rapidly expanding which new forms of media can also be treated as one – take for instance, narratives in videogames. Although it has been a subject for debate amongst scholars, whether or not videogame is a new form of literature, Saptanto (2021) wrote that the existence of narrative elements in a videogame has created a new paradigm in which it can be considered as a modern literary work and the product of modern popular culture. Furthermore, Lowien (2016) expressed that the irony of SFL, which has been adopted widely in text analysis, is that it is rarely associated directly with digital/videogames (Law, 2023). Thus, this research is necessary since it fills the gap by expanding the scope of transitivity system as a viable tool for examining language use in videogames as a new form of modern literary work, and most importantly, it gives contribution to

the broader field of Linguistics as well as its sub-discipline of Systemic Functional Linguistics.

This research aims to apply transitivity system in analyzing a videogame protagonist character from Assassin's Creed III (2012). Assassin's Creed itself is a well-known franchise in the gaming industry, ever since its first title release on 2007. Published and developed for PC (personal computer) and Gaming Console by Ubisoft, the franchise is considered to be the main flagship of the company (Masterfox, 2018). Currently, there are thirteen titles within the franchise that have been released, in which the profit that Ubisoft gained from each game is generally high. According to Rees (2023), a Staff Writer of Pocket Gamer.biz, the latest entry of the franchise which is entitled 'Assassin's Creed Mirage' had generated a massive \$554.8 million dollars of profit to the company during its launch period in October 2023. Prior to this, in 2021, Ubisoft achieved the highest revenue after the release of 'Assassin's Creed Valhalla', which reached \$1 billion dollars of total profit (Times of India, 2022). Based on this, it can be said that the popularity of the franchise is still high enough to attract gamers nowadays despite being a decade-old-running game franchise. In regards to Assassin's Creed III (2012), the game has been documented as the seventh the best-selling videogame title released by Ubisoft with the estimated total of 12 million copies sold worldwide. Mazanko (2024) wrote that one of the reasons behind the game's success is due to the protagonist of the game – Connor Kenway, is considered as an interesting protagonist character with a Native American background during the fictionalized version of the War of American Independence.

Following the theoretical framework of transitivity system proposed by Halliday (1985), this study is aimed to examine how the characterization of the protagonist in Assassin's Creed III (2012) – Connor Kenway, is developed using transitivity system. This study is mainly concerned in answering the following question:

- 1) How do the identified process types contribute to the characterization of the main protagonist of Assassin's Creed III (2012)?