

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Heroism has developed into a popular topic that frequently appears in a variety of narratives. It is mentioned in a wide variety of mythologies and films, including Chronicles of Narnia, Harry Potter, Rocky Balboa, Creed, and a great number of other works. Despite the fact that heroism is a significant topic in a wide variety of literary works, each author has a unique approach while still demonstrating a consistent pattern.

In the historical narrative, mythology, and movies, many heroes, such as King Arthur and Hercules, are typically portrayed as being muscular guys equipped with physical strength. In contrast to the archetypal heroes described in the previous section, there are a great number of tales that depict the hero as a feeble or unremarkable individual who is yet capable of performing an extraordinary number of acts of kindness for the community.

Story is one of the most essential elements in a movie. Without a story, a movie cannot be considered as a movie because there is no interesting part to attract the audience. Story is not only essential for a movie, but it also can be important to everything such as video games. Video games are a new form of entertainment in which people can play the characters inside the game and enjoy the story which the game provides. As video games reached its popularity, it began to become a genre of a novel or movie. One of the movies that adopted a game into its genre is *Free Guy* (2021) by Shawn Levy. The movie talks about the life of an NPC (Non-Playable Character) inside an online game named Free City. In the game, players can do anything they want such as robbing a bank, racing, buying luxury cars and other things that they cannot do in the real world. In this study, the author will analyze the main character, Guy, in the movie

Guy, played by Ryan Reynolds, is a Non-Playable Character who exists within the game in the movie. A non-playable character (human or otherwise) is a character in a role-playing game who is not controlled by the player and programmed by artificial intelligence. A non-playable character (NPC) is a significant figure in the game. A self-aware and adaptive NPC can alter its behavior in response to player activities and environmental variables (Mabruroh and Herumurti 2019). Non-Playable Characters behavior is essential for creating a realistic simulation environment.

*Free Guy* is a science fiction action-comedy movie that was released on August 13th, 2021. The movie is directed by Shawn Levy and the main protagonist is Guy, who is played by Ryan Reynolds. *Free Guy* (2021) is the newest movie which adapted a game into the settings. The movie mainly tells the story of the NPC, Non-Playable Character, of the game. This movie also involves many gaming youtuber such as Jacksepticeye, Ninja, etc. The movie portrayed a virtual world in a game where people could gather and enjoy the game.

There are only a few movies that adapted a game into its genre or plot. One of the movies that is similar to *Free Guy* is *Ready Player One* (2018). *Ready Player One* tells about an era where virtual reality technology is developed. Almost all of the people used virtual reality technology to play a game in the virtual world called OASIS. Five award nominations have been submitted for "Free Guy," which is categorized as a new film. The nominations are People's Choice Award for Favorite Movie Actor (2021), People's Choice Award for the Comedy Movie Star of the Year (2021), Prix du Public UBS (2021), Variety Piazza Grande Award (2021), People's Choice Award for Favorite Comedy Movie (2021). Another reason is that the hero in the film had characteristics that were not typical of others of their kind. In the vast majority of blockbuster films, the protagonist is depicted as having a muscular physique and an incredible amount of power. The main character of this film, on the other hand, is nothing more than an ordinary

individual with a typical physical build. It stands in contrast to other popular movies that have a protagonist who acts heroically.

The author of this study is going to use the hero's journey theory that was developed by John Campbell in order to undertake an analysis of the narrative structure of the film. The hero's journey, also known as the monomyth, is a frequent template used in narratology and comparative mythology. This template is used for stories that contain a hero who embarks on an adventure, is triumphant in a critical crisis, and then returns home changed or transformed. The hero's journey is a structure that is founded on myth. Extremely adaptable, it is comprised of three primary stages: the departure, which is when the protagonist leaves on his journey, (perhaps grudgingly) looking for excitement; the middle; and the conclusion. The second part of the voyage is the initiation, which is where the majority of the journey's events take place and where the hero finally arrives. The last part of the theory is the return. The hero has accomplished whatever it was they set out to do and has taken possession of the item (treasure, love, or knowledge). Now it is time for him to go back home. These are the fundamental components of any and every hero's journey, and they can be implemented in a wide range of ways to enhance, investigate, and develop narratives.

The study regarding the movie FREE GUY (2021) has not been discussed or found in the previous study. However, there have been several studies that are relevant to the current study entitled “The Hero’s Journey: 12 Stages in The Narrative of Animation Boboiboy Movie 2” conducted by Oscar Gordon Wong and Imelda Ann Achin (2021), “The Comparison of Heroine’s Journey in Brave Movie (2012) and Moana Movie (2016)” conducted by Gita Mutiara Ramadhanty (2020), and “The Analysis of Hero’s Journey in J.R.R Tolkien’s The Hobbit and The Lord of The Ring; Fellowship of The Ring” conducted by Saputra Hardian (2019). The hero's journey theory is also utilized in these studies in order to perform an analysis

on the objects of the research, but with a variety of issues and focuses. The hero's journey theory is discussed in these studies as a means of analyzing the main character's story from the very beginning. It is also related to this study of *Free Guy* (2021) that analyzes the plot of the film as well as the narrative structures. Therefore, the analysis on *Free Guy* (2021) movie is conducted by the author to create a study with the same objects and topics or give an insight to help the future research. The author of this study has the opinion that the outcome of this research will be a description of the ways in which the hero's journey theory can be applied to the film.

The author believes that by conducting this study, a study or research will be carried out in the future on the utilization of the hero's journey in a film, and that this research will then be opened up to be elaborated upon. A nice example of an object of this study that may be evaluated using Campbell's hero's journey theory is "Free Guy (2021)." The author believes that the film *Free Guy* (2021) can be evaluated using the hero's journey theory in order to comprehend the journey that the movie's protagonist, Guy, goes on throughout the film.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

Based on the background of the study, the statements of the problem are developed as follow:

1. How is the journey of the protagonist in order to become a hero portrayed in Shawn Levy's *Free Guy*?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to analyze the narrative structure of the movie that is implied within the story of the movie. Based on the statements of the problem, the objectives of this study are:

1. To describe how the protagonist become a hero in the movie.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The researcher who conducted this study has great expectations that the hero's journey theory will find wider application as a result of it, and that it will be of assistance to other researchers who are attempting to apply John Campbell's hero's journey theory to the analysis of a problem in a movie or other works. In addition, the purpose of this study is to contribute to and improve understanding of the hero's journey theory, in particular Joseph Campbell's hero's journey and how the hero's journey narrative structure is portrayed in the story of the movie.

#### **1.5 Definitions of Key Terms**

Hero's Journey : The Hero's Journey is a well-known narrative device that may be divided in three distinct parts (Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 1949). The hero's ordinary life is first upended when he or she receives a summons to embark on an epic journey. Second, the hero needs to prevail over challenges and vanquish foes in order to complete their objective. In the end, they go back to their normal lives having changed.

Hero: Hero is the primary protagonist of a literary or dramatic work who is referred to specifically as the protagonist of a male character, particularly when contrasted with the heroine. A hero is someone who has devoted their life to something greater than themselves (Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 1949).

Non-Playable Character: According to Mabruroh and Herumurti (2019), A non-playable character (human or otherwise) is a character in a role-playing game who is not controlled by the player and programmed by artificial intelligence. A non-playable character (NPC) is a significant figure in the game.