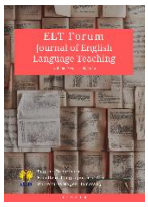
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Translanguaging practices among bilingual multiplayer online battle arena players in Indonesia

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Abstract

MOBA matches leave players little time to conjugate instructions, although team talk must still do both tactical and interpersonal work. This qualitative case study examined how 15 bilingual or multilingual Indonesian players drew on Indonesian, English, and regional-language resources while playing Mobile Legends: Bang Bang and Honor of Kings. The data comprised participant observation, recordings of naturally occurring voice communication, field notes, and brief semi-structured interviews. Three reoccurring applications of translanguaging were found via an iterative thematic analysis. Players used Indonesian commands and common English game phrases to coordinate action swiftly. They utilised slang, compliments and certain terms from regional languages to establish connection. They employed comfort, apologies and redirection to de-escalate tension following errors or disputes. In the observed matches, mixed-language utterances were therefore tied to specific moments and communicative needs, rather than appearing as arbitrary switches between named languages. MOBA play is presented as a platform that reports on multilingual digital interaction and the context-sensitive use of English in out-of-school settings.

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INTRODUCTION

Online multiplayer games are commonly viewed as a form of entertainment, but they also provide a valuable setting for studying language use. Players who may be strangers to each other have to read the map, take control of a character, and work with a team, usually within seconds. In the case of Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) games like Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (MLBB) and Honor of Kings (HoK) these elements play out very clearly. In-game communication is used to exchange tactical information, build trust, demonstrate skills, and handle disagreements.

This study examines how language choices are made within the framework of translanguaging. Blingual and multilingual speakers do not use separate and distinct language systems but instead put together an integrated set of linguistic resources which they use to create meaning (García Li, 2014; Li, 2018). From this perspective, speakers may select linguistic resources that best fit a particular interaction instead of moving entirely back and forth between Indonesian and English (Poza, 2017).

Bilingual and multilingual speakers do not use different language systems, but a mixed repertory to express their intended meaning (García Li, 2014; Li, 2018). Also, in this what we could think of as a switch between languages we observe instead a speaker who chooses from a variety of linguistic features what is optimal for the present interaction instead of entirely switching back and forth between Indonesian and English (Poza, 2017).

This problem is quite important in MOBA games. Players are able to employ a mixture of Javanese particles, English technical terminology, Indonesian syntax, and map related aspects. It's not only what is stated but how a statement works in a certain gaming setting that counts.

This tendency is seen in the case of both MLBB and HoK. Words such as push, gank, flank, mid, roam, recall and objective pepper player interactions, tutorials, live broadcasts and gameplay interfaces. The Indonesian gamers employ this terminology with instructions such as maju, awas, mundur, gas, jangan war dulu, and bantu turtle. The outcome is a gaming lexicon that local gamers are quick to recognise.

It's more than simply a desire for brevity here. The player may see the opponent's actions while placing their character and decide to attack a target. Even if the instructions are grammatically accurate, they lose their significance if they come too late. A simple and fast combo may tell the direction, the intent and the urgency all at once. Short communication is the key to team play.

This common word has social importance. "Team spirit is very important during the match, especially since MOBA teams are often composed of players who have never met each other before. In a common tongue, "nice combo," "my bad," or "stay calm, we can turn this around" help to communicate thanks, ease tension, or create a feeling of community. Code-mixing allows players to position themselves as both skilled players and helpful teammates.

Exchanges don't necessarily enhance relationships. The anger, accusations, insults and harassment that players face in competitive virtual games may influence their involvement and willingness to interact (Fox & Tang, 2017; Kordyaka et al., 2023). Players may reassure teammates, defuse tension, or redirect attention to the game through multilingual exchanges. For certain Indonesian players, English expressions like *it's okay, don't mind,* and *focus on the objective* can accomplish this, however their efficacy varies depending on the particular relationship and interaction.

Classrooms, social media, and other multilingual groups have been the subject of translanguaging research (García & Sylvan, 2011; Poza, 2017; Rauteda, 2024; Shalihah, 2024). Less focus has been placed on real-time competitive games, especially when it comes to linguistic communication in Indonesian MOBA games. This disparity is important since a single game incorporates emotional pressure, transient social relationships, and strategic coordination into a single, short exchange.

MOBA additionally, a voice chat is different from the situations that are most commonly covered in this literature. While social media communication usually gives time to formulate responses, classroom conversations are structured by educational aims and generally defined roles. In a game, quick visual and motor decisions are performed concurrently with language decisions. In addition to being timely and understandable, meaningful remarks must also exhibit enough cooperation to allow the team to move forward.

Against this background, the present study examines naturally occurring voice communication among Indonesian players in MLBB and HoK. It relates recurring mixed-language forms to three domains that emerged from the data: tactical coordination, group affiliation, and the

management of stress or toxicity. Attention to Indonesian, English, and occasional regional-language resources also shows how globally circulating game terms are taken up within a local player community.

The study was guided by a question: What uses of translanguaging occur in multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) games?

Accordingly, the study aims to identify and interpret how bilingual Indonesian MOBA players use their linguistic repertoires for tactical work, social identification, and the handling of stressful or toxic interaction.

METHODS

A qualitative case study design was used to examine language as it occurred within a bounded setting: bilingual Indonesian players communicating during MLBB and HoK matches. The design made it possible to interpret each utterance alongside the gameplay event and the participants' own explanations, rather than separating the words from the situation in which they were produced (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

A recruitment call posted on social media in Indonesia resulted in a group of 15 participants. out of these participants, 10 regularly played MLBB and 5 played HoK. To be part of this study, the players required to play at least 3 hours a week and also be fluent in at least two languages which they identified as a bilingual or multilingual player. These criteria were used to recruit players who were familiar with MOBA gameplay and its typical communication patterns.

Participant research which included field notes from the researcher and audio from sessions of the game. Also, each subject played for 15 to 20 minutes in a match. The researcher took part in Support or Tank roles which was done to not disrupt the teams' usual strategies. In game chat was captured using Discord for dialogue. Field notes documented team actions, mistakes, and moments of tension from the draft-pick phase to the end of each match. The interview questions were developed based on the research question. Participants were asked how they dealt with conflicts within teams, why they used certain expressions, and at what point they felt at ease with a mixed approach.

An iterative theme analysis based on Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to transcribe and analyze the audio. The translanguaging approach, which sees multilingual materials as an integrated repertoire, was also incorporated into this analysis (García & Li, 2014; Li, 2018). This combination offered a conceptual foundation for comprehending multilingual forms and allowed for the open coding of patterns within the data.

Reading the transcripts and field notes several times was the first step in the study. The researcher coded each contribution's purpose within its environment after identifying contributions that mixed Indonesian, English, regional languages, gaming jargon, or colloquial terms. The categories of tactical efficiency, group identity, and management of stress or toxicity were eventually formed from related codes. In addition to game context which also when available we included player comments from interviews in the assignment of functions to contributions.

To review the interpretations the researcher went over transcripts with field notes and interview accounts and also kept analytic notes of coding choices. This was of great importance because the researcher was a part of the field. Usernames and account identifiers were removed which is what the excerpts below present

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Across the 15 recorded games, translanguaging was used in three main ways: to communicate tactical information, index a shared gamer identity, and help players manage stressful or toxic situations. These are put into categories of analysis which are not exclusive of each other; the same play could for example direct the team and show off familiarity at the same time.

Table 1. Uses of translanguaging in MOBA gameplay

Use	Description	Common linguistic forms
Translanguaging for tactical efficiency	Players combined language resources to communicate strategy quickly under time pressure.	English gaming terms, Indonesian directives, and short hybrid commands.

Use	Description	Common linguistic forms
Translanguaging as group identity	Players used mixed languages to express humor, closeness, praise, and team belonging.	Indonesian slang, English praise, local language insertions, and casual gamer expressions.
Translanguaging to manage stress and toxicity	Players shifted languages to soften tone, reduce conflict, reassure teammates, or disengage from hostile interaction.	Polite English phrases, mitigated Indonesian forms, calming expressions, and distancing phrases.

Table 1 provides an overview of the three categories, the interactional problem addressed by each one, and the forms most often associated with it. The categories were derived from what the utterances accomplished in context, not from the presence of a particular English or Indonesian word.

Table 2. Examples of translanguaging practices in gameplay data

Use category	No.	Utterance	Linguistic form	Use or function
Tactical efficiency	1	*Gas mid, push towernya.*	Indonesian slang + English gaming terms	Gives a fast offensive command and identifies the lane objective.
Tactical efficiency	2	*Flank bawah.*	English game term + Indonesian directional marker	Warns teammates about an incoming threat quickly.
Tactical efficiency	3	*Jangan war dulu, skill cd.*	Indonesian directive + English game term	Prevents premature fighting and explains the tactical reason.
Tactical efficiency	4	*Wait low, setup lord.*	English gaming terms + Indonesian-influenced syntax	Coordinates temporary retreat and team regrouping.
Tactical efficiency	5	*Open turtle, zoning dulu.*	English gaming terms + Indonesian structure	Coordinates movement toward an objective and assigns temporary roles.
Tactical efficiency	6	*Split push aja mm, jangan ikut war.*	English gaming terms + Indonesian directive	Gives lane strategy but also out of team fights.
Tactical efficiency	7	*Belum ada ulti, mundur.*	Gaming abbreviation + Indonesian directive	Reports on cooldown status and puts forth better positioning.
Group identity marker	1	*Nice kita ada chemistry ya!*	English evaluation terms + Indonesian clause and pragmatic particle	Puts forward team player success and also increases team cohesion.
Group identity marker	2	*Damagenya sakit banget anjir.*	English game term + Indonesian slang	Displays playfulness in admiration.
Group identity marker	3	*Gila, ga nyangka bisa comeback epic banget.*	Indonesian slang + English gaming term	Marks a group achievement and heightens group emotion.
Group identity marker	4	*Mantap Flo, clutch.*	Indonesian praise + player name + English gaming term	Recognizes a team member's contribution via a shared game log.

Use category	No.	Utterance	Linguistic form	Use or function
Group identity marker	5	*Ojo, enek Saber ning bush kono.*	Javanese structure + character name + English game term	Uses local expressions while warning a teammate.
Group identity marker	6	*Woi, nice combo banget.*	Indonesian address term + English game term + Indonesian intensifier	Signals which teams are working well together.
Stress and toxicity management	1	*Santai, bisa comeback.*	Indonesian reassurance + English gaming term	Reduces stress after a mistake and improves morale.
Stress and toxicity management	2	*Jangan ditanggapin, fokus objective aja.*	Indonesian directive + English game term	Reduces conflict and refocuses on strategy.
Stress and toxicity management	3	*Sorry, cover mm ya.*	English apology and game term + Indonesian pragmatic particle	Takes responsibility for and repairs team interaction.
Stress and toxicity management	4	*Don't mind, nanti aku rotasi.*	English reassurance + Indonesian support statement	Reduces frustration and provides practical support.
Stress and toxicity management	5	*Jangan blame.*	Indonesian directive + English verb	Discourages blaming.
Stress and toxicity management	6	*Gapapa, play safe ya.*	Indonesian reassurance + English game term and instruction	Maintains team balance while putting forth a safer option.
Stress and toxicity management	7	*Halah, mute ae toxic.*	Indonesian/Javanese discourse markers + English game terms	Encourages detachment from aggressive interaction and return to focus.

Note: cd = cooldown, mm = marksman.

Table 2 reports on which the categories are based in the collected data. We present the same information in a very close to as-is form which includes features like slangs, particles, and game terms which were present in the actual play. What these combinations did at that time is reported in the following sections.

Translanguaging for tactical efficiency.

Strategic decisions become most evident when lane conditions, the enemy's posture, cooldowns, or game objectives change. During these moments, players do not have the time to provide comprehensive explanations or seek approval from their teammates but can instead make short comments with meanings easily understood by their teammates due to their knowledge of the map, the interface, and the game.

Examples of these types of statements include: *Gas mid, push tower; Flank bawah; Jangan war dulu, skill cd; Wait low, set up Lord; Open Turtle, Zoning dulu; Split push aja mm, jangan ikut war;* and *Belum ada ulti, mundur*. Each call gives the team instructions that can be implemented right away, despite differences in terminology and grammar. While common English phrases denote lanes, objectives, ability status, or tactical actions, Indonesian instructions guide the gameplay.

Gas mid, push towernya is a concise tactical statement. In Indonesian game lingo, *push towernya* denotes the goal, *mid* denotes the area of the action, and *gas* demands quick response. This statement captures urgency, direction, and purpose much more succinctly than a detailed explanation of the same strategy would; it is not a literal translation from one language to another.

A comparable expression can be found in *Flank bawah*. *Flank* implies a clear tactical threat, whereas *bawah* suggests direction. The meaning is not fully conveyed by *bawah* or *Flank* alone. They

inform teammates to the anticipated direction of an attack when paired with enemy activity that is visible on the map.

Participants stated that they regularly came across English terminology including *push, roam, recall, cooldown,* and *objective*, which can be found in player manuals, tutorials, live streams, and user interfaces. This finding is consistent with Thorne et al. (2012)'s description of online games as a semiotic ecology that includes player conversation, in-game text, and out-of-game resources. The terminology utilized in these matches has been acquired and standardized in a number of related contexts.

The interpretation of these mixed-language practices as part of a shared linguistic repertoire is further supported by tactical data (García & Li, 2014). Instead of mixing linguistic forms for show, players choose combinations that their teammates can easily identify. Rather than whether a remark stays within the bounds of a particular language, communicative effectiveness in game scenarios is determined by the team's ability to react promptly.

However, there is a general division of labor. English supplies the majority of game-specific language, while Indonesian typically communicates directions and attitudes. Although this distribution is fluid rather than rigid, it results in regionally understandable expressions like *skill cd* and *jangan war dulu*. The common MOBA register found in this study is in keeping with the broader description of online gaming as an interest-based community where language use and sociability develop thru engagement (Thorne et al., 2009).

Although the usefulness of this repertoire can be partly attributed to time pressure, coordination involves more than just speed. These actions necessitate a mutual understanding of roles, map locations, and possible follow-up actions. The analysis of multiplayer game interactions by Peterson (2012) further shows that task-related support functions work within the framework of cooperative social relationships. In this context, brief commands work well since teammates can place them within the context of the ongoing shared activity.

The focus of this is different from that of the majority of studies on classroom translanguaging. The technique is frequently explored in relation to learning, comprehension, and involvement in educational settings. These passages emphasize a more urgent need: formulation must happen early enough to affect the next move, even tho these functions can also be important in gaming. Thus, it is better to think of tactical efficiency as the outcome of exact timing, common game knowledge, and linguistic flexibility.

Translanguaging as a marker of group identity

As soon as the current tactical pressure fades, their tone changes. Players employ mixed-language banter to compliment and tease one another after a successful fight, a successful combo, or an unexpected error, bridging social gaps. In these situations, the main purpose of translanguaging is to promote teamwork rather than to provide instructions.

Nice, kita ada chemistry ya!; Damagenya sakit banget anjir; Gila, ga nyangka bisa comeback epic banget; *Mantap Flo, clutch*; *Ojo, enek Saber ning bush kono*; and *Woi, nice combo banget* are the six quotes in this category. Even tho each quotation uses gaming jargon, the praise or humor has a unique local flavor due to the addition of Indonesian slang, addresses, particles, and occasionally Javanese idioms.

Nice kita ada chemistry ya!, refers to the perceived coordination between teammates, whereas *nice* assesses the gameplay. This evaluation is changed into an inclusive invitation by the use of Indonesian and the particle *ya* at the end of the sentence. The speaker recognizes the team's successful cooperation and asks other players to agree.

Damagenya sakit banget anjir has a specific purpose. The phrases *sakit banget* and *anjir* heighten the response, while the English noun *damage* is combined with the Indonesian suffix *-nya*. Although the comment describes how a gamer plays, the dramatic choice of words causes the message to resemble a friendly praise rather than an accurate measurement of attack strength. Many people believe that informal Indonesian speech style combined with knowledge of the match is demonstrated through such written statements. In this expression, clear gaming experience is shown by the speaker because casual communication patterns are utilized.

Local language expressions provide extra connection between group members. When looking at the Javanese phrase *Ojo, enek Saber ning bush kono*, the English gaming word *bush* is joined together with the character name *Saber*. Warnings of this type are understood as funny or friendly by

teammates who share cultural background while tactical importance remains preserved. By using one short message, group safety is enhanced while cultural identity is expressed simultaneously.

Since a MOBA team often participates in single matches together, establishing group understanding becomes essential. They found that having a common lexicon allowed participants to establish confidence quickly, even if the members of the group were strangers. To understand particular words like combination, comeback, gank or gas, a player may employ typical strategy talks since active involvement is essential in match communication. "Active play is a shared language that fosters strong team bonds.

This approach does not see identity as a property that a speaker simply presents. Many feel that personal identity is constructed in a process of constant social contact when people talk inside gaming communities. Language positions and styles indicate social positioning in relation to others (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). The results imply that this hybrid gaming approach enabled the participants to be part of a gaming culture while keeping their social identity as Indonesian peers. This article contributes to identity-based explanations of translanguaging practices (e.g., Li, 2018; Poza, 2017).

The interview helped explain why this is the preferred strategy. The English gaming phrases seemed more natural, since they were already needed for the flow of the game. Many participants thought that purely formal Indonesian was too restrictive for gaming. Thus, their hybrid style was a register choice, suitable for a relaxed situation where rapport, competence and humour were negotiated, not a lack of vocabulary.

According to Steinkuehler (2006) playing multiplayer video games is like partaking in a conversation, in which speech patterns are bound by common conventions and frameworks of ownership. Even if the ad hoc teams seen here are smaller and have shorter life spans, the same notion applies: being able to convey jokes, cautions, and praise is a fundamental component of being able to participate. Translanguaging throughout the game leads to the creation of this feeling of ownership.

Thus, the mixing of English and Indonesian in the same utterance does not give any information about group identification. The social contrast that this combination conveys is what matters most. While Indonesian vernacular and regional variations anchor the conversation in a more personal relationship between peers, English game terminology connect the speakers to a transnational gaming register. Their identity as gamers is revealed at this intersection.

Translanguaging to manage stress and toxicity

Errors, missed scoring opportunities, mutual blame, or indications of developing frustration among teammates all lead to the emergence of a third pattern. In response, players may offer words of support, offer an apology, or urge players to refocus. These measures can stop rising disagreements long enough for the team to resume play, even tho they do not completely remove competitive pressure.

Santai, bisa comeback; Jangan ditanggapin, fokus objective aja; Sorry, cover mm ya; Don't mind, nanti aku rotasi; Jangan blame; Gapapa, play safe ya; and *Halah, mute ae toxic* are some pertinent quotations. Some acknowledged their errors, some diverted focus, and still others suggested avoiding confrontational players. Their attempt to keep the gameplay from being overshadowed by the interaction was what brought them together.

Santai, bisa comeback first uses the Indonesian phrase *santai* to soothe the situation before using the word *comeback* to give this guarantee a game-related foundation. Instead of just saying, 'Calm down'; the message suggests that it is still possible to turn around a losing situation. Emotional support and tactical interpretation are merged in a single, brief message.

The speaker completes two tasks consecutively when they say, *Jangan ditanggapin, fokus objective aja*. *Fokus objective aja* offers a different approach, while *Jangan ditanggapin* forbids responding to critical remarks. Instead of just instructing everyone to stop fighting, the second section gives the team an option to focus on something else.

These examples of short English phrases such as *sorry, my bad,* and *play safe* are often cited by participants as been perceived less antagonistic than their direct Indonesian equivalent. But this is not evidence that English has an inherent nature of being more polite, it leaves a situational sense. For example, Dewaele (2004) found that emotional reactions to swearing vary according to the context and the linguistic background of multilingual speakers. In such a case, an English idiom could potentially create sufficient distance so that the apology does not feel too personal.

The need for such corrective actions is well-established in competitive team games. Although Kou (2020) demonstrated that toxic behavior in League of Legends was largely explained by both proximal and distal factors such as between-team conflict, team perception of defeat Kwak et al. (2015) found many problematic actions exist in competitive teams. This literature when coupled with some evidence for harassment eroding player experience and engagement (Fox & Tang, 2017; Kordyaka et al., 2023) gives weight to the reading that the above comments speak to real threats of interaction rather than trivial concerns over good manners.

These examples illustrate three recurring strategies used to manage tense interactions. *Sorry, cover mm ya*, an apology that both solicits assistance and takes partial blame. Such as *don't mind, nanti aku rotasi* is an example of a reassurance based on a tangible promise that coexists with emotional support. Instructive phrases like *play safe or fokus objective aja*, directs the team to practical next steps instead of laying blame. Multilingual formats are crucial, as they enable these tactics to be discrete & in the language styles well-known by the team.

It has been observed that this interpretation contains certain limitations. Efforts aimed at reducing conflict do not achieve success in every situation, and translanguaging cannot eliminate every insult. The effectiveness of this approach is influenced by the identity of the speaker, the severity of the disagreement, and the willingness of other individuals to cooperate. Many scholars believe that these results support a careful decision, showing that translanguaging functions as a helpful instrument for players, although bad behavior is not completely cured by it.

The scope of translanguaging is expanded within this context despite these obstacles. When players express their background or communicate facts, linguistic repertoires are also utilized by participants so that personal tension after a mistake can be managed. Emotion management becomes a part of the practical game as tactical success depends on ongoing cooperation.

The idea that in-game communication is invariably hostile is likewise refuted by the passage. The recording shows intentional attempts to apologize, diffuse the issue, and change the course of the conversation in addition to reciprocal blame and derogatory comments. These initiatives show that participants actively control their interactions by modifying their speech patterns and word choices to protect team dynamics and common objectives.

Translanguaging as a multipurpose tool

In general, rather than representing three distinct linguistic systems, these three categories indicate a flexible repertory. Depending on the demands of the game, a player may use them to communicate with teammates, coordinate moves, or settle disputes. The idea that translanguaging is a type of adaptive meaning-making is consistent with this context-sensitive usage (García & Li, 2014; Li, 2018).

Table 3 brings the categories back to the sequence of play by relating a recurring situation to the immediate communicative need, the dominant function of the utterance, and the likely team-level result.

Table 3. From the circumstances of the game to the communication's result.

Gameplay situation	Communication requirements	Translanguaging function	Team outcome
The opponent's path, target, or location can change quickly.	quick and accurate coordination.	Tactical efficiency	The players coordinated their moves with each other and responded fast.
An effective game or a productive exchange amongst unfamiliar teammates.	Acknowledgment and social ties	Group identity	The players form positive bonds with one another and grow to feel like they are a part of the team.

Gameplay situation	Communication requirements	Translanguaging function	Team outcome
Mistakes, mutual blame, or mounting frustration.	lowering stress and reestablishing communication.	Stress and toxicity management	Conflict faded and focus returned to the game's objective.

Rather than being a strict coding requirement, the table should be interpreted as a summary of tendencies. Coordination is typically emphasized by quick changes in the flow of interaction; a sense of belonging is created by successful plays; and the restoration of interaction is highlighted by mistakes or mutual blame. Function is still dependent on what comes before the statement and how teammates react.

For analysis, the overlap between categories is essential. While *Santai, bisa comeback* controls emotion and implies a tactical interpretation of the game, *Ojo, enek Saber ning bush kono* warns of danger while showing regional familiarity. Meaning is produced when lexical choice, tone, timing, and visible play details come together. Scholars have noted that linguistic categories alone cannot clarify this total combination because communication depends on immediate action.

Environmental context helps researchers distinguish these outcomes from research completed on asynchronous social platforms or inside educational institutions. Game participants in MOBA titles speak with team members while competing, and when the match finishes, group members usually disperse. Because rapid response, temporary teamwork, and sudden feelings shape the interaction, specific verbal choices are determined by these fast conditions. Many people believe that translanguaging functions simultaneously as a social instrument, an emotional output, and a strategic tactic when players face urgent moments.

Collected evidence rarely supports the idea that listed languages must be separated strictly so that individuals communicate effectively. Effective communication is frequently achieved through sentences that combine slang, English gaming terminology, Indonesian structural rules, and local vocabulary. Although translanguaging has been conceptualized as flexible use of a multilingual repertoire, the construct and its treatment of language boundaries remain contested (Treffers-Daller, 2025). These multilingual practices did not follow strict language boundaries but remained recurrent, recognizable, and appropriate to particular interactional contexts (Poza, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The voice communication data of 15 matches played by 15 bilingual or multilingual Indonesian players was analyzed. The results, analyzed together with field notes and brief interviews, showed three interrelated categories of use: tactical efficiency, group identity, and the management of stress or toxicity.

Communicating in-game strategies using Indonesian and game-specific English terms allowed for instant feedback and the ability to make in-game changes. Furthermore, there were instances of expressing appreciation for others' contributions to the team, the use of informal language, as well as regional accents and ways of speaking, all of which contributed to the formation of an ad-hoc team playing style. Apologizing, providing comfort, and diverting attention from a toxic situation, for example, helped to achieve team goals.

Thus, instead of randomly mixing linguistic forms, players drew on a shared repertoire for particular communicative purposes. They select from available resources of language, they take into consideration what others can perceive, and they negotiate social relationships in a number of ways. Thus, the demands of strategic action, of social interaction, and of emotional management are also reflected in the ways in which translanguaging is used in these games of MOBA.

MOBA games provide interesting venues for the study of sociolinguistics. Within game environments, players make use of local phrases, which are then combined with widely used English vocabulary in a particular mixture of forms that other players can recognize and interpret in order to take coordinated action. Meaning, identity and emotions are thus negotiated within and outside of formal settings of language learning and use in ordinary behavior of digital communication.

The findings may also be used for language education. If the focus is on analysis rather than on the assumption that playing a game will automatically improve a student's language skills, then certain game samples can be very valuable to students. The samples can give them insight into

language variety, target audiences, pragmatics and how to localize English phrases. Known multilingual expressions can promote cooperation and reduce conflict between players of a gaming group. However, these expressions need to be supported by rules that clearly outline what is considered to be harassment or other forms of rude behavior.

This study has several limitations, particularly its small sample size. More importantly, however, because each participant contributed only one game, the study was not able to explore the stability of these practices over time, across different rankings, or even within different team configurations. Longitudinal studies could explore the effects of gender, rank, geographical location, and community norms on the use and acceptability of translanguaging in a variety of settings, including in comparison of more recreational versus competitive games of different genres.

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