An Analysis of Idiomatic Expressions in Voice Lines Heroes in Dota 2 Video Game

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Abstrak
Penelitian ini menganalisis ekspresi idiomatik dalam i video game Dota 2 dengan menggunakan teori Charles Hockett. Penelitian ini menyoroti potensi video game sebagai alat yang efektif untuk pembelajaran bahasa, memberikan penutur asli bahasa Inggris konteks autentik untuk memahami dan menginternalisasi ekspresi idiomatik. Melalui analisis kualitatif, ditemukan dan diklasifikasikan 50 ekspresi idiomatik ke dalam enam kategori: Substitute, Proper Names,Abbreviations, English Phrase Compounds, Allusions, dan Slang. Secara khusus, kategori Substitutes mencakup 8 idiom, Proper Names 12 idiom, English Phrasal Compounds* 7 idiom, Figures of Speech pada 14 idiom, dan Slang 9 idiom, dengan tidak ada contoh pada kategori Abbreviations*. Makna kontekstual dari setiap idiom dianalisis, sehingga memberikan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang fungsinya dalam permainan. Temuan ini menciptakan kesetaraan antara permainan digital dan pendidikan bahasa, memberikan implikasi berharga bagi para gamer, pendidik, dan pembelajar dalam memanfaatkan video game untuk pengembangan bahasa.

Kata kunci: Idiom, Dialog suara, Dota 2, Video Game, Makna kontekstual

Abstract
This research analyzes idiomatic expressions in the voice lines of heroes in the video game Dota 2, using Charles Hockett's theory. This research highlights the potential of video games as an effective tool for language learning, offering native English speakers an authentic context to understand and internalize idiomatic expressions. Through qualitative analysis, 50 idiomatic expressions were identified and classified into six categories: Substitutes, Proper Names, Abbreviations, English Phrase Compounds, Allusions, and Slang. Specifically, Substitutes accounted for 8 idioms, Proper Names for 12 idioms, English Phrasal Compounds for 7 idioms, Figures of Speech for 14 idioms, and Slang for 9 idioms, with no examples of Abbreviations. Each idiom's contextual meaning is analyzed, thus contributing to a deeper understanding of their function in the game. The insights gained create an equivalence between digital games and language education, providing valuable implications for gamers and educators or learners in utilising video games for language development.

Keywords: Idiom, Voice lines, Dota 2, Video Games, Contextual meaning

1. INTRODUCTION

Linguistics, the scientific study of language and its structure, encompasses various subfields such as morphology, syntax, phonetics, and semantics. It also examines how language is used, varies, and changes in different cultural and social contexts (Firdaus, 2023). Semantics, specifically, deals with the meaning of language. According to Goddard & Schalley (2010) semantics refers to the meaning of words, phrases, sentences, or texts, explaining the systematic relationships between a language's words and sentences and their meanings. Hurford & Heasley (2007) emphasize that understanding semantics is crucial for grasping the overall meaning of language, as it helps us comprehend how linguistic expressions relate to the objects and concepts they describe.

Idioms, which are expressions or phrases with meanings different from their literal interpretations, play a significant role in language learning. They are linguistic units consisting of multiple words that are used as separate lexical items and include established phrases, proverbs, and culturally specific sayings (Hinkel, 2017). Roberto De Caro (2009) highlights that mastering idioms is essential for effective communication, as much of everyday speech relies on idiomatic expressions. (Fitriyah, 2020) adds that idioms are examples of fixed utterances that allow little or no modification and have meanings that cannot be deduced from their components.

The significance of this research is evident when considering the widespread popularity and influence of Dota 2, a global multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) video game developed by Valve Corporation. With millions of players worldwide, Dota 2 has a diverse user base that includes many English learners. The game's narrative and in-game dialogue frequently employ idiomatic expressions, which can pose challenges for players, especially those learning English as a foreign language (EFL), in understanding the plot and character interactions (Kinkade et al., 2015).

This research aims to analyze idiomatic expressions in Dota 2 to aid language learners and players in comprehending these complex linguistic elements. By examining the voice lines of heroes in Dota 2, this study seeks to elucidate the meanings of idioms used in the game and explore how gamers, particularly those learning English, can benefit from these expressions to enhance their language skills. The research bridges the gap between video games and language learning, offering valuable insights for both gamers and educators on the application of idiomatic expressions in a digital gaming context.

2.

3. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Definition of Idiom

Idioms are expressions that cannot be understood literally but carry a figurative meaning. According to (Lou, 2017), "idioms are fixed combinations of words whose meaning is often difficult to guess from the meaning of each individual word." These expressions are characterized by their stylistic coloring and emotional saturation, as Khudoyberdievna (2022) explains: "Idioms are idiomatic phrases based on the transfer of meanings, a metaphor that is clearly understood by the speakers."

Benczes (2002) organizes idioms into a "frozenness hierarchy," ranging from expressions that can undergo grammatical transformations without losing their figurative meaning to those that cannot. This hierarchical classification reflects the varying degrees of idiomatic rigidity and transformation tolerance.

Contextual Meaning

Contextual meaning refers to the interpretation of words, phrases, or sentences based on the surrounding context. Sucihati (2021) describes it as "the interpretation and understanding of words, phrases, or sentences based on the surrounding context in which they are used." This involves analyzing specific situations, background information, and linguistic clues to derive the intended meaning.

Goziyah, Yusuf Maulana, Hanim (2022) emphasize that "contextual meaning is essential to understanding the intended message of communication," highlighting the importance of context in language analysis. Nouraldeen (2015) adds that "meaning and context are interdependent because meaning cannot be conveyed without context and context cannot be established without meaning." This interdependence underscores the necessity of contextual analysis in comprehending language.

Types of Idioms

Makkai (2013) identifies six areas of idioms: phonetic, phonemic, morphemic, lexemic, sememic, and hypersememic. In the lexemic area, there are five types of idioms: tournure idioms, phrasal verb idioms, irreversible binomial idioms, incorporating verb idioms, and phrasal compound idioms. Each type exhibits unique structural and semantic characteristics.

Hockett (1958) as referenced in Tyasrinestu & Ardi (2020) research also categorizes idioms into six types: substitutes, proper names, abbreviation, English phrasal compounds, figures of speech, and slang. These categories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding idioms as integral parts of language structure.

In analyzing the types of idioms, this study will utilize the concepts proposed by Hockett (1958) as referenced in Tyasrinestu & Ardi (2020). This approach offers a robust framework for examining idioms within the context of English language structure.

The Concept of Video Games for Learning

Video games are interactive entertainment systems that engage players in virtual worlds. Salen & Zimmerman (2004) define video games as "systems in which players interact with artificial cues to achieve goals and overcome challenges created by the game rules." McGonigal (2011) describes gaming as "a continuous decision-making process that challenges the human brain to think creatively and respond quickly to change."

Video games provide rich learning experiences. Gee (2003) explains that video games create "deep learning" experiences, where players not only grasp information but also understand how to use it effectively within the game context. This includes skills acquisition, problem-solving, and strategic decision-making.

Video games can also enhance language learning. Pettersson (2012) notes that video games "can be an additional motivation for students to learn a second language" by providing context-rich environments that simulate real conversations. This integration of video games in language learning can improve learning quality and student motivation.

Dota 2 and Idiomatic Expressions

Dota 2, an online multiplayer game developed by Valve Corporation, provides a rich source of idiomatic expressions through its voice lines. These expressions are used by heroes in the game and offer valuable insights into the use of language in a

virtual context. The analysis of idiomatic expressions in Dota 2 can shed light on the linguistic creativity and cultural elements embedded within the game's narrative and character interactions.

4. RESEARCH METHOD
Research Method

This research employs qualitative methods because the data consist of words and written language. As Sugiyono (2009) asserts, "Descriptive problem formulation guides the researcher in exploring and capturing the social situation to be studied thoroughly, widely, and intensively." This methodology is appropriate for analyzing idiomatic expressions in the voice lines of heroes in the Dota 2 video game.

The data will be analyzed and interpreted using descriptive explanations. The analysis will utilize a table to systematically display the idiomatic expressions identified in the heroes' voice lines.

Source and Type of Data Research

Research data are divided into primary and secondary categories.
5. **Primary Data** Primary data will be sourced directly from the voice lines of heroes in Dota 2. This research will focus on analyzing and classifying idiomatic expressions using Hockett (1958) theory as explained by Tyasrinestu & Ardi (2020).
6. **Secondary Data** Secondary data will include supportive sources such as journal articles and relevant internet information to provide additional context and insights.

Data Collection Techniques

The following techniques will be employed to collect data: 1) Observation of Dota 2 Game The researcher will play and observe the Dota 2 game multiple times to familiarize with the voice lines. 2) Identification of Idioms Careful identification of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences containing idiomatic expressions will be conducted. 3) Coding of Idiomatic Expressions During re-listening sessions, all idiomatic expressions will be coded meticulously. 4) Qualitative Data Analysis Qualitative methods will be used to gain an in-depth understanding of the use of idioms in the voice lines of Dota 2 heroes. 5) Descriptive Data This approach will provide a clear depiction of the variety of idioms used and their context within the game.

Instrument of the Research

In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument of data collection. Moleong (2001:241) in Sugiantiningsih et al., (2019) research notes that "One of the main characteristics of qualitative research is the role of humans in the entire research process." Merriam & Tisdell (2016:2) add, "The human instrument, which can be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data."

Data Analysis

The data analysis will follow two main steps: 1) **Identifying** The researcher will identify idiomatic expressions in the voice lines to confirm their presence. 2) **Classifying** Using Hockett (1958) theory, the idioms will be classified into six categories: Substitutes, Proper Names, Abbreviations, English Phrasal Compounds, Figures of Speech, and Slang.

7.
8. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of idiomatic expressions in the voice lines of heroes in the Dota 2 video game reveals a diverse range of idiomatic usage. Utilizing Hockett's (1958) theory, six types of idioms were identified: Substitutes, Proper Names, Abbreviations, English Phrasal Compounds, Figures of Speech, and Slang. The findings were as follows:

Table 1. Idiomatic Expressions in Voice Lines Heroes Dota 2

No	Idiomatic Expression	Idiomatic Total
1	Substitutes	8
2	Proper Name	12
3	Abbreviation	0
4	English Phrasal Compounds	7
5	Figure of Speech	14
6	Slang	9
	Total	50

The total count of idiomatic expressions identified was 50, derived from analyzing the voice lines of 50 heroes.

The identified idiomatic expressions were classified and their contextual meanings were analyzed. This dual approach helped elucidate not only the types of idioms but also how they contribute to the game's narrative and character development.

Table 2. Types of Idiom in Voice Lines Heroes Dota 2

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
Axe	Cut and run!	Substitutes	"Cut and run!" for "Run away!" In this context, Axe calls for retreat or escape from a dangerous situation.
Abaddon	I'll take your worst.	Substitutes	This means "your worst" for "your best."
Alchemist	Hey little buddy, it's in the bag!	Substitutes	"It's in the bag!" for "It's a piece of cake!"
Sniper	Bulls-eye!	Substitutes	"Bulls-eye!" for "Right on target!" Sniper has hit the target very "precisely", such as an arrow hitting the center point of a bull's-eye.
Ogre Magi	Two heads are better than one.	Substitutes	"Two heads are better than one."

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
			for "Two minds make for mightier magic!"
			This meaning Collaborating or working together yields better results.
Tinker	March, march!	Substitutes	"March, march!" for "Advance!" Tinker uses an ability called "March of the Machines." This ability summons a line of fast-moving.
Axe	Cut and run!	Substitutes	"Cut and run!" for "Run away!" In this context, Axe calls for retreat or escape from a dangerous situation.
Invoker	Carl!	Proper Names	A reference to invoker's name before he became known as the invoker.
Chen	For Obelis, the one god	Proper Names	The lines 'Obelis' represents a powerful deity or entity within the game world. The phrase suggests devotion or allegiance to Obelis as the sole god, emphasizing his singular importance or supremacy.
Lone Druid	Sylla of the Bear Clan!	Proper Names	'Sylla' and 'Bear Clan' refer to the Lone Druid's name and his clan respectively.
Juggernaut	I'm the Juggernaut, Lich!	Proper Names	This plays on the popular phrase "I'm the Juggernaut, bitch!" from the X-Men comics and

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
			movies. In this context, Juggernaut is asserting his dominance over his enemies.
Bane	By the ichor of Nyctasha!	Proper Names	is a powerful exclamation or oath, referring to the power or sacred essence of the entity named Nyctasha.
Luna	Selemene commands	Proper Names	"Selemene" is a name, which is the moon goddess in the game of Dota 2.
Zeus	Your god has arrived	Proper Names	Indicates that Zeus (the god with the power of lightning) has come.
Morphling	Dangerous waters.	Proper Names	Refers to situations or conditions that are dangerous or risky.
Arc Warden	Zet is the Self, and the Self is Zet.	Proper Names	This emphasizes the unique nature and ability of the Arc Warden, who is able to create clones of himself, so that his self-concept and identity become highly integrated and indistinguishable from one another.
Dazzle	I cast a long shadow	Proper Names	"I cast a long shadow" does not refer literally to someone having a long shadow, but describes the power, dominance, or significant influence one has in a context.
Omniknight	Strength guides me	Proper Names	"strength guides me" suggests that determination and resilience lead Omniknight forward

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
Medusa	From stone to statue.	Proper Names	Refers to the process of turning something inert or dead into something alive or active, similar to the process of turning a stone into a statue.
Clockwerk	Gear up	English phrasal compounds	To prepare for an event or activity, Clockwerk might use this when he's preparing for a fight or equipping items
Pudge	Hooked em!	English phrasal compounds	"hooked em!" means connected, often with the connotation of a strong or sudden connection.
Tidehunter	Look what the tide washed in.	English phrasal compounds	This phrase is often used to express surprise or disbelief at someone or something that suddenly appears or is discovered.
Slark	Sealed in darkness	English phrasal compounds	Slark feels uncomfortable or unsuitable in certain situations that may be associated with darkness or uncertainty.
Terrorblade	I run afoul	English phrasal compounds	Run afoul means to get into trouble or conflict.
Huskar	To the Nothl Realm, I give my all.	English phrasal compounds	"I gave it my all." the meaning is to dedicate oneself completely.
Bristleback	Come on, have at me!	English phrasal compounds	A challenge to fight or confront him with aggression. This phrase is used to invite an opponent to attack or confront Bristleback.
Wraith King	Bow to your king!	Figures of Speech	Ordered them (the minions of ghosts or

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
			spirits) to show respect by bowing to him.
Troll Warlord	The strong shall eat the weak	Figures of Speech	This illustrates the principle of survival of the fittest or the law of the jungle, where the strong will defeat the weak.
Lich	Feel my cold embrace!	Figures of Speech	"Cold embrace" describes unpleasant and possibly deadly experiences or circumstances.
Witch Doctor	The Doctor is in!	Figures of Speech	Comparing Witch Doctor to a medical practitioner who is available to help.
Mars	To war! And glorious conquest! Yaaahh!	Figures of Speech	Mars enthusiastically calls for battle and victory.
Faceless Void	An eternity of embarrassment.	Figures of Speech	This expression indicates a deep sense of frustration or regret, most likely related to a failure in the game or an embarrassing event that Faceless Void experienced.
Kunkka	Batten the hatches!	Figures of Speech	Preparing for trouble or securing everything in anticipation of a storm.
Pugna	Down the drain	Figures of Speech	Something that is lost or wasted. It can indicate that something (such as an effort, resource, or opportunity) has been lost or has come to nothing.
Legion Commander	Whatever they brought, it won't be enough.	Figures of Speech	This describes the belief or trust that the opponent will not be able to face or

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
			overcome the challenge or threat they face, that whatever they prepare or bring will not be enough to defeat them.
Night Stalker	None can stand against me. There's no escape.	Figures of Speech	The Night Stalker considers herself to be very powerful and no one can fight her or escape her presence. This shows great self-confidence
Sven	There is no greater honor	Figures of Speech	Sven felt very honored by what he had accomplished. He felt that nothing else could bring him greater honor. This statement shows Sven's passion
Drow Ranger	Silent as Mist.	Figures of Speech	The Drow Ranger is very calm or silent, similar to fog which moves without sound. This illustrates the Drow Ranger's ability to move undetected, highlighting his skill in sneaking or approaching enemies silently.
Ancient Apparition	A cold wind blows.	Figures of Speech	This expression gives the impression of a cold and frightening atmosphere, indicating an approaching threat or the effects of the Ancient Apparition's presence.
Storm Spirit	I ride the wild winds	Figures of Speech	This expression gives the impression that Storm Spirit is an agile and strong

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
			character, and can harness the forces of nature for his own benefit.
Lina	Setting the bar real high.	Slang	Sets very high expectations, which can be used both in the context of the game and in other situations to show great expectations.
Slardar	Packed to the gills!	Slang	The phrase "Packed to the gills!" refers to a situation where there are tons of something, such as items, enemies, or players in an area.
Gyrocopter	Hot damn!	Slang	Shows a reaction to something surprising or amazing that happens in the game, such as a great achievement or an unexpected situation.
Puck	It's in the bag!	Slang	Spoken when the game is almost certain to be won by one of the teams. The meaning is that victory is certain or almost certain for that team.
Timbersaw	"Ha ha! Chop chop!"	Slang	Refers to Timbersaw's drive to act quickly in attacking or fighting the enemy.
Jakiro	We leave the nest	Slang	When Jakiro says "We are leaving the nest", this could mean that Jakiro or his team is ready to get out of their comfort zone and face bigger challenges or

Heroes	Voice Line	Type of Idiom	Meaning
			implement strategies in the game.
Monkey King	Let's Ride	Slang	"Let's ride" is used to invite someone to start an action or journey.
Magnus	Mind if I horn in?	Slang	"horn in" refers to Magnus wanting to join in on the team's action or strategy, or perhaps take part in a strategic conversation between fellow players.
Nature Prophet	Nature calls	Slang	This expression may be used loosely or as a joke, but it still refers to a person's basic needs that must be met

The analysis of idiomatic expressions in the voice lines of Dota 2 heroes reveals interesting insights into the game's language and storytelling. We identified 50 idioms, divided into six categories: Substitutes, Proper Names, Abbreviations, English Phrasal Compounds, Figures of Speech, and Slang. Each category shows how idioms are used to enhance character development and game interactions.

The diverse use of idiomatic expressions in Dota 2 offers valuable opportunities for language learning, especially for non-native English speakers. Video games can serve as effective tools for language acquisition by providing context-rich environments (Kartikasari et al., 2021). The idioms in Dota 2's voice lines present authentic language usage that can help players understand and internalize idiomatic expressions in context.

Idioms in Dota 2 are not just decorative; they play a crucial role in character development and storytelling. Each idiom is carefully selected to match the personality and background of the heroes, contributing to a richer narrative. Battle-related idioms by heroes like Axe and Tinker underscore their roles as warriors, while mystical references by heroes like Invoker and Luna emphasize their magical nature.

The analysis of idiomatic expressions in Dota 2 reveals a sophisticated use of language that enhances both gameplay and narrative depth. The variety of idioms creates a rich linguistic tapestry reflecting the diversity of characters and the complexity of the game world. This study highlights the importance of idioms in video games and their potential as tools for language learning and narrative development.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of idiomatic expressions in the voice lines of Dota 2 heroes reveals the rich linguistic diversity embedded within the game's narrative. By categorizing these idioms into six types Substitutes, Proper Names, Abbreviations, English Phrasal Compounds, Figures

of Speech, and Slang. We have demonstrated how these expressions enhance character development and the overall gaming experience.

The findings show that idiomatic expressions are not merely ornamental but serve critical functions in conveying character traits, emotions, and cultural references. For instance, phrases like Axe's "Cut and run!" and Sniper's "Bulls-eye!" provide insight into the characters' personalities and actions, while expressions such as Juggernaut's "I'm the Juggernaut, Lich!" showcase cultural intertextuality and player engagement.

Moreover, this research underscores the potential of video games as valuable tools for language learning. The idioms used in Dota 2 offer authentic examples of language in use, presenting non-native English speakers with practical and context-rich opportunities to understand and internalize these expressions. The game's immersive environment enables players to encounter and practice idiomatic language in a dynamic and engaging context, thereby enhancing their linguistic competence and confidence.

The integration of idiomatic expressions in Dota 2 not only enriches the game's storytelling and character interaction but also provides a meaningful and effective avenue for language acquisition. Future research could further explore the pedagogical applications of video games in language learning, examining how different game genres and narratives can be harnessed to support linguistic and cultural education.

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