

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is providing the comprehensive research background, research question, research objective, research significance. and defining key terms relevant to the analysis.

1.1. Background of the Research

This research is aimed examine the construction of antagonist narrative in *Arcane* first season. The focus on this research is put the attention on the antagonist as the catalyst of the story. Examining antagonist figures in through the lens of literary criticism proves to be a valuable pursuit, shedding light on the sophisticated storytelling techniques employed within the game (Aarseth, 1998). Within the realm of literary criticism, such analysis facilitates the exploration of archetypal elements, symbolism, and the nuanced interplay between opposing concepts such as light and darkness, and good and evil (Modonesi, 2013). Antagonistic characters often act as catalysts for character development and plot advancement, serving as narrative foils to the heroes. Scrutinizing the portrayal of these characters and the symbolic weight they carry unveils the adept storytelling skills of the game developers and their capacity to craft a compelling and immersive narrative.

Unlike the origin narrative which is a MOBA game, which primarily focuses on strategy and combat, *Arcane* expands the lore by providing a character,driven narrative that explores the socio,political tensions between Piltover and Zaun (Dimitrova, 2018). The substantial consumption of character narratives in *League of Legends (LoL)* can be attributed to its strategic emphasis on creating engaging and diverse stories for each *lore* in, game, hero, which now has reproduced in a narrative of movie series entitled by *Arcane*. It has already two seasons. The game's immersive appeal lies in the meticulous crafting of individual character backgrounds, unique abilities, and visual designs. Players are drawn to multifaceted personalities and origin stories, creating a sense of attachment to the virtual personas they control (Mawalia, 2020). This deliberate narrative integration not

only adds depth to the gaming experience but also fosters a connection between players and the heroes they choose. The widespread consumption of these character narratives is a testament to the game's success in catering to the evolving preferences of the global gaming community which now face the development of intermediality.

However, in this context of game of *League of Legends (LoL)* a “lore hero” refers to a character whose background story, or *lore*, is intricately woven into the game's narrative (Mawalia, 2020). Each hero in the game comes with its own unique backstory, personality, and motivations, which are often revealed through in-game events, cinematic trailers, or written *lore* provided by the game developers. Understanding the *lore* of a hero can enhance the player's overall gaming experience by providing context to the character they are playing or encountering. It can also create a deeper emotional connection between players and their favorite heroes, as well as add depth to the game's universe. *The lore of a hero* typically includes details about their origins, their role in the game world, their relationships with other characters, and any significant events that have shaped their journey. In *Arcane* Season 1, understanding a character's backstory can shape the audience's perception of their journey and the choices they make. Figures like Vi, Jinx, and Jayce have rich histories that intertwine with the larger narrative of Piltover and Zaun. Exploring their pasts and personalities adds depth to the viewing experience, allowing fans to engage with the story beyond just its action sequences.

Moreover, a closer examination of antagonist characters presents an opportunity to assess the socio,cultural elements interwoven into the storytelling. Given *Arcane* global popularity as sophisticate animation under Netflix. Through literary analysis, one can uncover these cultural references, recognizing the game as a dynamic and evolving narrative that resonates with a broad audience. Thus, dissecting antagonist characters in *League of Legends (LoL)* through the perspective of literary criticism not only deepens our comprehension of the game's narrative complexities but also underscores the artistic and cultural dimensions that contribute to its widespread resonance and success.

League of Legends (LoL) has gained widespread acclaim not only for its engaging gameplay but also for the intricacies embedded within its rich narrative. One aspect that demands attention and rigorous analysis is the portrayal of antagonists in the game's *lore*. The antagonists in *Arcane* play a pivotal role in shaping the narrative landscape, and development which lead the intermediality which based on the game. Understanding their motivations, conflicts, and relationships with other characters provides valuable insights into the overarching storyline. As such, there are compelling reasons why the antagonist narrative in *Arcane* is worthy of in,depth examination and evaluation.

The antagonist characters in *Arcane* are not mere stereotypes; they are crafted with depth and complexity. Exploring their backstories and understanding the driving forces behind their actions adds layers to the overall narrative. In *Arcane first season 2021*, an antagonist is a key character or force that opposes, challenges, or creates conflict for the protagonist in the Runntera. This research focuses on two main issues: identifying the types of antagonists and understanding the motives behind their actions as depicted in the game's lore. These antagonistic motives often clash with the protagonist's goals, reflecting a narrative structure built on binary opposition. This opposition is driven by the portrayal of the Pilvoter Of Zaun as the central protagonist and the dark forces, such as demons, as the antagonists.

In regarding to propose the discussion in the domain of antagonist. This research argues that antagonist in such a narrative is inevitable in order to provide the ground narrative, indeed with the progress of protagonist. As regards the sum total of all the obstacles that obstruct a character in the pursuit of their desires. They are the problem or obstacle the protagonist has to overcome (Yorke, 2013). Indeed, in such a understanding the analysis over the subject in the most prevalent form of antagonist is typically embodied by the villain a malevolent character predisposed to engaging in nefarious activities(Propp, 2009). Frequently, it falls upon the protagonist to thwart their sinister endeavors. However, it is imperative to recognize that an antagonist can assume various forms, extending beyond individual characters with malicious intentions. Obstacles impeding the protagonist's pursuit of their objectives may manifest in diverse manners, such as environmental

challenges, a recurrent theme in disaster films. Notably, formidable creatures, particularly those of a large and hazardous nature, serve as compelling antagonistic elements. An anti-villain, as an antagonist, opposes the protagonist despite sharing similar objectives. Conversely, an antagonist may masquerade as an ally, a scenario identified as a false antagonist. The concealed antagonist is a character whose adversarial role is only disclosed towards the narrative's conclusion.

Nonetheless, this research is not arbitrary yet entered as the continuation in the academic progress and development in literary critic. The study conducted by Dimas Eko Saputro and Cahyaningsih Pujimahanani examines *Arcane* through a Marxist perspective, highlighting the class conflict between Zaun and Piltover, which arises due to economic, political, and power disparities. Zaun, representing the lower class, initiates a revolution against the capitalist system that perpetuates exploitation and poverty. The study finds that this conflict ultimately leads to a restructuring of the class hierarchy, wherein Zaun ascends to power while Piltover experiences decline (Hakim & Chusna, 2024). Similarly, the research by Ananda Lukmanul Hakim and Inayatul Chusna employs Marxist theory to analyze how power is maintained through false consciousness in *Arcane*. Their study demonstrates that exploitation in Zaun persists due to ideological domination, which conditions the lower class to accept systemic injustice as a natural state of affairs (Saputro, 2022). Consequently, this research underscores that capitalism is sustained not only through economic control but also through the manipulation of social consciousness to uphold structural inequality.

In concluding the background, the extensive consumption of character narratives in *Arcane first season 2021* is attributed to its deliberate focus on crafting engaging and diverse stories for each in-game hero, creating an immersive experience. Finally, this research aims to explore the significance of antagonist *Arcane* in the segmentation of type of antagonist and its motives. It argued that examining antagonists is crucial for understanding narrative effectiveness.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the research background passage above, this research pursues the research question as follows:

1. What are the types of antagonist narrative in *Arcane first season 2021*?
2. What are the motives of antagonist narrative in *Arcane first season 2021* progress the narrative?

1.3. Research Objective

However, this research has objective answer in seeking the result of the research question as follows:

1. In order to Identify the types of antagonist narrative in *Arcane first season 2021*.
2. In order to examine the motives of antagonist narrative in *Arcane first season 2021* progress the narrative.

1.4. Research Significance

Based on the research interest, this research can be constructed in several contributions as the automatic impact in preserving the notion of analysis. The contributions can be followed from theoretically as the study makes a scholarly contribution to the theoretical underpinnings of narrative analysis in the realm of gaming, with a specific emphasis on the depiction and function of antagonistic figures in the narrative backdrop of *Arcane* and its intermediality process. This research holds significant value in both academic and cultural contexts, particularly within the fields of narratology, media studies, and popular culture analysis. By analyzing the antagonist narrative in *Arcane* (2021), the study offers a critical lens on how contemporary animation reconfigures traditional villain archetypes through psychological complexity and visual storytelling. Unlike classic binary oppositions between good and evil, the series presents an antagonist-Jinx-whose characterization is deeply intertwined with trauma, identity fragmentation, and emotional ambiguity. This reflects a shift in narrative strategies in modern media,

where antagonists are not mere plot obstacles, but carriers of moral ambiguity and affective depth.

In addition, this research contributes to the growing body of scholarship on transmedia storytelling. *Arcane* is a unique cultural product derived from the *League of Legends* video game universe, yet it functions independently as a high, quality narrative text. Studying its antagonist narrative helps elucidate how emotional resonance, psychological realism, and character, driven conflict are constructed in animation adapted from interactive media. This has implications for understanding how narrative adaptation across media forms can reshape audience engagement, empathy, and ideological positioning. It also brings attention to how animation is increasingly used as a serious medium for complex storytelling, rather than being relegated to children's entertainment.

Therefore, the research is significant in addressing how antagonistic figures reflect broader sociocultural anxieties. Jinx, as a fragmented and tragic antagonist, represents themes such as mental health, social marginalization, and the failure of institutional systems, issues that resonate with contemporary audiences globally. By unpacking the antagonist narrative in *Arcane*, this study contributes to conversations about the ethics of storytelling, the political implications of character construction, and the evolution of villainy in 21st, century media. Thus, the research not only deepens our understanding of *Arcane* itself but also illuminates broader transformations in narrative theory and media representation.

Furthermore, the second significance contribution can be delved into the context of practically. The practical significance contributions are the findings can be practically applied to the field of game design and development, offering insights into creating compelling antagonist characters and narratives. Game developers can leverage this knowledge to enhance player engagement and overall gaming experience. Game developers and film marketers can use this information to tailor strategies that appeal to players who are intrigued by the *lore* and narrative aspects of the game. Finally, the evaluation for game industry and the research can be valuable for the marketing teams associated with the game. Highlighting the

significance of antagonist *lore* can be used in promotional campaigns to attract and retain players. Additionally, it can aid in community building by fostering.

1.5. Organization of Writing

This research is systematically organized into five chapters. Each chapter presents a specific aspect of the research, from the introduction and theoretical foundation to the research methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusion. The organization of this research is described as follows:

Chapter I. This chapter presents the introduction to the research, which consists of the background of the research, research questions, research objectives, research significance, and organization of writing. The background discusses the reasons for examining antagonist narratives in *Arcane* Season 1 (2021), particularly the types and motives of antagonistic figures and their roles in the development of the narrative. The research questions and objectives define the direction of the study, while the research significance explains the theoretical and practical contributions of the research.

Chapter II. This chapter discusses the theoretical foundation used to analyze the research problems. It consists of narrative structure, types of antagonists, antagonist motives, and the conceptual framework. The discussion of narrative structure applies Tzvetan Todorov's narrative theory, while the discussion of antagonist types draws on Vladimir Propp's character function theory and related concepts of antagonistic characters. The chapter also discusses George Polti's theory of dramatic situations as a framework for examining antagonist motives. These theories provide the foundation for identifying and interpreting the types and motives of antagonists in *Arcane* Season 1 (2021).

Chapter III. This chapter explains the methodology employed in conducting the research. It consists of the research design, source

of data, sample of data, technique of collecting data, and technique of analyzing data. This chapter describes the qualitative descriptive approach used to examine antagonist narratives in *Arcane* Season 1 (2021). It also explains the procedures used to collect, classify, and analyze relevant data concerning the types and motives of antagonist characters.

Chapter IV. This chapter presents the findings and analysis of the research based on the research questions. The discussion is divided into two main parts. The first part examines the types of antagonist narratives found in *Arcane* Season 1 (2021), including the typology and narrative construction of the antagonistic figures. The second part examines the motives underlying the antagonists' actions, particularly political and ideological motives as well as personal and emotional motives. The analysis also explains how the types and motives of antagonists contribute to narrative disruption, character development, and the progression of the story.

Chapter V. This chapter presents the conclusion and suggestions of the research. The conclusion summarizes the main findings concerning the types and motives of antagonist narratives in *Arcane* Season 1 (2021) based on the theories and analysis presented in the previous chapters. The suggestion provides recommendations for future researchers who are interested in studying antagonist narratives, narrative theory, adaptation, intermediality, or contemporary popular literature.