CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Research

Language is the primary tool people use to communicate, express themselves, and strengthen social bonds. According to Rabiah (2018), language is the most fundamental tool that humans use to gather information. In everyday life, language is used as a medium to convey opinions, share experiences, and even express feelings and beliefs concisely. According to Prastamawati (2023), one of the most important tools to influence the way of life of society in general is language. Through language, people can communicate with each other and strengthen collective consciousness in society. Apart from being a communication tool, language also functions as a teaching tool. Across generations are informed through language, norms, and knowledge. Language is the main medium that allows humans to understand the heritage of civilization, expand their understanding of social reality, and create new innovations (Sapir, 1921). Therefore, language plays an important role in the development of human civilization historically and contemporarily.

Emergence of digital technology has facilitated transformation of the global society's culture. Perhaps one of the most tangible forms of the change is penetration of interactive media like online games, which are now an indispensable part of the milennial and Gen Z generations' daily lives. As reported by Statista (2023) statistics, the global game market has already grown to more than USD 184 billion revenue, and Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, was one of the regions with the highest growth rate. According to We Are Social and Hootsuite data (2023), around 94,5% of 16-34 year-old internet users in Indonesia play digital games with a daily average of 1–2 hours of playtime. It clearly shows that game is not just entertainment, but also a social utility, identity, and culture. One of the most viewed games in Indonesia is

...gends: Bang Bang. With more than 100 million downloads and ...er base of 80 million (Sensor Tower, 2022), Mobile Legends has ...enomenon that goes beyond just a game. In the context of this ...o" refers to the character that players use on the battlefield. ...neans a fictional character in the game who has certain powers.

But connotatively, this word carries a much deeper and complex symbolic meaning. "Hero" can be interpreted as the symbolization of power, courage, chivalry, up to gender representation and masculine domination or even femininity depending on the character. Symbolization creates a story that infiltrates into the player's thinking process and affects the construction of identity.

According to Romadhon & Ubaedillah (2022), the term "Hero" in Mobile Legends is not neutral, but rich in values and ideologies. In their study, they show that the connotative meaning of "Hero" reflects reproduced modern myths through digital media. This was said by Azizul (2022) who analyzed the advertisement of Pevita Pearce as a heroic figure. He pointed out that the position of women as "heroes" is not free from certain stereotypes, showing how the meaning of "Hero" is strongly influenced by socio-cultural and gender contexts. Askari (2023) also revealed how in-game words such as "hero", "gg", or "noob" impact players' perceptions of performance and social status in gaming societies. This confirms that "Hero" is not just a word, but a status symbol. Meanwhile, Haqqy (2022) talks about how popular culture through online games forms a system of signs that are accepted and practiced by players. He highlighted that symbols in games are not only understood, but also internalized by players as part of their identity narrative.

Although there are some studies that have written about the meaning of symbols in games, most of them are still descriptive or confined to character analysis. As revealed by Alfian (2020), MOBA is a type of online game played by a team that is responsible for their respective characters to obtain victory. Behind the thrilling action and strategy, there are other elements that are interesting to research, namely the quotes uttered by the characters. As Arif (2021) stated These days, online games have advanced to the point where they conceal a plot, significance, and philosophy. In the context of the online gaming world like Mobile Legends, language has a much more complex role. Here, language is not only used to communicate verbally, but also through certain actions, symbols and codes. Quotes or utterances made by

ne are examples of how language is used to build character, is, and even influence the flow of the game.

ot many studies that specifically establish the denotative and js of the characters' utterance by using Roland Barthes' in the context of digital games. This research gap is strategic g of characters' utterance plays a role in the reproduction of

social and cultural values. Without a deep understanding, we will miss how digital media shapes discourse and power structures in society. This research seeks to fill that gap by investigating in depth how the characters' utterance is denotatively and connotatively understood by Mobile Legends players, and how that meaning is constructed and propagated through the game.

This research will apply a qualitative approach through Roland Barthes' semiological analysis, which dissects denotative meaning (literal meaning) and connotative meaning (deeper, symbolic, and ideological meaning). According to Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory, every sign consists of two elements: the signifier and the signified. The spoken word, or sign, refers to a broader idea or meaning in the characters' utterances. However, Roland Barthes augmented Saussure's theory with a layer of connotative meaning. Barthes (1968) argues that signs have an immediate denotative meaning and a broader connotative meaning, usually related to culture and society. For example, when a hero says, "I will protect my friends to the end," the statement shows his commitment to look after his friends. However, these terms also refer to more general concepts like courage, loyalty, and friendship. The experiences, expertise, and cultural values of the people who hear them shape their connotative meanings. This approach is particularly relevant for providing insights into the process of meaning production in digital culture. Theoretically, this research adds contributions to visual communication studies and popular culture studies, specifically in understanding how digital media operates as a modern myth through its symbols. In practice, the results of this study can be used as a reflection for game developers, teachers, and parents on the role of symbols in interactive media.

Prior research has looked at the way in which language impacts our goals and desires noting that both denotative and connotative meanings are relevant for communication. Denotative meanings, for instance, give us the literal information we need to understand what has been said, while connotative meanings can influence

ngs. Denotative meanings of the characters' utterance in Mobile

player with factual information about their skill and function in

connotative meanings could spark feelings. Thus, the major

y is to examine and analyze the denotative and connotative

cters' utterance in the Mobile Legends game and observe the

construction, interpretation, and contribute to digital popular

culture. This research will provide a different face in the reading of sign dynamics and meanings under the era of interactive technology and also the results of this research will help us to better understand the background and creation of complex interactions between game characters, which will ultimately guide the creation of more engaging gaming experiences.

1.2 Identification of Problem

When Mobile Legends players start a game, they often focus on strategies to win the match. However, behind the words spoken by the characters, there are hidden meanings that are rarely explored. This research aims to bridge the gap by exploring the denotative and connotative meanings of characters' utterances, as well as uncovering the layers of emotion and history that shape their characters.

The problem identification in this research includes:

1.2.1   Players often overlook the narrative richness of characters' utterance in Mobile Legends, ignoring the characters' background and emotional undertones. This lack of understanding can hinder their comprehension of the game's lore.

1.2.2   Theoretical study of video game narratives, especially mobile games like Mobile Legends, is limited due to a lack of comprehensive studies on utterances' context and meaning, limiting understanding.

1.2.3   Players tend to interpret characters utterances literally, noting their literal meaning (denotation) but not the emotional and cultural aspects (connotation).

1.2.4   Heroic dialogue often reflects cultural values and beliefs, often overlooked. Understanding these contexts can enhance appreciation for game diversity, encourage deeper connection, and foster cross-cultural understanding and exchange.

1.2.5   Character utterance provide gamers a better grasp of each character's emotions, revealing character arcs and growth and improving xperience by encouraging a sense of personal connection.

Through the examination of these domains, the research aims to raise players' knowledge regarding Mobile Legends so that their play becomes richer and their identification with the characters and narratives of the game enhanced. Not only does this research contribute to the players, but it also aids in resolving the broader academic debate on the narratives of video games and their effects on contemporary culture.

1.3 Scope of Problem

Based on the identification of the problems previously described, the author focuses on the interpretation of denotative meaning and connotative meaning contained in the utterance of Mobile Legends characters.

1.4 Research Question

To find out the meaning contained in the characters' utterances, the researcher formulates questions to reveal this meaning as follows:

1.4.1   What are the denotative meanings in the selected Mobile Legends character's utterances?

1.4.2   What are the connotative meanings in the selected Mobile Legends characters' utterances?

1.5 Objective of the Study

Referring to the research question above, the objective study are:

1.5.1   To describe the denotative meanings in selected Mobile Legends characters' utterances.

1.5.2   To reveal the connotative meanings in selected Mobile Legends characters' utterances.

1.6 Significance of the Study

gnificance

earch is useful to increase knowledge in the field of linguistics especially semantic and semiology study. The analysis of otative meanings in Mobile Legends characters' utterance can

help understand the deeper meaning of the utterances, including the underlying message, motivation, and philosophy.

1.6.2 Practical significance

A better understanding of the denotative and connotative meanings of Mobile Legends characters' utterances can improve players' gaming experience. It can help players to better understand their backstories and their motivations. The results of this study can also help the gaming industry in understanding how meanings are constructed and interpreted in their games. This can help them to develop games that are more engaging and meaningful to players. This research is also useful as a reference for further research.

1.7 Previous Related Study

Research relevant to this study is research conducted by Dewi Mustika Muslimin (2017) entitled "Denotative and Connotative Meaning in Masha and The Bear Cartoon Movie". The research explores the animated series Masha and the Bear through a semiotic lens, focusing on the denotative and connotative meanings within the film. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative method, the researcher carefully selected and analyzed episodes, identifying both literal meanings (denotation) and deeper cultural meanings (connotation). Grounded in Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, the analysis revealed how cultural context influences the interpretation of signs. The findings highlighted various types of connotations, including attitudinal, associative, affective, and allusive meanings, with allusive meanings being the most prevalent. The research emphasizes the importance of these meanings in conveying messages that resonate with Russian culture, enhancing our understanding of the film and illustrating the complex relationship between animation, culture, and meaning-making.

The second research is research from Mohamad Yusri Romadhon et al
sis Makna Denotatif dan Konotatif pada Istilah di Game Online
g Bang". This study examines the denotative and connotative
game Mobile Legends: Bang Bang. The study aims to analyze
ed in the game convey both literal meanings and deeper cultural
a qualitative descriptive method, the researchers gathered data

from the grand final of the Mobile Premier League (MPL) ID Season 9 through recording, listening, and note-taking. They applied Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to differentiate between denotation (literal meaning) and connotation (contextual meaning). The findings revealed that many terms in Mobile Legends carry connotative meanings that depend on gameplay context, enhancing communication among players. Notable terms included "noob" referring to inexperienced players, and other jargon that reflects gaming culture. Finally, the research highlights the significance of understanding these meanings within the gaming context, illustrating how gaming language evolves and influences broader communication practices.

Third research is from Rizky Ishar (2023) entitled "Semiotic Analysis of The Denotative and Connotative Meaning on The Beatles' Song Lyrics". The research focuses on a semiotic analysis of five popular songs by The Beatles: "Hey Jude," "Here Comes The Sun," "Come Together," "Yesterday," and "Let It Be." The study aims to explore the denotative and connotative meanings within the song lyrics, utilizing Roland Barthes' semiotic theory as its theoretical framework. Employing a descriptive qualitative method, the researchers analyzed the lyrics to identify various semiotic signs, revealing how these signs convey both literal meanings and deeper cultural implications. The findings highlighted a total of 26 semiotic signs across the songs, with key themes of sincerity and modesty emerging prominently. The research underscores the significance of these meanings in reflecting human experiences and emotions, illustrating how The Beatles' lyrics resonate with listeners on multiple levels. Ultimately, the study enhances our understanding of the interplay between language, culture, and music in conveying meaningful messages.

The fourth research is from Desy Riana Pratiwi el al (2020) entitled "The Analysis of Denotative and Connotative Meaning in Ariana Grande's Song Lyrics: A Semantic Study". The study analyzes the denotative and connotative meanings in Ariana Grande's song "God is a Woman." The study aims to uncover how these meanings contribute to the emotional and thematic depth of the lyrics. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, the researchers examined the song's lyrics to identify literal meanings (denotation) and deeper, implied meanings. analysis was based on Geoffrey Leech's semantic theory, which for understanding different types of meanings in language. The the song contains more connotative meanings than denotative connotative meanings and two denotative meanings identified.

The research emphasizes the significance of these meanings in conveying messages about gender and empowerment, illustrating how the lyrics challenge traditional perceptions and celebrate femininity. Lastly, the study enhances the understanding of the complex interplay between language, meaning, and cultural expression in music.

The fifth research is from Arsiska Sari (2016) entitled "Denotative and Connotative Meaning in One direction's Songs Lyric: A Semantic Perspective" The research examines the denotative and connotative meanings in the lyrics of three One Direction songs: "Hey Angel," "Long Way Down," and "Drag Me Down." Using a descriptive qualitative method, the study analyzes how specific words in the lyrics convey both literal meanings and deeper emotional implications. The findings reveal that connotative meanings are more prevalent than denotative meanings in the songs. For instance, in "Hey Angel," the word "angel" suggests love and nostalgia, while "bar" has a straightforward, literal meaning. Similarly, in "Long Way Down," terms like "fire" and "flame" evoke feelings of struggle and passion, whereas "ocean" can be interpreted both literally and metaphorically. In "Drag Me Down," words like "fire" and "sun" symbolize motivation and support. Overall, the research highlights the significance of understanding these meanings to appreciate the emotional depth of One Direction's music, illustrating how language in song lyrics can convey complex themes and resonate with listeners on multiple levels.

The sixth research by Rezza Agus Alfian and Tri Cahyo Kusumandyoko (2020) entitled "Representasi Makna Pada Karakter Kadita Dalam Game Online Mobile Legends Bang Bang". The research explores the representation of meaning in the character Kadita from the online game Mobile Legends: Bang Bang. Utilizing Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, the study analyzes how Kadita, inspired by the legendary figure Nyi Roro Kidul, embodies themes of modern femininity and cultural identity. The researchers employed a qualitative descriptive method, examining both in-game content and relevant literature. They identified that Kadita symbolizes

n, showcasing strength and independence while incorporating ements. The character's design reflects a blend of modern e, illustrating a transformation of the Nyi Roro Kidul legend into ext. The findings highlight Kadita's role in challenging gender ng her as a powerful figure capable of competing equally with nately, the study concludes that Kadita represents a significant

intersection of cultural heritage and modern gender dynamics, offering insights into how video games can influence societal perceptions of femininity and empowerment.

Based on the previous findings above, the researchers also focus on semiology studies to analyze the object, but in this study the researcher specializes the data by analyzing the denotation and connotation meanings in the characters' utterances in the mobile legends game using Barthes' theory. However, the difference is in the object of research where this research focuses on the meaning of characters' quotes.

1.8 Theoritical Framework

1.8.1   Semiology of Roland Barthes

Roland Barthes' semiotics is a system of sign analysis that focuses on the meaning contained in signs and how that meaning is constructed and interpreted. According to Barthes (1968), a sign is not a static thing, but something that always changes meaning depending on the context and culture in which the sign is used. Roland Barthes developed the theory of Ferdinand De Saussure, the core of Barthes' theory includes three orders of signification. The first order, denotation, refers to the literal meaning of a sign. For example, the phrase "Time is Money" (signifier) directly means that time has a value equivalent to money (signified). In this context, we understand the phrase as a literal statement that shows the importance of managing time efficiently, without any additional meaning or deeper interpretation. However, behind this basic meaning, there is a second order, the connotation, which includes the associations and values attached to the sign which vary depending on cultural context and individual experience. When moving to the second order, the phrase begins to carry a more complex connotative meaning. In many cultures, it reflects the view that wasted time is a financial loss. As such, the phrase "time is money" can be interpreted as a symbol of hard work ethic, productivity and capitalist values. Here, the phrase functions as a "mythmaker," where broader cultural meanings are formed based on ne and productivity.

at the third level, the cultural meanings generated from the gether to form a larger cultural picture. In this context, the phrase reflect the ideology of a modern society that highly values ctivity, often neglecting other aspects of life that may be more

valuable, such as social relationships or time for oneself. As such, it contributes to the image of a society focused on material achievement and success, reflecting the broad principles by which a culture organizes and interprets the reality it faces. Through the transformation from signifier to signified in these three orders of signification, we can understand how the meaning of the phrase "time is money" is shaped and understood in a broader social and cultural context.

Actually, this concept is very meaningful to improve semiology Saussure, which is ends at the denotative level. Barthes also developed the concept of myth to explain how the connotative meaning of signs can be standardized and disseminated through media and popular culture. Myths, according to Barthes (1972), are systems of meaning that hide reality and create illusions about the world. Roland Barthes' semiotics has been widely used in various fields, such as linguistics, literature, culture, media, and communication. Barthes' semiotics can help us to understand how meaning is constructed and interpreted in culture and society. Roland Barthes' semiotics is a powerful tool for understanding meaning in culture and society. By understanding how signs work, we can become more critical consumers of media and be critical of the messages that are delivered to us.

1.8.2   Denotation

Denotation, as a concept in semiotics and linguistics, is foundational to understanding how signs function in communication. It refers to the direct, explicit meaning of a sign, devoid of any emotional or cultural connotations. This concept can be explored through the theories of key figures such as Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Barthes, and various semantics theories.

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, is often credited with laying the groundwork for modern semiotics. In his seminal work, "Course in General Linguistics". Saussure introduced the idea of the sign as a combination of the signifier (the form of the word or image) and the signified (the concept it represents). Denotation, in Saussure's framework (1959), is the relationship between the signifier

is most straightforward and universally accepted. For example, ier) directly refers to the animal it represents (signified). This arbitrary; there is no inherent reason why the animal should be ι, but this is the accepted term within that linguistic community.

Denotation, therefore, is the first level of meaning that is stable and widely recognized, forming the basis for further layers of meaning, such as connotation.

One of Saussure's most significant contributions is the idea that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is largely arbitrary. This means that there is no inherent or natural connection between the two; rather, it is a product of social convention and linguistic agreement. For example, the animal we refer to as a "cat" in English is called "chat" in French and "Katze" in German. Each language has developed its own signifier for the same signified, demonstrating that the choice of signifier is not dictated by the nature of the animal itself but is instead a matter of linguistic convention. This arbitrariness underscores the idea that meaning is constructed through social interaction and shared understanding within a linguistic community.

Denotation serves as the foundational layer of meaning in Saussure's framework. It is characterized by its stability and universality, as it represents the most straightforward interpretation of a sign. This level of meaning is often what is captured in dictionaries, where definitions aim to provide a clear and objective understanding of a word's meaning. For instance, when we encounter the word "cat," the denotative meaning is simply the physical representation of the animal. This meaning is widely recognized and accepted, making it a reliable point of reference for communication.

Furthermore, Denotation is essential for effective communication, as it establishes a common ground for understanding among speakers of a language. Saussure's insights into denotation have profound implications for communication and interpretation. Understanding that denotation is the first level of meaning allows individuals to recognize the importance of clarity in language. Effective communication relies on shared denotative meanings to ensure that messages are understood as intended. Moreover, recognizing the arbitrary nature of the sign encourages critical thinking about language and meaning. It prompts individuals to

words are used to represent specific concepts and how cultural understanding of signs. This awareness can lead to a deeper complexities of language and the ways in which meaning is tiated in social interactions.

Roland Barthes, a prominent French literary theorist and ntly advanced the field of semiotics by building upon the

foundational ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure. Barthes explores the complexities of meaning in signs, particularly focusing on the interplay between denotation and connotation. His work highlights how signs operate not only as vehicles of literal meaning but also as carriers of cultural and emotional significance. Barthes (1968) defines denotation as the "first-order" signification, which refers to the most basic, literal meaning of a sign. This level of meaning is straightforward and universally recognized, serving as the foundation upon which further interpretations can be built. Example of Denotation: Consider a photograph of a cat. Denotatively, this image simply represents a cat, an animal characterized by specific physical traits such as fur, whiskers, and a tail. This denotative meaning is clear and objective; it is the immediate recognition of the sign without any additional layers of interpretation. Barthes emphasizes that denotation is not merely a passive reflection of reality but an active construction of meaning. The act of naming or depicting something involves choices that are influenced by cultural and social contexts. Thus, while denotation aims for objectivity, it is still shaped by the conventions of the language and culture in which it exists.

As we delve deeper into the world of denotation, we begin to see its role as a foundation for meaning. While it provides a clear and stable understanding of a sign, it is also influenced by cultural contexts. The act of naming or depicting something reflects the conventions and norms of a particular society. For instance, while the denotation of a cat as a domestic animal may be universally recognized, the cultural significance attached to cats can vary widely. In some cultures, cats are revered and associated with good fortune, while in others, they may be viewed with suspicion or fear. This cultural lens adds a layer of complexity to denotation, reminding us that even the most straightforward meanings are not entirely free from interpretation.

Importantly, denotation serves as a starting point for exploring more complex layers of meaning, such as connotation. While the denotation of a cat is simply the

notations associated with cats ideas of independence, mystery, herge from cultural narratives and personal experiences. This ation to connotation illustrates how meaning can be layered and o look beyond the surface.

denotation, as articulated by Barthes, represents the first-order n, providing a clear, objective, and universally recognized

meaning. It acts as the bedrock of understanding in communication, allowing individuals to convey and interpret messages accurately. While denotation strives for stability and objectivity, it is also shaped by cultural contexts and conventions. Ultimately, understanding denotation is essential for grasping the dynamics of meaning in language and culture, setting the stage for deeper analysis of how signs function in various contexts. Through Barthes' lens, we come to appreciate the intricate interplay of signs, meanings, and the rich tapestry of human communication.

1.8.3 Connotation

In the intricate world of language and meaning, two towering figures stand out: Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes. Their contributions to semiotics and linguistics have profoundly shaped our understanding of how signs convey meaning. At the heart of their theories lies the concept of connotation, a term that encapsulates the rich layers of meaning that extend beyond the literal interpretation of words and signs. To understand connotation, we must first delve into Saussure's groundbreaking ideas. Saussure introduced the concept of the sign as a dual entity composed of the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the tangible aspect of the sign, the word, sound, or image that we perceive. For instance, when we hear the word "rose," the signifier is the actual sound or written form of the word itself.

On the other hand, the signified is the mental concept or idea that the signifier evokes. In the case of "rose," the signified is the actual flower, characterized by its delicate petals, vibrant colors, and sweet fragrance. This relationship between the signifier and the signified is crucial for understanding how meaning is constructed in language. Saussure emphasized that this relationship is largely arbitrary; there is no inherent connection between the signifier and the signified. The word "rose" could just as easily have been assigned to a different flower, and in different languages, the same flower is referred to by different names"rosa" in Spanish, "rosen" in German, and so on. As Saussure (1959) his arbitrariness highlights that the meanings we attach to words are products of social convention and linguistic agreement.

ure primarily focused on the denotative aspect of signs their knowledged that signs can carry additional meanings beyond ons. This is where the concept of connotation begins to emerge. I connotation refers to the secondary meanings, associations,

and emotional responses that arise from a sign, shaped by cultural and contextual factors.

For example, while the denotation of "rose" is simply the flower itself, its connotations can be rich and varied. In many Western cultures, a red rose connotes love and passion, often given as a romantic gesture. A pink rose might symbolize admiration or gratitude, while a white rose is often associated with purity and innocence. These connotations are not inherent to the flower itself but are constructed through cultural narratives and societal values

Saussure's insights into the arbitrary nature of the sign and the social context in which it operates lay the groundwork for understanding connotation. He suggested that while denotation provides a stable and universally recognized meaning, connotation adds depth and complexity to our understanding of signs. This layered approach allows for a richer interpretation of language and communication. Building upon Saussure's foundational ideas, Roland Barthes took the exploration of meaning further in his influential work, "Mythologies." Barthes introduced a more explicit distinction between denotation and connotation, emphasizing the cultural and ideological dimensions of meaning.

Denotation according to Barthes (1972) remains the "first-order" signification the literal, explicit meaning of a sign. It is the straightforward interpretation that is universally recognized. For instance, when we see a photograph of a rose, the denotative meaning is simply that it is a picture of a rose. However, Barthes argued that this is only the beginning of the meaning-making process. Connotation, in his view, represents the "second-order" signification, where the sign takes on additional layers of meaning influenced by cultural and social contexts. This is where the richness of meaning truly emerges.

Barthes (1972) emphasized that connotation is deeply intertwined with cultural narratives and ideologies. The meanings associated with a sign are not merely personal or subjective; they are shaped by the broader cultural context in which the sign is situated. For example, the connotations of a rose can vary widely l beliefs and practices. In Western cultures, a red rose is often ntic love, making it a popular gift on Valentine's Day. However, same flower may carry different meanings. In some Eastern symbolize secrecy or even death, depending on the context in

which they are presented. This variability illustrates how connotation is not fixed but can change over time and across different cultural landscapes.

In the rich tapestry of linguistic study, Geoffrey Leech stands out as a pivotal figure in the exploration of meaning. His work, particularly in the realm of semantics, has provided profound insights into how language functions, especially regarding the nuances of connotation. Leech's theories illuminate the layers of meaning that words can carry, extending far beyond their literal definitions.

At the heart of Leech's exploration is the distinction between denotative and connotative meanings. Denotation refers to the explicit, dictionary definition of a word the primary meaning that is universally recognized. For instance, when we think of the word "rose," its denotative meaning is simply the flower itself, characterized by its petals and fragrance. However, Leech emphasizes that this is only part of the story. Connotation, on the other hand, encompasses the additional meanings, associations, and emotional responses that a word evokes beyond its literal definition. This aspect of meaning is rich and multifaceted, shaped by cultural, social, and personal factors. For example, while a "rose" denotes a flower, it connotes love, beauty, and romance in many cultures, particularly in Western contexts.

Leech (1981) argues that connotation is not static; it is dynamic and can change based on the social context in which a word is used. The meanings associated with a word can vary significantly depending on cultural background and individual experiences. For instance, the word "home" may evoke feelings of warmth and safety for one person, while for another, it might bring to mind feelings of confinement or obligation, depending on their personal history and cultural context. This variability highlights the importance of understanding connotation in effective communication. Words are not merely vessels of information; they carry emotional weight and cultural significance that can influence how messages are received. In advertising, for example, marketers often select words with strong connotations to evoke specific emotions and persuade consumers. A product described as "_____" _____ _____ _____fferent connotations than one labeled as "expensive," even ____ ___ ____y refer to high cost. This strategic use of language underscores ___ ____ ____tion in shaping perceptions and influencing behavior.

____ _____ _____eech also acknowledges that many words are polysemous, ____ _____ ___ ____ultiple meanings. The connotation of a polysemous word can ____ ____ ____ ____e context in which it is used. For example, the word "light" can

denote brightness, but it can also connote ideas of ease or lack of weight. The specific connotation will depend on the surrounding context and the speaker's intent. This flexibility in meaning illustrates the richness of language and the importance of context in interpreting connotation.

1.8.4   Online Games

Online gaming has evolved into a multifaceted phenomenon that transcends mere entertainment, becoming a significant aspect of modern social interaction and psychological engagement. As Aflah (2023) notes, online games are interactive experiences that allow players to engage with one another through various devices, including mobile phones, PCs, and laptops. This accessibility has contributed to the widespread popularity of online gaming, making it a global pastime that connects millions of players across different cultures and backgrounds.

According to Akin (2023) "Online gaming provides opportunities for players to communicate, collaborate, and compete with each other in virtual environments, leading to the formation of social networks and communities". At its core, online gaming is not just about playing; it is about participation and interaction. Players are not passive observers; they actively engage with the game environment, controlling characters or avatars that can be moved according to their will. This interactivity is a key element that differentiates online games from traditional forms of entertainment, such as watching a movie or reading a book. In online games, players are empowered to make decisions, strategize, and influence the outcome of the game, which can lead to a heightened sense of agency and involvement. The competitive nature of online gaming adds another layer of excitement. Players often strive to achieve high scores, complete challenging missions, or defeat opponents, which can evoke a range of emotions, from exhilaration to frustration. The thrill of competition can be a powerful motivator, driving players to improve their skills and invest more time in the game. This psychological engagement can lead to a sense of accomplishment when players succeed, reinforcing their desire to continue playing

nline gaming fosters social connections, both directly and actions occur when players know each other personally, such ates who team up to play together. These shared experiences g relationships, as players bond over their gaming experiences,

celebrate victories, and support each other through defeats. The collaborative nature of many online games encourages teamwork and communication, skills that are valuable both in and out of the gaming context.

On the other hand, indirect interactions occur when players connect with strangers from around the world. This aspect of online gaming can be particularly enriching, as it allows individuals to meet and collaborate with people they would never encounter in their daily lives. Players can form friendships and alliances with others based solely on their shared interest in a game, creating a sense of community that transcends geographical boundaries. These connections can lead to meaningful relationships, as players engage in conversations, share strategies, and even participate in events or tournaments together. However, the social dynamics of online gaming are not without challenges. The anonymity of the internet can sometimes lead to negative behaviors, such as harassment or toxic competition. Players may encounter unsportsmanlike conduct, which can detract from the overall experience. Game developers and communities are increasingly aware of these issues and are implementing measures to promote positive interactions, such as reporting systems and community guidelines.

In conclusion, online gaming is a complex and engaging activity that offers players a unique blend of competition, social interaction, and psychological engagement. As players navigate virtual worlds, they not only seek to achieve personal goals but also build connections with others, whether they are friends or strangers. The evolution of online gaming continues to shape how we interact, compete, and connect in an increasingly digital world, making it a significant cultural phenomenon that reflects the changing landscape of social interaction in the 21st century.

1.8.5   Mobile Legends

Mobile Legends: Bang Bang is a popular multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game developed and released by Moonton. Since its launch in 2016, it has captivated

ty in Indonesia and beyond, becoming a staple in the mobile

Available on both Android and iOS platforms, Sunarto, et al

ed on the game company's statistics, Mobile Legends, a game

ssive Online Battle Arena), has 43 million monthly active players

with Indonesia accounting for over half of all users. Mobile

Legends has successfully combined accessibility with engaging gameplay, attracting millions of players worldwide. At its core, Mobile Legends is a team-based game that pits two teams of five players against each other in a strategic battle. Each player selects a hero from a diverse roster, which includes various characters with unique abilities and roles. The selection process is crucial, as players must consider their team composition and the strengths and weaknesses of their chosen heroes.

The game features a mix of heroes that players can purchase and those that are temporarily available for free, allowing newcomers to experiment with different characters without a financial commitment. This system encourages players to explore various playstyles and strategies, enhancing the overall gaming experience. The primary objective of Mobile Legends is to destroy the opposing team's base, known as the "Nexus." To achieve this, players must work together to navigate the map, engage in combat, and strategically destroy enemy structures. The game map is divided into three main lanes: the top lane, middle lane, and bottom lane. Each lane is equipped with turrets that automatically attack enemy units, providing a layer of defense for the team. Players must carefully plan their movements and coordinate with their teammates to push down these lanes while defending their own base. In addition to the turrets, each lane features a series of minions, also known as creeps, that spawn periodically and march toward the enemy base. These minions serve as the primary source of experience points and gold for players, allowing them to level up and purchase items to enhance their heroes' abilities. The strategic destruction of enemy turrets is vital, as it not only weakens the opposing team's defenses but also empowers the minions that follow. Once all turrets in a lane are destroyed, the opposing team will face super minions, which are significantly stronger than regular minions, making it even more challenging to defend their base.

The gameplay in Mobile Legends is fast-paced and requires quick decision-making, teamwork, and effective communication. Players must constantly assess the battlefield, respond to enemy movements, and adapt their strategies based on the

the game. The importance of teamwork cannot be overstated; rely on effective coordination and synergy between heroes to tegies and secure victories. Mobile Legends also incorporates t allows players to gain experience and unlock new abilities as . Players can earn gold by defeating enemy heroes, destroying g minions, which can then be used to purchase powerful items

that enhance their heroes' capabilities. This progression system adds depth to the gameplay, as players must make strategic decisions about when to engage in combat, when to farm for resources, and when to retreat to heal and regroup. The game's popularity has led to a vibrant esports scene, with numerous tournaments and competitions held both locally and internationally. Players and teams compete for recognition and prizes, showcasing their skills and strategies in high-stakes matches. This competitive aspect has further fueled the game's growth, attracting a dedicated community of players who are passionate about honing their skills and achieving success in the competitive arena.

As Sunarto et al (2019) stated friendships may be formed between players as a result of their interactions and communication, as demonstrated by the development of an online player community on the Mobile Legends game. Mobile Legends: Bang Bang is more than just a mobile game; it is a dynamic and engaging experience that combines strategy, teamwork, and skill. With its accessible gameplay, diverse hero roster, and competitive environment, it has become a cultural phenomenon in the gaming world. As players continue to engage with the game, they not only seek to improve their individual skills but also foster connections with teammates and opponents alike, making Mobile Legends a significant part of the modern gaming landscape. Whether you are a casual player or a competitive gamer, Mobile Legends offers an exciting and immersive experience that keeps players coming back for more.

CHAPTER II
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

As part of the research process, the researcher used descriptive qualitative approaches. According to Wawuru (2024) Descriptive qualitative is a method that focuses on comprehending the meaning, values, and processes that occur in a particular context, descriptive qualitative research aims to describe and explain a social phenomenon based on the facts that appear as they are. In order to get closer to an object as a whole, descriptive qualitative research attempts to develop a natural perception of the object. Descriptive qualitative methods are basically the same as hermeneutic methods; that is, both qualitative and content analytic methods hermeneutics and descriptive methods absorb the benefits of interpretation by presenting the data in a descriptive format. The qualitative descriptive method serves to understand the research, develop theory, and describe the complexity and social reality. This method will be relevant to this research.

2.2 Data Source

The main source of this research is the selected mobile legends characters utterances from various source such as Mobile Legends website or YouTube gameplay video consisting of five characters roles namely tank, mage, assassin, fighter, and marksman.

2.3 Instrument of the Research

Taking notes during the data collection process was a key instrument that the researcher utilized to gather the necessary information. The notes were analyzed and compared to primary data sources, with the researcher focusing on quotes from the Mobile Legends characters to achieve the required results.

racters from Mobile Legends, covering all five roles (Tank,
er, Mage, and Assassin).

cters with unique personalities and compelling backstories to
ety and richness of the collected utterances.

3. Listening to utterances spoken by Mobile Legends characters that has been selected.
4. Collecting the characters' utterance by looking for characters' utterances in the game's character selection screen, character profiles, or loading screen.
5. Taking quotes spoken by selected Mobile Legends characters.

2.5 Data Analysis

1. Classifying the collected utterances based on their connotation (ideology or cultural implications) and denotation (literal meaning).
2. Writing interpretations for each utterance, explaining its significance in relation to the character's role, personality, and backstory.
3. Discussing the implications of the utterance on player perception and character development within the game.
4. Summarizing the key insights gained from the analysis and interpretation of the utterances.
5. Drawing conclusion the findings from the data analysis, highlighting key insights about the characters and their utterances.