

Genre and Attitude to develop Characterization of Protagonist's Heroes in Narrative Asset of Mobile Legend: Bang-bang

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ABSTRACT

MOBA games contain highly intriguing narrative assets that are worth exploring. In the MOBA game *Mobile Legends*, narrative assets are found in the Mastery Code menu. Interestingly, these narrative assets are not always structured as traditional narratives; they can also appear in other textual genres. The aim of this research is to describe how genre functions as a supporting element in the characterization of the hero protagonist. Additionally, this study analyzes the Attitude System, a tool within the Appraisal framework, to understand how it contributes to the characterization of the hero protagonist. This research adopts a qualitative, descriptive approach, as it aims to naturally describe the observed phenomena.

INTRODUCTION

Mobile games today have many types and their communities. According to Hsu & Lin (2017) mobile games are games specifically designed to be played on mobile devices. The types of mobile games are action, adventure, arcade, casual, simulation, sports, strategy, word, music, and so on (Fulerton, 2014). The popularity of mobile games today in Indonesia is very high with the emergence of the MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena) strategy game subgenre. MOBA is a game genre that involves two teams of players competing against each other in a battle arena with the main objective of destroying the opposing team's base or main structure while defending their base.

An interesting thing that can be observed in video games and mobile games is the assets that are utilized in them. There are two assets, mechanical assets and narrative assets in video games or mobile games. Narrative assets in video games, or narrative components, are the building pieces that construct the tale and influence player interaction. These components include scripted events, character talks, visual narrative, environmental signals, and much more. Each component plays a critical part in providing a unified and captivating narrative experience.

In mobile games, where the format typically mandates brevity and speed, the proper use of narrative content is even more crucial. Developers must develop intriguing storylines under the limits of shorter play durations and limited screen real estate. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), "Narrative structures in games are pivotal for creating an immersive experience that captures the player's attention and emotional involvement" (p. 68).

While narrative materials build the framework for the tale and emotional connection, mechanical elements underlie the gaming experience. Transitioning from narrative aspects to mechanics, it is necessary to grasp that the systems and rules regulating gameplay also play a key role. Mechanical assets, on the other hand, relate to the systems and rules that control gameplay. These include game mechanics, controllers, user interfaces, scoring systems, and the underlying algorithms that define how the game reacts to player actions.

Mechanical components are vital for establishing a balanced and compelling gaming experience, ensuring that players stay challenged and amused. In mobile games, where touch controls and rapid interactions are crucial, the design of mechanical elements must be especially intuitive and responsive. As observed by Hunicke, LeBlanc, and Zubek (2004), "Game mechanics are the core of the gameplay experience, shaping how players interact with the game world and influencing their overall satisfaction" (p. 7). In this perspective, the current study will especially concentrate the narrative assets provided by ML games. Narrative assets provide context and stories that make the game more interesting and meaningful (Murray, 1997; Jenkins, 2004; Pearce, 2009). These narrative assets can be a fertile ground for research with Linguistic studies.

One of the MOBA genre games with a large community in Indonesia is Mobile Legend: Bang-bang. Then, this research focuses on the narrative assets provided by ML games. The narrative assets in ML games are located in the

Mastery Code (MC) menu. In the MC, there are continuous stories from all heroes, both protagonists and antagonists. Characterization development is also the focus of this research. Character balance in games is an art and science that ensures that all players have an equal chance of winning, which is essential to maintain the integrity of the game (Rogers, 2013).

When examining the narrative of the Mobile Legends game, it is essential to have a comprehensive grasp of the genre and register. Upon analyzing the narrative aspects of the game, it becomes evident that the genre and register work together to provide a highly immersive gaming experience. As an illustration, the hero narrative genre in Mobile Legends frequently adheres to the traditional epic structure, wherein hero characters possess intricate backgrounds and engage in intense confrontations. The choice of register employed in conversation and narrative serves to convey the character's function and nature, as the utilization of formal language and a distinct rhetorical style reinforces their reputation as a hero.

Through the analysis of these narrative materials, we can gain insights about the use of genre and register in order to construct a cohesive and captivating tale. Moreover, this research also uncovers the manner in which these linguistic components contribute to the establishment of character identification and the progression of the narrative in the game. Hence, our research not only offers valuable understanding of the narrative framework in Mobile Legends, but also demonstrates the practical application of functional systemic theory inside the realm of digital media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Genre and Register in Systemic Functional Linguistics

Genre can be defined as a deliberate and purposeful social activity that is organized and structured to achieve specific goals. Genre can be defined as a goal-driven social activity that is carried out sequentially. In his taxonomy, Rose (2010) categorizes genres into two different types: macro-genres and micro-genres. Macro-genres are explained as a composite of diverse genres derived from different discourse groups with cultural contexts. Then, micro-genre is defined as a very specific genre. There are two forms of micro-genres, namely the fairy tale genre and the factual genre (Martin, 2006). After further research, the MC menu that carries narrative assets in Mobile Legend turns out to be categorized into factual genres. The factual genre itself consists of eight types, namely description, report, recount, procedure, explanation, exposition, discussion, and exploration (Santosa et al., 2023). The description genre describes something unique and specific, so the results cannot be generalized. The genre of description in narrative assets in the MC describes each hero protagonist. Although named narrative assets, narrative assets can be genre descriptions that describe descriptions in the game, such as the game's characters, clues about missions, and so on. The genre strategy in producing hero protagonist characterization can be seen from each stage (Identification and Description). By paying attention to the flow of these stages, the development of hero characters will be organized effectively.

Apart from looking from the perspective of the stages of the descriptive genre, the narrative assets in ML are also built through the phases in the stages of the descriptive genre. In the identification stage, the phases can be divided into (1) the introduction of characters and their origins, and (2) the introduction of the character's role or past history. Then, in the description stage, there are phases of description of traits and personality, description of physical abilities and strengths, and description of life goals and motivations. However, these phases can change according to what happens in the field.

Genre is very important in characterizing the protagonist hero in Mastery Code Mobile Legends. In the descriptive genre, each step of identification and story description contributes greatly to character development. In the Identification stage, players are exposed to the hero character's background, including their origins, strengths, and motives. This provides a solid foundation for the player to understand and engage with the character. The description stage presents a description of the hero's abilities or a depiction of the hero's motivations.

Register is a variation of language use or variation of language function based on contextual configuration or configuration of meaning or use. Thus, register is the concept of meaning or the concept of function or the concept of use (Santosa, 2023: 9). If genre is a semiotic system that has certain cultural values and norms, which are realized into a social process with its social goals and stages, then register is a semiotic system one layer below genre, which realizes the social goals and stages of genre in a contextual configuration or configuration of meaning with certain Field, Tenor, and Mode (Matthiessen, 2015).

To gain a deeper understanding of how these narrative elements are linguistically shaped, it is crucial to understand the concept of register. Register refers to linguistic or functional variations of language that are influenced by contextual configurations or configurations of meaning and use. Register is a linguistic notion that refers to the way language is used in different contexts, taking into account factors such as meaning, function and purpose (Santosa, 2023:9). If genre is considered a semiotic system that includes certain cultural values and norms, which are realized through social processes with different social purposes and stages, then register can be seen as a semiotic system that functions at a lower level than genre. Register refers to the social function and stage of a genre in a particular configuration of meaning, which is determined by the Field, Tenor, and Mode (Matthiessen, 2015).

Appraisal System

This study aims to examine the Appraisal System in the context of Register. Appraisal is an integral component of interpersonal meaning. Interpersonal meaning relates to the use of language to regulate, establish, and uphold social relationships, as well as convey attitudes, evaluations, and emotions (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2014). The following typology shows the flow of the Attitude System:

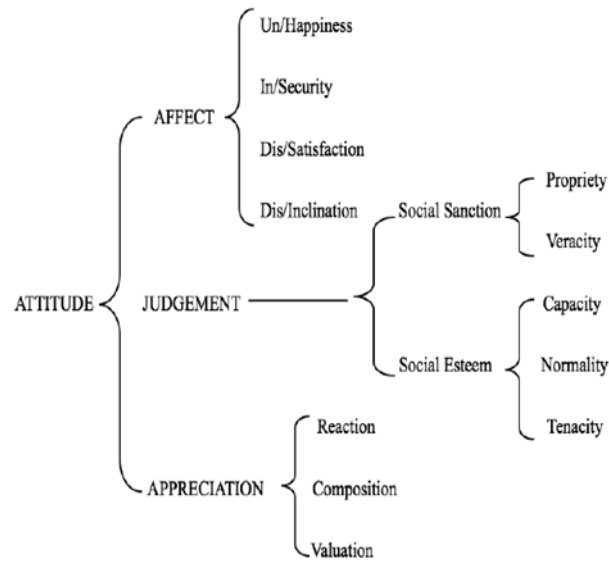


Figure 1. An Overview of Attitude System

Based on the picture above, there are subsystems of attitude displayed. In the affect aspect, there are subsystems of Un/Happiness (expression of happiness or unhappiness), In/Security (expression of security or insecurity), Dis/Satisfaction (expression of feeling satisfied or dissatisfied), and Dis/Inclination (desire or fear). Then, in the judgment aspect, there is Social Sanction which includes propriety (assessment of character ethics) and veracity (assessment of character honesty), and Social Esteem which includes capacity (assessment of the character's ability), normality (assessment of special or special characters), and tenacity (assessment of whether the character can reliably solve problems or not). Furthermore, in the appreciation aspect, there are subsystems of reaction (assessment of the impact of emotions on an object), composition (performance based on balance or complexity of form), and valuation (assessment of the usefulness of objects).

The attitude system is a constituent element that supports the characterization of the hero protagonist. Various experts have identified several characterizations of hero protagonists, which include: (1) *moral integrity*; (2) *courage and bravery*; (3) *self-sacrifice*; (4) *skill and strength*; (5) *toughness*; (6) *empathy and compassion* (Storr, A. (2017); Allison, ST, & Goethals, GR (2017); Franco, Z., Blau, K., & Zimbardo, P. (2011); Alsford, M. (2006); Lowney, C. (2009); Raglan, L. (2003)). The utilization of Genre and Attitude System aims to support the characterization of the mentioned hero protagonist.

Many previous researchers have conducted research on genre and attitude. Some of these studies have different data sources, such as children's stories, language learning, novels, articles, and news. The first research was conducted by Santosa et al (2021) with the title "Genre and Attitude to Support Character Development in Children's Stories". This research examines genres and attitudes that are very important in character development in children's stories. This paper analyzes how genre stages and phases, along with attitudes, have an impact on character portrayal and narrative structure. The research found that stories lacked positive-negative-positive character development

stages. Then, attitude types are not fully explored for character development in stories.

The second study was conducted by Yoon (2022) with the title “The Effects of Genre-Based Writing on EFL Students' Writing Performance and Attitude of English Writing and English Learning”. This study explains that the effects of the *genre-based writing* approach on students can improve writing skills in holistic and analytical assessments. In addition, this study also resulted in positive changes in attitudes towards English writing and learning. Furthermore, the third study conducted by Azar et al (2019) with the title “The Impact of Attitude Markers on Enhancing Evaluation in the Review Article Genre”. This study explains that attitude markers play an important role in enhancing evaluation in the review article genre, especially through adjectives and adverbs of attitude, helping in the effective communication of the author's judgment and criticism.

Furthermore, the fourth study was conducted by Hsiao (2019) entitled “Attitudes: authorial stance in the review genre of taiwanese ma graduates”. This study explains that attitudes are expressed through evaluation in the thesis review genre of Taiwanese MA graduates, displaying explicitly written attitude markers more often than evoked attitude markers. The fifth research has also been conducted by Kim (2014) entitled “The Effect of Expected Perspective on the Role of Genre and Attitude toward Utilizing Genre in Broadcast Ad on the Liking of Broadcast Ad Genre”. This study explains that consumer attitudes vary based on the expected perspective towards genre in broadcast advertising. Positive attitudes correlate with liking of comparative and sex appeal ads, while negative attitudes show moderate liking.

Seeing the topic of this research which leads to digital media, namely *mobile* games, researchers also reviewed several previous studies whose objects of study were media, such as: Dergach (2022); Prastikawati (2021); Susanto et al (2023); Chen (2014); Thahara et al (2019); Asad (2022); Indriyani et al (2023); Jing et al (2021); Yulianti et al (2021); and Serdali (2016). After reviewing all these articles, the researcher concluded that no one has discussed narrative assets in video games or mobile games. Therefore, this can be one of the research gaps. Then, no one has studied Genre and Attitude to support the characterization of hero protagonists in video games or mobile games. Therefore, these findings can be a research gap for researchers.

Furthermore, researchers can formulate the problem to be studied into: (1) How can genre support the characterization of the hero protagonist in Mastery Code as a narrative asset in Mobile Legends: Bang-bang? (2) How can the Attitude System support the characterization of the hero protagonist in the Mastery Code as a narrative asset in Mobile Legends: Bang-bang?

METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative study that focuses on the Characteristics of Protagonist's Heroes in Mobile Legend: Bang-bang. In addition, this research uses the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach by using one of its approaches, namely the Appraisal System. However, the use of the Appraisal System is limited to the Attitude System. The data in this study are words, phrases, or clauses that contain evaluative utterances categorized into *affect*,

judgment, and appreciation. The source of data in the study is the stages of the narrative genre in the mastery code, one of the narrative assets contained in the Mobile Legend game: Bang-bang. Then, the data collection technique in this study was carried out through transcription of data from each hero protagonist chapter contained in the Mastery Code menu. In addition, to validate the research data, researchers conducted *Focus Group Discussions* with Linguistics experts. After the data was validated, the data was then subjected to content analysis using the theory from Spradely (1985) modified by Santosa (2021). The content analysis consists of domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis.

RESEARCH RESULT

In this study, the researcher discussed the genre patterns in supporting the characterization of the hero protagonist. The genre stages found in Mastery Code as the game's narrative assets are descriptive genres. This is because researchers found patterns that describe each hero protagonist. Therefore, the stage pattern consists of: Identification and Description. In addition to the stages, there are phases within the stages. In the Identification stage, there is an introduction phase of the hero and his origin, and an introduction phase of his past history or early role. Then, in the description stage, there are phases such as: the description phase of traits and personality, and the explanation phase of physical abilities or strengths.

In addition to finding the stages and phases in the narrative assets, the researcher also used these stages and phases as data sources. Data in the form of Attitude (affect, judgment, and appreciation) is taken from these stages and phases. Then, these data are connected to the characterization of the hero protagonist. Therefore, it can be displayed more clearly the acquisition of existing data in the tabulation as follows:

Table 1. Amount of the Data

Stages of Descriptive	Phases of Descriptive	Moral Integrity (Judgement)	Courage & Bravery (Judgement)	Self-Sacrifice (Judgement)	Skill & Strength (Appreciation)	Resilience (Affect)	Empathy & Compassion (Affect)
Identification	Initial Introduction	8	9	7	10	8	6
Identification	Introduction to the history of the character	6	8	5	9	7	4

Description	Description of the skill	5	10	6	10	7	5
Description	Description of the motives	7	8	5	8	9	7

How does genre support the characterization of the hero protagonist in the Mastery Code as a narrative asset in Mobile Legends: Bang-bang?

Based on the previous discussion, the genre text identified within the narrative assets in the Mastery Code menu of the Mobile Legends game belongs to the descriptive genre. The stages of the descriptive genre include identification and description, each with its own phases. These stages and phases play a significant role in supporting the characterization of the protagonist heroes, which serve as central elements within the game.

In the identification stage, the phases can be divided into:

1. Introduction of the character and their origin
2. Introduction of the character's role or history in the past

These phases provide players with initial context about who the character is and how their role was formed. For example, the introduction of Gatotkaca as a hero from Arcapada and the descendant of Bima and Arimbi establishes a strong background, helping players understand the character's historical roots and significance within the storyline. At this stage, players start building emotional connections with the character based on their origins and past roles.

The next stage is description, which consists of several phases:

1. Description of personality and traits
2. Description of abilities and physical strength
3. Goals and motivations

This stage reinforces characterization by offering deeper insights into the hero. For example, Gatotkaca's personality, described as persistent and competitive, reflects his relentless pursuit of victory, allowing players to resonate with the hero's motivations. Furthermore, the description of his physical strength, such as the "Steel Bones," which grants exceptional endurance, constructs an image of a resilient and formidable warrior on the battlefield. Finally, the phase covering the hero's life goals and motivations—like his desire to defeat his nemesis, Ashura—provides a clear narrative purpose, making Gatotkaca a compelling and spirited protagonist.

In addition to the foundational identification and descriptive phases, the richness of narrative assets is further exemplified in complex storytelling elements like those found in the Minos Labyrinth story. Transitioning to this example, we see how the identification phase introduces crucial aspects of the characters and setting, such as the appearance of the Twilight Orb in the western desert, attracting widespread attention. The phase continues as we learn about Belerick, a guardian who controls two opposing forces—light and dark—symbolized by the streams encircling the orb. This not only situates Belerick's

role in the story but also emphasizes his connection to balance and order, thus fulfilling the purpose of this initial stage of character introduction.

Furthermore, moving into the descriptive phase, the text vividly portrays the arrival of Lunox, a girl with two wings, whose powers of Chaos and Order surround her. The description of her eyes as "bright as diamonds" adds a layer of mystical allure, while her apparent amnesia introduces an element of mystery to her character. Through these details, the narrative asset deepens the player's understanding of Lunox's physical appearance and her abilities, establishing her as a pivotal figure in the conflict between light and dark.

Building upon this, the narrative also dives into Lunox's abilities and influence on the story's lore. Belerick's memory of the war between light and dark eons ago highlights the sheer impact of Lunox's chaotic energy, which not only stopped the war but also left a lasting impression due to its destructive potential. This phase underscores Lunox's formidable power, especially the chaotic force capable of annihilating entire worlds, which contrasts with her role as a force of balance.

By following these phases of genre description, the narrative asset successfully constructs a multi-dimensional portrayal of Lunox, linking her past deeds, current powers, and mysterious nature. Such detailed narrative techniques ensure that the hero protagonists in Mobile Legends are not merely characters for gameplay but deeply developed entities with rich backstories and motivations, making them more engaging for the player.

The stages and phases of the descriptive genre directly support the development of protagonist characters, such as Lunox, in terms of Moral Integrity, Courage & Bravery, Self-Sacrifice, Skill & Strength, Resilience, and Empathy & Compassion. Each stage and phase adds depth to the characterization, making the moral and emotional qualities of the character more tangible to players.

In the identification stage—comprising the phases of character introduction, origins, and the presentation of their role or past history—the narrative of Lunox provides initial context about who she is and her significant role in history. For example, introducing Lunox as a girl with two wings and the power of Chaos and Order establishes her mysterious origins. This phase supports the themes of Moral Integrity and Courage & Bravery by illustrating how, despite her destructive powers, Lunox chooses to maintain balance and prevent war. Her decision reflects her moral integrity and the bravery required to confront dark forces.

Continuing to the description stage—which consists of phases covering personality and traits, abilities and physical strength, as well as life goals and motivations—the narrative of Lunox further strengthens her characterization. The description of Lunox losing her memory but still possessing great power reflects Self-Sacrifice, suggesting that she may have given up her identity to stop a greater conflict. The depiction of her ability to control both Chaos and Order demonstrates her Skill & Strength, highlighting her prowess as a hero capable of managing immense powers to maintain the world's balance.

Additionally, the narrative illustrating how Lunox endures after the great war between light and darkness exemplifies Resilience, emphasizing her mental and physical toughness in overcoming significant challenges. Finally, the portrayal of Lunox using her energy to fight the darkness—even though such power could destroy the world—reveals her Empathy & Compassion. Instead of wielding her power for destruction, she uses it for protection, demonstrating emotional depth that defines her as a caring hero.

By following the stages of identification and description within the descriptive genre, Lunox's characterization as a protagonist becomes more comprehensive and meaningful. Each phase supports the development of her morality, strength, and empathy, creating a character who is not only powerful within the story but also emotionally rich, resonating deeply with players.

How does the Attitude System support the characterization of the hero protagonist in the Mastery Code as a narrative asset in Mobile Legends: Bang-bang?

The Attitude System in Mobile Legends: Bang-bang plays a crucial role in supporting the characterization of protagonist heroes showcased through the Mastery Code, one of the game's primary narrative assets. This system not only conveys the personality and moral traits of the characters but also enhances players' understanding and interaction with the heroes they control. By emphasizing attributes such as courage, resilience, self-sacrifice, and empathy, the Attitude System effectively enriches the narrative dimensions of each character, creating more complex and relatable protagonists. Within the context of the Mastery Code, the system reinforces the protagonist's identity by presenting traits that align with the narrative objectives while fostering a deeper emotional connection between players and the characters.

The Attitude System can be explained through three key components: Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation.

1. Affect refers to how a character experiences or expresses emotions, such as fear, anger, or joy, helping to create emotional depth and highlight the protagonist's human side.
2. Judgment focuses on moral and ethical evaluations—how a character is assessed based on their actions, such as whether they display bravery, honesty, or responsibility.
3. This component is crucial in shaping the hero's image as someone who upholds moral principles.

Appreciation involves the character's response to the world around them, including sensitivity to beauty, strength, or order. This adds depth to the player's perception of the protagonist, portraying them as wise and strategic figures.

Through the combination of these three components, the Attitude System supports the characterization of protagonist heroes, reinforcing elements such as Moral Integrity, Courage, Self-Sacrifice, and Resilience. This results in characters that are not only engaging from a narrative standpoint but also inspiring for players. Below is a detailed analysis of the Attitude System in building the characterization of protagonist heroes within the Mastery Code of Mobile Legends: Bang-bang:

- 1) The Role of Affect in Supporting the Characterization of the Hero Protagonist

In the narrative of Tigreal from the Mastery Code in Mobile Legends: Bang-Bang, the element of Affect plays a significant role in enhancing his characterization as a heroic protagonist. As the greatest knight of the Moniyan Empire, Tigreal is renowned not only for his combat prowess but also for his high moral values, courage, and self-sacrifice. The detailed description of his role and attributes offers insight into how emotions portrayed in the narrative – such as security, happiness, and insecurity – contribute to depicting Tigreal as a strong and dependable figure.

This analysis focuses on Chapter 4: Implosion, exploring how the element of Affect supports various aspects of Tigreal's characterization, including Moral Integrity, Courage & Bravery, Self-Sacrifice, Skill & Strength, Resilience, and Empathy & Compassion. Through this emotional dimension, Tigreal emerges not only as a powerful warrior but also as a character with depth, embodying qualities that inspire trust and admiration from players.

Chapter 4: Implosion

Tigreal has been a faithful believer in the Lord of Light since he was young, he had absolute faith and swore that he would become a member of the Chivalric Order. He dedicated all his time to training and is very strict on himself. His father used to be Tigreal's mentor in the Chivalric Order and Tigreal didn't let him down, he invented signature move 'Implosion', his most used skill in battle; when his sword hits the ground, his opponents would be on the verge of surrendering.

In Chapter 4: Implosion, several phrases reflect the element of Affect, contributing significantly to Tigreal's characterization. First, the phrase, "Tigreal has been a faithful believer in the Lord of Light since he was young," evokes a sense of security (trust) by portraying his deep commitment and loyalty to the Lord of Light. This unwavering belief strengthens Tigreal's identity as a hero and instills a sense of safety and assurance among his followers.

The statement, "he had absolute faith and swore that he would become a member of the Chivalric Order," expresses happiness in the forms of cheer and affection. It reflects the joy and fulfillment Tigreal finds in pursuing his calling as a knight, embodying his aspirations and dedication. Furthermore, the sentence, "His father used to be Tigreal's mentor in the Chivalric Order, and Tigreal didn't let him down," highlights both security (trust) and happiness (affection), emphasizing the bond between Tigreal and his father. His determination to meet his father's expectations reflects his strong desire to honor his family's legacy.

Thus, the affective elements within Chapter 4 reinforce Tigreal's characterization as a protagonist with Moral Integrity and Resilience. His loyalty to the Lord of Light and his commitment to not disappointing his father present him as a devoted, resilient, and compassionate hero. These affective components add depth to Tigreal's character, making him more relatable and inspiring for players and fans.

In addition to Tigreal, another notable protagonist in Mobile Legends is Harley. Harley, a young, gifted mage from the Magical City, is known not only for his mastery of magic but also for his close relationships with others, especially

Lesley. His adventurous life, as depicted across several chapters of his Mastery Code, showcases strong emotions, revealing that Harley is not just an intelligent magician but also a character with complex emotional dimensions. One of the most prominent chapters in illustrating Affect is Chapter 2: Brotherhood. This chapter highlights the emotional connections Harley forms, adding another layer to his character beyond his magical prowess.

Chapter 2: Brotherhood

Task Target: Fight alongside Lesley and win a match. Complete 1 such matches.

Harley is the only heir to the Vance family. Lesley's father was appointed to ensure the safety of the entire family, and during an assassination attempt Lesley rescued Harley and became his savior. To thank her, Harley's father left Harley in Lesley's care. Harley's naughty and playful personality combined with his talent for magic often led to chaos in the house, but whenever he heard his sister's name he would run in fear. Lesley decided from that day on that she would secretly watch over Harley and protect him.

In this chapter, the narrative describes how Harley was saved by Lesley from an assassination attempt, establishing a deep emotional bond between them. Harley, known for his mischievous and playful use of magic, suddenly becomes fearful whenever he hears Lesley's name. The phrase, "whenever he heard his sister's name, he would run in fear," indicates that, despite his usual confidence, Harley feels fear and submission in Lesley's presence. This fear reflects not only Lesley's authority but also her hidden affection as his protector. Beneath that fear lies a sense of security, as Harley knows that Lesley is always quietly watching over him, fostering a relationship built on trust and affection.

On the other hand, Chapter 4: Deadly Magic also conveys elements of affection, though in a more subtle way. This chapter continues to explore Harley's emotional journey, revealing that even through challenges, he finds comfort in his connections. The complex interplay of fear, trust, and affection adds layers to Harley's character, making his relationship with Lesley not only protective but also deeply meaningful. Here is the content of Chapter 4:

Chapter 4: Deadly Magic

Task Target: Slay enemies with Explosive Damage of Deadly Magic. Complete it 20 times.

During his time in Eruditio, the brave and energetic Harley earned the affection of Dr. Rooney and met new friends like Lolita, Bruno, Alpha and Saber. They accompanied him back to Magical City, and with their help he defeated the Dark Wizards with a Fire Ring made of Deadly Magic. During the battle he also destroyed the core of Demorte, the leader of the Dark Wizards.

While in Eruditio, Harley not only acquired new abilities but also gained love and support from new friends like Dr. Rooney, Lolita, Bruno, Alpha, and Saber. The phrase "the brave and energetic Harley earned the affection of Dr. Rooney" illustrates how Harley experienced warmth and acceptance from those around him, emphasizing the importance of emotional connections in his life journey.

Overall, Harley's story is not just about magical powers and battles but also about the emotional bonds he forms with those around him. Chapter Brotherhood and Deadly Magic highlight how fear, affection, and trust play crucial roles in shaping Harley's character, making him a figure of both emotional depth and extraordinary talent.

In Chapter 4: Deadly Magic, affect is evident in Harley's relationships with Dr. Rooney and his new friends, demonstrating the elements of affection and trust in Harley's characterization. Harley earns the affection of Dr. Rooney and others, such as Lolita, Bruno, Alpha, and Saber, during his time in Eruditio. These bonds reflect how, despite his energetic and mischievous nature, Harley is able to forge meaningful connections with those around him.

The trust that develops between Harley and his friends becomes apparent when they face the Dark Wizards together. This mutual trust is essential in building a strong team and enables Harley to lead them in critical battles. Through these emotional relationships, Harley's character emerges not just as a talented young wizard but as a leader who inspires and connects deeply with those around him.

From the perspective of protagonist hero characterization, these emotional relationships strengthen Harley's qualities of Empathy & Compassion. Despite his young age, Harley demonstrates the ability to build meaningful and affectionate bonds with others, which ultimately aids him in the battle against evil. Harley's bravery also reflects Courage & Bravery, as he not only relies on his own strength but draws motivation from his emotional connections with his friends to fight against Demorte and the Dark Wizards.

With the support of his friends and the emotional encouragement they provide, Harley successfully destroys Demorte's core using the Fire Ring imbued with Deadly Magic. This highlights the crucial role of affection and trust in the battles he faces, showcasing that Harley's strength lies not only in his magic but also in the powerful relationships he nurtures.

Overall, Chapter 4: Deadly Magic not only portrays Harley as a powerful sorcerer but also as a protagonist with deep emotional connections to those around him. The affection he receives and the trust he builds with his friends reinforce Harley's position as a hero who fights not only with physical strength but also with his heart and emotions.

2) The Role of Judgment in Supporting the Characterization of the Hero Protagonist.

The judgment system plays a crucial role in supporting the characterization of protagonist heroes in a game by providing a foundation for the development of complex and nuanced characters. One example is the hero Miya in Mobile Legends. Through the judgment system, players can evaluate the actions, choices, and roles of the hero within the story, ultimately enriching the characterization of the protagonist. This judgment supports various aspects of characterization, such as Moral Integrity, which presents Miya as a figure who always acts rightly; Courage & Bravery, evident in her willingness to face challenges; Self-Sacrifice, demonstrated by her willingness to sacrifice for the

good of the team; Skill & Strength, reflecting her expertise in combat; Resilience, shown in her determination in the face of defeat; and Empathy & Compassion, highlighting her care for others. All these aspects make Miya more than just a fictional character; she becomes a heroic symbol that resonates with players.

Chapter 1: Moon Priestess

A silvery moon hangs high in the sky, and all is tranquil in the forest. Miya strides leisurely through the trees, enjoying the brief peace that follows the fierce flames of battle. She passes an elf, who calls out in greeting: "Priestess! Will you be reciting your prayers again today?" The elves who witnessed her younger years are long gone. Her elder brother, the King of the Moon Elves, remains deep in his slumber. Miya, the Moon Priestess who stands before the elves today is their leader, responsible for the entire Moonlit Forest. For only moonlight may form her shimmering veil.

In the chapter "Moon Priestess," Miya's character as a protagonist hero is depicted through several judgments that shape her characterization. Miya is portrayed as a leader with high Moral Integrity, shouldering the significant responsibility of protecting the Moonlit Forest. This role highlights her unwavering dedication to the welfare and well-being of her community. As a spiritual leader, Miya routinely offers prayers, indicating her commitment to maintaining the morality and spirituality of her people.

The judgment system also reveals Miya's Courage & Bravery, reflected in how she enjoys the tranquility after battles, which were previously marked by the "fierce flames of battle." This illustrates her courage and resilience in facing danger, as Miya remains calm and steadfast in the aftermath of conflict. Furthermore, Miya's role as the Moon Priestess embodies the aspect of Self-Sacrifice, where she sacrifices her personal comfort to fulfill her duties as a leader responsible for the well-being of her entire community.

Miya's leadership also showcases remarkable Skill & Strength, as she is not only respected by her people but also viewed as someone with exceptional abilities in protecting her community. This resilience is further reflected in the fact that her brother, the King of the Moon Elves, remains in a deep slumber, leaving Miya to bear the burden of leadership alone. Despite this challenge, she presses forward without hesitation, demonstrating mental fortitude and resilience in the face of adversity.

Lastly, the judgment system also highlights Miya's Empathy & Compassion, evident in her interactions with the elves who greet her with great respect. Miya leads not only with strength but also with gentleness and concern for the emotional well-being of her people. The prayers she offers reflect her care for them, making her a leader who is both strong and nurturing.

Overall, the judgments present in Miya's mastery code point to several key categories: Moral Integrity, Courage & Bravery, Self-Sacrifice, Skill & Strength, Resilience, and Empathy & Compassion. Each of these categories contributes to shaping Miya's characterization as a strong, empathetic, and courageous hero protagonist.

Chapter 1: To be a Killer

Task Target: Accumulate 15 Kills of enemies.

Because of the misfortunes in the family, Lesley grew up to become a merciless killer. Her father died in an attempt to protect Harley's family. As the assailants approached the Vance household, Lesley leapt out from the corner, took her father's black long rifle and finished off her late father's mission. The tears rolling down her cheeks didn't stop her from pulling the trigger, each shot taking down one enemy. She would not stop shooting until all her enemies fell down.

In Lesley's mastery code, various phrases and sentences reflect the judgment system that supports her characterization as a complex hero protagonist. The phrase "Lesley grew up to become a merciless killer" falls under the category of Moral Integrity. Although she becomes a ruthless figure, her actions are driven by loss and her efforts to protect her family, indicating a strong moral foundation even within the context of revenge. The sentence "Her father died in an attempt to protect Harley's family" also belongs to the category of Moral Integrity, illustrating that her father's sacrifice to safeguard another family serves as a moral foundation for Lesley's actions. This creates a hero protagonist character who continues her father's legacy.

Lesley's courage is depicted in the sentence "Lesley leapt out from the corner, took her father's black long rifle, and finished off her late father's mission," which fits into the category of Courage & Bravery. This phrase shows that Lesley bravely confronts direct danger and takes over her father's mission with strong determination, reinforcing her characterization as a daring hero. Her mental toughness is evident in the sentence "The tears rolling down her cheeks didn't stop her from pulling the trigger," which reflects Resilience. Despite being overwhelmed with emotion, Lesley remains focused on her mission, demonstrating her emotional resilience as a tough hero.

Finally, the phrase "She would not stop shooting until all her enemies fell down" reflects Skill & Strength, where Lesley continues to fight until all her foes are defeated. This demonstrates her combat expertise and strength as an unrelenting warrior, reinforcing her characterization as a figure with extraordinary fighting abilities. Overall, this judgment system portrays Lesley as a hero protagonist shaped by morality, courage, resilience, and strength, making her a powerful yet deeply emotional character.

3) The Role of Appreciation in Supporting the Characterization of the Hero Protagonist.

Appreciation, as part of the Attitude system within Appraisal theory, plays a crucial role in evaluating the quality, consistency, and significance of the protagonist's actions or experiences. In a narrative, Appreciation not only highlights aesthetic or functional aspects but also provides social and emotional meaning that strengthens the hero protagonist's characterization. Positive evaluations of the protagonist's bravery, strength, resilience, and empathy help construct the image of a hero who is not only physically capable but also morally upright and compassionate toward others. Thus, Appreciation plays a vital role in reinforcing characteristics such as Moral Integrity, Courage, Self-Sacrifice,

Skill, Resilience, and Empathy, making the hero protagonist a well-rounded and inspiring figure within the story. The following is an example of data taken from Chapter 4 of the mastery code for the hero protagonist, Benedetta:

Chapter 4: Peerless Shadow

Task Target: Get 3 Maniac in total.

One day, Benedetta ran across and saved a ranger squad who was in the middle of a fight against the monsters. During the campaign, Benedetta was infected by their optimism and toughness and established friendship and trust with them. Afterward, Benedetta chose to stay. One by one, the monsters across the entire region of the Rantha Mountains' southern foothills were defeated by Benedetta and her comrades. She would take back her glory here.

The text clearly reflects the hero protagonist's characterization through elements such as Moral Integrity, Courage, Self-Sacrifice, Skill, Resilience, and Empathy. First, Moral Integrity is evident from Benedetta's decision to stay and continue fighting the monsters alongside the ranger squad. This choice demonstrates her moral commitment to protect and serve, even though she was not obliged to do so. Second, Courage & Bravery are shown through her willingness to face danger without hesitation, as described in the narrative where she and her team defeat the monsters one by one throughout the mountain region.

Next, the element of Self-Sacrifice appears in her decision to abandon personal ambitions and join the ranger squad, prioritizing the needs of the team and community over her own interests. Additionally, Skill & Strength are reflected in her success in defeating the monsters, emphasizing her physical and mental abilities in battle. Resilience is demonstrated by her capacity to endure and keep fighting amidst ongoing challenges, showing her strong determination to achieve her goals.

Finally, Empathy & Compassion are seen in how Benedetta builds friendships and trust with the ranger squad, indicating her concern for others and her ability to form deep emotional connections. Thus, Benedetta's characterization as a hero protagonist is not only grounded in physical strength and bravery but also in moral values and empathy, making her a complete and inspiring hero figure.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research reveals that various attitudes—such as moral integrity, courage, self-sacrifice, skill, resilience, empathy, and compassion—play significant roles in shaping hero characterization across different narrative stages. The data shows that Skill & Strength stands out as the most dominant attribute, particularly in the initial introduction and description of the skill phases, where it scores 10. This dominance indicates that the narrative construction in Mobile Legends emphasizes the heroes' abilities and combat prowess, reflecting the expectations of the MOBA genre that prioritize performance and power in gameplay.

Several heroes from the research—Alucard, Benedetta, and Zilong—align closely with the findings, as they embody high skill and strength. Alucard, with

his life-steal ability and burst damage, exemplifies a fighter who thrives in duels, making him a central character. Similarly, Zilong's exceptional speed and spear mastery highlight both combat skill and courage, while Benedetta's agility and precision reflect her role as an assassin with strong offensive potential. On the other hand, heroes like Gatotkaca stand out for their resilience and self-sacrifice, absorbing damage to protect teammates. These qualities align with moral integrity and bravery, emphasizing the importance of defense and teamwork. Additionally, characters like Guinevere and Miya convey empathy and noble intentions, balancing their combat roles with emotional and narrative depth.

The MOBA genre plays a crucial role in shaping the characterization of these heroes. Since the genre revolves around teamwork, strategy, and combat, the narrative naturally prioritizes traits like skill, strength, and bravery. However, the inclusion of emotional elements such as resilience and empathy adds layers of depth to the characters, making them more engaging and memorable. This study demonstrates that the interplay between genre and attitude not only determines the functional roles of heroes in gameplay but also enriches their narrative identities. As a result, Mobile Legends succeeds in building protagonist heroes who are both mechanically powerful and emotionally compelling, ensuring a more immersive and enjoyable player experience.

ADVANCE RESEARCH

This study explores the dynamic interplay between hero characterization and gameplay mechanics in Mobile Legends, examining how attributes such as skill, strength, resilience, empathy, and moral integrity shape both the functional roles and narrative depth of its heroes. Through a detailed analysis, it is revealed that while attributes like combat prowess and performance—particularly skill and strength—dominate the early stages of character introduction, qualities such as resilience, self-sacrifice, and empathy add significant emotional layers, enriching the players' experience. The findings highlight how the MOBA genre, with its emphasis on teamwork and combat, influences the depiction of heroes, but also demonstrates how deeper emotional elements enhance the narrative complexity of the characters. This research contributes to a broader understanding of how genre conventions, character attributes, and emotional dimensions intersect in video game storytelling, making heroes not only effective in gameplay but also memorable and engaging within the game's universe.

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