CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.   Background of Study

Game is common in our life, but today digital games are steadily increasing. Basically digital games appear in various media, respectively, related to mobile phones, the internet, and computer games. Computer games have become increasingly popular in the past 20 to 25 years among young people. In the beginning, computer games were mainly played by youth and young adult who were enthusiastic about computer (Fromme, 2003). Furthermore, the computer game industry has rapidly emerged and grown with internet technology.

Along with this medium, the study of games needs to be examined by the scholars. The importance of a holistic game research has been raised by Aarseth (2001) in his article *'Computer Game Studies, Year One'*. He clearly emphasizes the value design knowledge for the academic community. The issue of games is an extremely interesting area of research and it provides abundant research questions to be considered. What is more interesting issue from computer game is this kind of new technology brings fresh object to be studied. It contains many questions to deal with. Also, this medium is available to be examined with interdisciplinary values (e.g., social science and humanities).

This study is curious to study computer game while it is bound up with internet connection, computer as terminals, and communication features in which

this game embedded. Basically, computer game are divided into several genres, including role-playing game, first-person shooter, real time strategy games, sports game, rhytm game, and etc. One of the kinds computer game attracts the writer of the thesis to study and explore. It is *Defence of the Ancients (DotA)*, the custom scenario for real time strategy computer game *Warcraft III: Reign of Chaos* and its expansion *Warcraft III: The Frozen Throne*. Probably, it has been one of the most popular 'free, non supported game-modification in the world' (Walbridge, 2008). A real time strategy game is generally taking on god's eye of view and emphasizes the ongoing play (Apperley, 2006). Arguably, the popularity of its game also affects youngsters in certain value.

There are many computer games attracting us to play which offer stunning graphic art, visual effect, of futuristic gameplay, but few of them offer multiplayer feature so that it can be played together by game players. A multiplayer game is a game that can be played by two or more players at the same time. Interaction and communication among game players in multiplayer game (e.g., in competitive settings) is an important characteristic that distinguish them from conventional single-player games (Klimmt & Hartmann, 2008). This game allows game players to engage in multi-party conversation online synchronously in real time. Communication is usually through an in-game chat system or prescribed commands sent to other team member or opponents. While game players are playing games, whether they like or not, they involve interaction to the other game players. Due to interaction on in-game, this game has some features to communicate with other, one of them based on text-typed displayed through in-

game chat. In-game chat is a chat dialogue between game players while they are playing game in a game match. They need to communicate with each other for various reasons including discussing strategy, calling for help, commenting on performance, or just chatting. These chats features are great way to communicate to other game players when they can not tackle direct communication.

During playing the game, a game player types some messages to the other game players even he/she is team member or opponent. This written dialogue is typed when the game is being played. The game player should type it quickly and effectively so that the game is still played and the game player is not interfered with that chat session. The message which is sent by the game player is limited by time because the chat itself is not a primary purpose in playing game. Due to effectiveness of message, game players usually do conversation in their own way.

Unlike conversation in face-to-face communication, the chat intonation, expression, face and movement, or other context explained by participants can not be directly seen. Expression in this game chat is similar to convention written dialogue online in chat session online. Some expression characters have some kind of convention for game player such as the use of smiley (e.g ":D", ":p", etc), alternation (e.g hmmmm, zzzz, and hufttt), interjection, the use of non-standard form, and the use of punctuation (exclamation marks) and capitalization to express heightened emotion. Game players create effective chat and form a new word in game chat. Myers (2002) stated that the complexity of textual chats allows players to go far beyond the standard rules of the standard written text (cited in Wright et al, 2002). From the case above, probably, there are many new

words emerging as common use by game players, because of a creative expression from people to make word more efficiently and simply be uttered. However, the gamers develop the conventional game-specific language used by game players of online games (for example, 'afk' for away from keyboard, 'gg', for giggle or good game) which can create a sense of close and tight relationship among players (Wright et al, 2002).

Curiously, the convention of game-specific language used by game players is influenced by the impact of the internet. According to Crystal (2001), Internet-using situations are likely to loom large, so that it needs to separate. He divided it into five broad Internet-using situations which are sufficiently different to mean that the language they contain is likely to be significantly distinctive. The language that is used in this chat of computer game *Warcraft III: Dota Allstar* is considered as Internet language because it is connected through the internet.

The medium, computer game, has dual internet situation, since it is embedded with the situations of synchronous chat group and virtual worlds. In a synchronous situation, a user enters a chat room and joins an ongoing conversation in real time. He conducts conversation on 'channel' which ignores the game-based setting of the conversation and addresses real-life issues. In virtual world situation, a user can engage in text-based fantasy social interaction in imaginary environments. He conducts conversation on in-game which refers to game world and its internal logic: players communicate from within their role in the game, use a communication appropriate for their character, and contextualize their messages within the overall game (Klimmt & Hartmann, 2008). As can be

seen, both of these different situations immediately motivate a fresh range of creative expression which can contribute the richness of vocabulary to linguistic field.

As noted earlier, the creative expressions happen on written-dialogue or textual chat. It is possible to focus very deeply on this issue. To make clear with the creative expression, the term is associated with the lexicon which belongs exclusively to gaming world which is encountered when the player enters on in-game chat *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar*. However, now it is called 'gaming word' in this study. That is the unique word used by the game players to engage conversation on in-game chat. Here again, this study intends to looks at word-formation to see some of the patterns in the way new words are made by game players.

Extrapolating from this phenomenon, a word can be analyzed by word-formation processes. Word-formation processes is concerned with the various processes by words can be built (Bauer, 1988). Word-formation processes play an essential part in forming a new word. In their word formation, spelling and pronunciation, new words are likely to be constrained by the lexis, phonology and grammar of the language; for example, it would be hard to have a world like 'cgsxhewltd', which would not fit with existing patterns of consonants, vowels, morpheme shapes, or spelling (Shortis, 2001).

There are theories of word-formation processes in which words can be built (Bauer, 1989; Jackson, 2002; Burridge, 2002; Stockwell & Minkova, 2001; Shortis, 2001). According to Jackson (2002), there are two basic methods by

which a language may increase its vocabulary. The first is to use the material (morphemes) available in the language already and recombine it in new word. He divided it into various processes such as compound, derivatives, acronyms, and loanwords. From still similar method, John Algeo (1999) added, in *the Cambridge History of English Language*, develops a classification system for word formation based on four factor: whether the word has an etymon (word element) based on earlier words, whether the word omits any part of an etymon, whether a word combines two etymon, and whether any of the etyma are from another language (cited in Shortis, 2001).

This study is going to use the theory of word-formation processes by Bauer (1988). He clearly mentions various processes by words can be built. He divided it into nine processes namely; using affixes, reduplication, modification the base, cases involving shortening base, processes involving several lexemes, alphabet based formation, unique morph, and suppletion. This theory is clearly enough to describe the word formation processes of gamer language in-game chat of online game *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar*. However, the other theories of word formation processes are used as support theories.

This study is aimed to observe word formation processes that used in computer game particularly *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar* because some of reasons. Firstly, synchronous chat group and the virtual world offer text-based communication to be examined in linguistic field. Secondly, there are lexicons that belong exclusively to this game which are interesting to investigate. Also, the writer of the thesis has had experience concerning to the game chat. He also

evidenced the language used by a game player which is distinctive from standard written text based.

II.   Statement of Problem

As can be seen in the background of the study, this study investigates the word-formation processes to examine gaming words in the in-game chat occurs in *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar* communication between team member and opponents Therefore, the study formulates the question below:

1. How are the gaming words formed in-game chat *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar* ?

2. What is the most dominant type of gaming words used in-game chat *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar* ?

III.   Objective of the Study

This study tries to find out the word-formation processes used on in-game chat *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar* and to find out the word-formation process(es) used on in-game chat occur(s) most. Therefore through this study, this study expects to prove how these techniques apply on the computer game *Warcraft III: DotA Allstar* then forming specific words that contribute to their vocabulary.

IV. Significance of the Study

The writer of the thesis expects that this study can contribute something to linguistics field of morphology by providing a freshness of new word which develops onto segmented field that is gamer community. This study is also

expected to look at the broader issue of game study seen from linguistic field. It also expected that the readers will have an additional knowledge about gaming words in online game which is often used by game players as real as in face-to-face communication. The result of this study is intended to be the comparative study of further research for linguists or researchers who are interested in studying the similar topic.

V.   Definitions of keyterms

Word-formation processes

: is the various processes by which words can be built (Bauer, 1988)

Warcraft III

: is a real-time strategy computer game develops by Blizzard Entertainment for Microsoft Windows, Mac OS, and Mac X. ("Warcraft III," n.d.)

DotA Allstar

: is short for Defense of the Ancient Allstar, a custom map for Warcraft III: The Frozen Throne, based on the "Aeon of Strife" map for the Blizzard title Starcraft. It is a team strategy game focused on hero combat. ("Defense of the Ancient, " n.d.)