# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

**Tactical Role-Playing Game**, abbreviated as TRPG, is a video game genre which mixes the Role-Playing genre with a tactical Strategy gameplay. This genre is more famously known as Simulation Role-Playing Game (SRPG) in Japan, where the genre's popularity is quite high [1], and most of the famous games of this genre are produced from the country, such as Fire Emblem, Final Fantasy Tactics, and Super Robot Wars.

Because the gameplay also mostly features change of turns between the player and the opponent, it may mistakenly lead some people into thinking that the genre is just the same as *Turn-Based Strategy*, which is a broader game genre that also encompasses other games which may not fit into this genre, such as Civilization. The features that distinguish this genre from Turn-Based Strategy are that it is more story-driven, and the player progresses from one stage to another in different maps rather than having one big world.

The most prominent gameplay elements present in the TRPG genre include but are not limited to the following: *Unit classes* -each with different stats and affinities-, *unit placements and movements* within the map, and the *combat system*. All of these mentioned features could be implemented with simple computer algorithms, especially the combat system, which is based on probability in most games and thus will often utilize a *random number generator*.

Due to the aforementioned statement, it should be possible to create a basic framework in form of a *game development tool* for the genre which includes these algorithms, so people who want to make TRPG games could use the tool for most of the algorithms and then provide their own materials for the graphics, audio and others.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

While many other genres already have solid frameworks in sophisticated development tools, such as the traditional Role-Playing Game genre with RPG Maker and the Fighting genre with M.U.G.E.N engine, the Tactical RPG genre seems to have yet to receive one.

Actually there had been an existing decent tool for this genre called *Sim RPG Maker 95*, however as the name implies (95), this tool is already too outdated as well as having a number of inflexible limitations such as the graphics type [2]. And no new version of the tool has been published yet, leaving the limitations unaddressed.

## 1.3 Scope

Because this genre is also one of the author's most favorite game genres, the author would like to observe the *methods of constructing a framework of the TRPG genre*, where most of the game algorithms like damage calculation and random number generator are already provided, and users will only have to input some game parameters as well as providing their own assets such as images and sound files, of course with less restrictions on the asset types.

The framework could be then *expanded into a Game Maker-like program*, complete with user interface. In order to make this expansion, an *observation of existing game maker programs like RPG Maker* would have to be done beforehand.

However for the sake of simplicity, while TRPG games also have events within the stages, this framework design would mostly encompass only the *basic gameplay algorithms* that are mostly already mentioned above.

### 1.4 Aims and Benefits

By constructing a design of this framework, hopefully it will help the author as well as other people interested in the Tactical RPG genre to *understand and further explore the gameplay system and algorithms* behind the games of this genre.

Another aim of this project would be to further *promote the Tactical RPG genre*. If a concrete prototype such as a game maker program could be produced, it can be even more beneficial as it will be able to *assist people in creating their own games in this Tactical RPG genre*.

And finally, with this thesis project hopefully it will further *improve the game development processes in this country, Indonesia*. As the project is made in Indonesia, hopefully it will attract local people who want to make games into the game development society in Indonesia.

## 1.5 Structures

The first chapter here has introduced the general idea of this thesis, and the next chapter, Theoritical Foundations, will explain more about the terms mentioned in detail, including the Tactical RPG genre and its gameplay features.

In the Third Chapter: Problem Analysis, the author will analyze some of the game development tools that will be closely related to the projected design of the tool. In Chapter Four: System Design, diagrams which relate to the project tool and/or the TRPG gameplay system will be shown and explained in detail.

In the chapter after that, Chapter Five, the process of the attempt to create the project prototype will be explained, as well as the testing process of the prototype. And in the next one – Chapter Six, The results of the prototype testing will be used as reflections for finding out weaknesses on the prototype as well as ways to fix them in the future.

And last but not least, the final Chapter Seven will conclude the thesis with summarizing things that may have been learned from this thesis as well as giving recommendations for the future of the new tool, TRPG genre exposure, and game development in general.