

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This section discusses the collected data that is used to answer the two problem formulations of (1) How have video games been identified as one of the products of popular culture? and (2) What are the tournament gamers' preferences in playing video games?

The writer has analyzed the data collected from 30 respondents within the age range of 17-26 years old from both genders. The genders of the respondents have proven the theory that video games are played by mostly boys, with the exact calculation of 90 % of boys and 40% of girls as argued by Keller (2019) in the literature review section. The writer received results from his respondents that the boys are always more in numbers than the girls. In this research, it is found that 67% of the players are boys and 33% of girls.

The literature review by Rani et.al. (2019) and also Al-mansour (2019), informed that there were two most popular video games worldwide: *Mobile Legends* and *PUBG Mobile*. In confirming which of these two games were played by the game players, the questionnaire's 1st question asked which of the two games they prefer to play. Table 1 below showed that *Mobile Legends* is most preferred by 96.7% of the players.

Table 4.1 Respondent's Preferred Game

No.	Video Game Title	Percentage
1	<i>Mobile Legends</i>	96.7%
2	<i>PUBG Mobile</i>	3.3%
Total Percentage		100%

Based on the writer's experience, playing *Mobile Legends* is a much more interesting game to play than *PUBG Mobile* because:

1. It has a great character design and interesting skins (costumes) to use
2. It has a more addictive gameplay mechanism (full-action) than *PUBG Mobile*, such as smashing buttons all the time, the announcer for the game, the quick chat feature and also the cool winning screen.
3. The developers offer more rewards for playing than *PUBG Mobile* developers

This reasoning, however, needs to be cross-checked with the respondents who responded to the questionnaire, in order to be confirmed with further questions given through an interview, like discussed in the following research question findings.

4.1 Popular Culture Characteristics of Video Games

The first research question asked how video games could be proven as a product of popular culture. To answer this question, the writer made use of the characteristics of popular culture that were framed by Dukut (2020) which were: (1) entertaining, (2) easy to access, (3) manipulative in nature, (4) cheap and affordable, (5) creating a global lifestyle, (6) reflecting people's daily life, (7) following the pattern of a certain

era, (8) temporary, (9) practical, and (10) bringing financial benefits for the creators/producers. Details on how the respondents have agreed or disagreed on the characteristics is elaborated in 4.1.1. until 4.1.10.

4.1.1 Entertaining

Question number 3: “*Apakah anda merasa puas setelah memainkan sebuah video game?*” (Do you feel satisfied after playing a video game?) resulted in the first finding in which 100% of the respondent agreed that video games gave them a sense of satisfaction, so they felt entertained and satisfied. The writer was supported by interviewee 1, who said that the video game in *Mobile Legends* is entertaining.

Interviewer 1: “*Unsur apa yang menarik atau yang menyenangkan dari Mobile Legend. Apakah mungkin karakternya atau mungkin teknik bermain gamenya atau unsur yang lainnya?*”

(What fun or interesting elements do you find from *Mobile Legends*? Is it the characters or gaming techniques, or other reasons?”

Interviewee 1: “*Yang menarik dari mobile legend adalah skin heronya yang bagus. Kemudian dari developernya itu banyak melakukan perubahan, sehingga mekanisme kita bermain selalu berubah, dan kita lebih bisa mengimprove untuk menemukan cara bermain yang lebih tepat untuk bermain di match yang terbaru,*”

(What’s interesting from the *Mobile Legends* is the availability of the cool hero skins and the game developer’s application of the many changes that

affected our game mechanism. Thanks to that we can improve ourselves to find a more proper way to play for a new match,")

Studying the above interview response, Interviewee 1's answer was related to the writer's own preference of selecting the Mobile Legends characters with their skins (costumes) within the game to be ready on the battlefield has brought enjoyment for him, too. The chance to be personally related with the game's characters by selecting their costumes has made the game livelier because it made game players felt as though he was the character playing on the battlefield, too.

The writer has once heard that some Indonesian people would also connect to the clear graphics with modernization when saying: "*Gambarnya kok sudah bagus ya, berarti sudah berkembang*" (The graphics are better now, which means that it has developed). When a video games' graphic has greatly improved, it meant that it has developed its pixels picture/video to be similar to real-life picture/video.

4.1.2 Easy to Obtain

The data was based on question number 4: "*Apakah Video Games sangat mudah untuk didapatkan?*" (Is video games very easy to obtain?), which resulted in all respondents saying yes. This finding proved that video games were very easy to get because it was available everywhere. To support this data, further confirmation can be found in interview 1, which resulted specifically by the interview question number 3 which the interviewee replied: "*Oh banyak. Mobile Legend sangat mudah untuk ditemukan. Lagi buka Instagram, berandanya muncul Mobile Legend. Di appstore juga ada Mobile Legend. Di youtube ada. ya menurutku Mobile legend udah game yang*

gede lah, jadi gampang untuk didapatkan.” (Oh, plenty. Mobile Legend is very easy to find. When opening Instagram, on the homepage appears Mobile Legend. In the AppStore, there is also a Mobile Legend and there is one on youtube. Yes, I think Mobile legend is already a big game, so it's easy to get).

The writer agreed that video games were easy to get almost in any gadget app because there were also supported by commercials from any social media like YouTube, IG, etc. For further evidence, it was found that two browsing applications which were *IOS/AppStore* were made available for those who used *iPhone* and *play store* on android phones (see Figure 1). This meant that the video makers have made it clear that they wanted as many game players as possible to play with their game products.

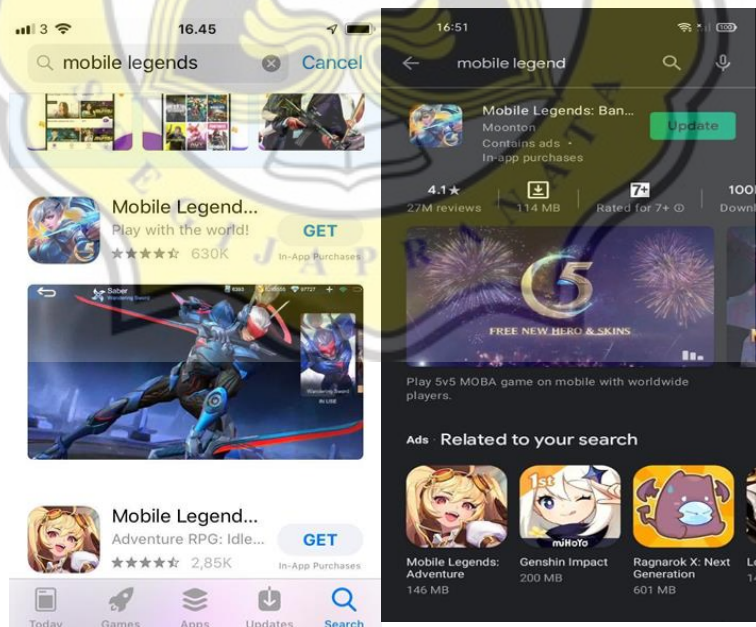


Figure 4.1 Mobile Legends Available on Appstore (left) and Playstore (right)

(Source: *Appstore* for I-Phones and *Playstore* for Android Phones)

Through the figure above, the writer understood that the video games from *Mobile Legends* were made available for any kind of device so that players could have easy access to it. With the result of this finding, it showed that video games were very easy to get because it exists/available in many places. It was enticing to learn that many games were also made available at a free price.

The tactic of the video game makers did not stop in giving free prices to play the game. They also added other kinds of bonuses to which a bored player would be eager in jumping back into the action of playing games. There was once a personal experience, when the writer felt bored playing *Mobile Legends* and decided not to play with it, but when he watched YouTube, he found an interesting *Mobile Legends* promotion on one of the YouTube's ads. The YouTube ads promotion told of a collaboration event between *Mobile Legends* and Star Wars. This unintended promotion had pushed the writer's interest back in re-playing *Mobile Legends*. The promotion of *Mobile Legends* seems to be never-ending. In addition to other advertisement promotions, such as a free chance of playing *Mobile Legends* as soon as someone tops up on their mobile phone in a minute, *Mobile Legends* also provided free merchandise to take, like shown in a YouTube advertisement in <https://youtu.be/9FgKFUNM96Y>.

4.1.3 Manipulating

Referring to the discussion above, it was found that video games have their way of manipulating players to continue playing their games. For this finding,

respondents were asked to confirm by giving the following question: “*Apakah bermain sebuah video game mempengaruhi emosi atau mental anda (bersifat manipulatif)?*” (Does playing a video game affect you emotionally or mentally (manipulative?)). This question asked about Dukut’s information where one out of ten characteristics of popular culture was having a manipulative nature (2020). The results of this finding was shown in the following table, where 93.1% of the respondents agreed that games were manipulative:

Table 4.2 Respondent’s Answers on Video Games’ Manipulative Nature

No.	Respondent’s answers	Percentage
1	Agreed	93.1%
2	Disagreed	6.9%
Total Percentage		100%

The data results above showed that most of the respondents agreed that video games indeed have a manipulative nature. The data was supported by an experience in dealing with video games parties, too. Video game producers always seem to plan on keeping players playing and look forward to playing more and more games. One of the ways of making players wanted to play other games was the continuation of the story plot of games. It is of no surprise then that there was a preference category of players, who referred to the plot and characters of video games like found by Anita Ching’s research (2005) which was discussed in 4.2.1.

In *Mobile Legends*, the developers and also the producers of the game have a feature called RANK. Rank is a feature to show the other players how powerful you are in a game. The rank is divided into 7 levels: the 1st one is warrior, 2nd one is elite, 3rd one is master, 4th one is grandmaster, 5th one is epic, 6th one is a legend, and 7th or the last one is mythic. Mythic is the highest rank in *Mobile Legends* and warrior is the lowest one. Aside from that, some ranks represent the territorial of the players for example Indonesia is no. 21 Lesley. It means the player is the top 21 user of the hero Lesley in the country of Indonesia. The local level ranks encompass province, capital, and even street.

The writer interpreted the above condition to show that video games were heavily affecting the player's emotion as well, because of the sense of wanting to complete certain missions to achieve victory and gain ranks. The excitement, however, was not just in achieving certain ranks but in also combating the obstacles of the games that are advancing as the player progress, thus, manipulating players to do their best each time they succeeded in overcoming obstacles.

Mobile Legends manipulate players to keep on playing by giving battle points or skin/costume of a random hero. Acquiring a skin for a random hero was an exciting feature that players often fight for because it became the opportunity for players to show their personal signatures on the video games' hero. It was interesting to note, that the satisfaction of putting on the skin for a chosen hero has undermined the manipulative nature video games have over players. It could be said that players were made not to feel the manipulation video game producers gave on them because the

excitement in playing the game has overridden that negative impact. In pursuit of acquiring the best rank in *Mobile Legends*, gamers felt lost if they do not play regularly because they will only start to notice some regular pattern to defeat their enemies. This playstyle pattern is further discussed in section 4.2.7.

4.1.4 Cheap and Affordable

Question number 5 which asked: “*Bagaimana menurut anda harga sebuah video game?*” (What do you think about video games’ price?) showed the finding that video games are sought for by players because they are affordably cheap. The data provided results of respondents who believed as follows:

Table 4.3 Respondent’s Answer on Video Games’ Price

No.	Respondent’s answers	Percentage
1	Cheap	86.7%
2	Expensive	9.1%
3	Some are expensive, some are cheap	4.2.%
Total Percentage		100%

Being regarded as cheap by 86.7% of the respondents is related to the characteristics of popular culture in 4.1.5. because video games become a medium for having a global-local lifestyle. It makes sense because everyone from abroad or from the inner country may be influenced by the lifestyle represented by the video game characters or heroes. As already shown in 4.1.2. with Figure 1, *Mobile Legends* is usually free to download, so it was making video games ever more popular.

4.1.5 Global-Local Lifestyle

Continuing the data results of the previous section, this finding was based on the question of number 7 which said: “*Apakah video game menciptakan gaya hidup lokal yang mendunia (Lokal-Global)?*” (Is video games creating a global-local lifestyle?). Data showed that 29 out of 30 respondents claimed that during gameplay, the players of *Mobile Legends* could experience a global lifestyle because of what they saw in the video which may show off a foreign culture. For example, the culture of being in a car competition was more often held in western rather than eastern countries where the car racing urban track was usually maintained more professionally than the eastern way of using virgin rural car racing tracks. Thus, the kinds of service facilities a car race may receive as bonuses to game players were showing a global lifestyle rather than a local one to Indonesian players.

The interactions players often did with those from other countries through the worldwide popular video game like *Mobile Legends* was also considered learning a global yet also local lifestyle. When players were matched up with a player from another country, it was an opportunity to learn about each culture’s different forms of lifestyles in a process called worldwide matchmaking. This is exactly what the writer experienced when he played with a Japanese player in the game *Grand Theft Auto Online*. Through a chat facility in the video game, he learned that the Japanese have a fast approach when attacking enemies and pursuing the completion of an objective while the Japanese player learned that Indonesian people like the writer consider that planning was the best way to obtain victory, of which sometimes made

miscommunication between the writer and the foreigner. So basically the Japanese were rushing players and Indonesian was tactically based on the writer's perspective. However, when they learn each other's behavior, they can work together as a team and put aside all differences.

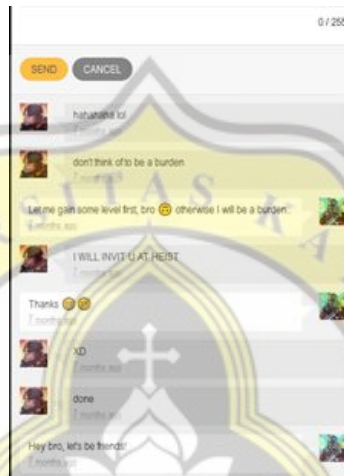


Figure 4.2 The Writer and a Foreigner chatting in A Chat Facility by the Developers of Grand Theft Auto Online

(Source: <https://socialclub.rockstargames.com/>)

4.1.6 Daily Life Reflection

The question: “*Apakah video game mencerminkan kehidupan sehari-hari anda?*” (Do video games reflect your everyday life?) is supported by the interview question number 5 which asked: “*Apakah anda setuju bahwa game atau video game itu adalah sebuah Budaya populer? Yang sehari-harinya ada di kehidupan kita? Selalu melekat sebagai unsur di kehidupan kita?*” (Do you agree that games or video games are a popular culture? What is in our daily life? Always attached as an element in our lives?) The writer found that 66.7% of respondents agreed and 33.3% of the

respondents disagreed regarding the characteristic of video games that can reflect people's daily life. The following was the data obtained from the interview:

Interviewee 1

“Itu kembali ke setiap pribadi masing masing ya. Kalo ditanya untuk saya pribadi, ya kalo sehari ga megang Mobile Legend rasanya kayak aneh. Jadi kayak sebelum tidur harus main dulu sama temen-temen, nge push rank sampe bener –bener yang capek banget baru selesai.” (That is depending to each individual, if you ask me personally, If I don't play *Mobile Legends* for a day, it feels weird. So it's like before going to bed, I have to play with my friends first, push rank until I get really tired, and eventually stop)

The statement above mainly tells that normally gamers consider video games as something that needs to be done each day; otherwise they felt uncomfortable as something seems to be missing. The same thing was felt by the writer when he does not play a game once a day. The writer interpreted from the numbers of the data that the players who agreed must have thought that video games affect their life orientation, education, and also creativity. Those who disagreed were those who probably just play video games to kill time because they do not feel they need to play them regularly.

Playing video games to 66.7% of the players was a daily life necessity because they had goals to complete, for the players to achieve a higher level by getting special weapons and items to ease the next video gameplay. This situation was similar when playing the game. As players, they must have a set of goals to achieve their daily

missions, and they would never stop doing it until they felt they have accomplished the goals. In one way, this informs that video game players were persistent and responsible people because they had high goals to achieve whatever they put their minds into, yet at the same time these players may be considered irresponsible when their total immersion with the game was making their real life's duties in chaos.

Some players were so intense with game playing that they forgot to do everything else. Some even forgot to take a bath and even eat, that parents often told game players to stop playing because the players were not living a normal life. The abnormality was often caused by the playtime of the game which in real life should be the time for people sleeping. In the writer's personal experience, playing video games during sleeping hours was due to the stronger internet connection and also because it was in those times that people were not working or doing their daily working/ studying routines. As responsible players, people would know when to stop and when to start playing games. Irresponsible players, however, kept on playing and were forgetting how to live like normal people. Thus, video game playing was representing the daily lives of people.

4.1.7 Period of Time Reflection

Question number 9 asked: "*Apakah video game mencerminkan periode tertentu suatu kehidupan seperti acara hari besar?*" (Do video games reflect certain periods of life like holiday events?) and 73% of the players agreed that video games are consistently following a certain period like Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving Day. The writer agreed with the 73% of the respondents for he experienced those events

while playing *Mobile Legends*, those who disagreed probably just didn't notice the game's menu environment and probably they are the type of players who just focus on the gameplay only, although the writer is highly doubtful about this. Some of these results could be seen from the additional data recorded by AFK gaming with a picture as follows:

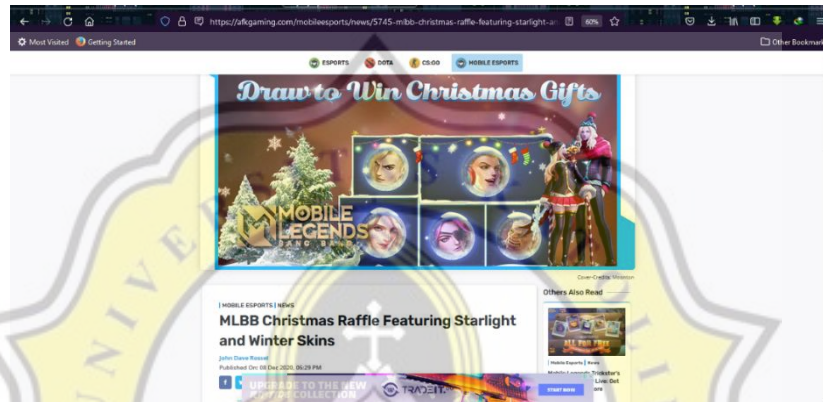


Figure 4.3 AFK Gaming web page about *Mobile Legends* following a certain period
(Source: <https://afkgaming.com/mobilesports/news/5745-mlbb-christmas-raffle-featuring-starlight-and-winter-skins>)

The figure above showed that in special holiday events there are usually discounts and winning free items in the game to increase the player's interest in continuing to play the games. The writer also noticed that in *Mobile Legends* the developers also used authentic music from unique cultures like Hawaiian music. The Hawaiian music was played in the event section of the video game and features some kind of complex music composition, which was like a beach class music with a Hawaiian hero's accessory on its thumbnail (see figure 4.4), which could affect the player's emotion in the video game to have a relaxed, sensational feeling. This gave

proof that one of Ching's (2005) findings period of music as a cultural influence on a video game was found true.



Figure 4.4 The Hero Johnson's Jeepney Racer Skin featuring a Hawaiian Accessory on its Thumbnail

(Source: Mobile Legends Application)

4.1.8 Temporary

In this finding, the writer found out from his respondents who answered the question: “*Apakah video game memiliki sifat yang sementara?*” (Does video games have a temporary nature?) that the contents of a video game are not always immortal, because they have a temporary nature (see table 4). Video games have the consistency to change over time because they often update their contents to continually improve the video games. The developers do this with the hope that every update they applied in their games will lead towards perfection (Granic et al., 2014).

Table 4.4 Respondent's Answer on the Temporary Nature of Video Games

No.	Respondent's answers	Percentage
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1	Yes	96.7%
2	No	3.3%
Total Percentage		100%

The data result above has proven that video games fulfill one of the popular culture's characteristics mentioned by Dukut (2020) and by Zammito (2019) who said that video games are always changing over time. Further evidence could also be found in the **Interview 1** dialog (see 4.1.1) where the interviewee stated that the updates for the new gameplay were what made him always curious to know about the newly updated facilities or plot offered by the game. From experience, the writer acknowledged that *Mobile Legends* have MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena), which always updated the graphical changes of costumes and weapons, thus making players wanted to try the new facilities by playing the updated game.

4.1.9 Practical

Question number 11 which asked: "*Apakah Video Game bersifat praktis?*" (Is Video Games practical?) resulted in 96.7% of his respondents in agreement that video games have a practical nature. It was practical because players could play video games everywhere at any time. It had no boundaries or limitations because the platform of *Mobile Legends* was in our daily mobile phone gadget, which was small and light, thus it was very practical. This practicality made players use the game to kill time, while for example, being stuck in a waiting room, waiting to be checked up by a doctor. Being

alone and having nobody to talk to, this situation was very conducive for a gamer to play a video game via a mobile phone.

Mobile Legends was not only available on a mobile phone, but it was also on a device called *PS Vita (PlayStation Portable)*. It was created by *Sony*. Its predecessor is *PSP* or a short for *PlayStation Portable*. It was also practical to carry because of its small size (see Figure 4.5).



Figure 4.5 The Writer's PS Vita

As can be seen, *PS Vita* was portable and can be used anywhere like the mobile phone that can be carried anywhere. Unlike *PS 2* and *PS 3* where it required a television and cables in order for to play, *PS Vita* was far more concise because the screen was within the gadget, so it could be used anywhere and anytime.

4.1.10 Financial Benefit

The question number 12 asked: “*Apakah Video Game bisa menghasilkan keuntungan secara finansial?*” (Can Video Games make a financial benefit?). For this question, the respondents of this research, who were participants of a gaming tournament held by the Faculty of Language and Arts, have all (100%) agreed that

Mobile Legends brought financial benefits. The reason was that there was a monetary prize given to its winners. Xiao (2020) explained that the arcade of games business in public places did bring in 10 times of fortune to not only the players but more importantly to the manager of the mentioned business. This became the reason for business managers to cooperate with advertisement agencies to promote video games with attractive prizes, merchandise, or persuasive language in their advertisements

4.2 The Preferences of Tournament Players in Playing Video Games as a Popular Culture

The second research question aimed to identify the preferences of the video game players that drove them to live a life of gaming. The indicators of this section took in Ching (2005) and Zammito (2019)'s elements which attracted players to play video games.

4.2.1 English Language Learning

This section is about the finding of player's preference from the question number 19 which stated: "*Apakah salah satu faktor ketertarikan anda untuk bermain video game dikarenakan judul yang dipakai menggunakan Bahasa Inggris?*" (Is one of the factors of your interest in playing video games because the title used is in English?) In this question, the writer assumed that English titles used in video games become a factor in attracting players. Fortunately, the questionnaire showed that 65.5% of the respondents agreed that the English titles are affecting the popularity of the video games themselves and also their preferences. The opposing 34.5% of respondents disagreed on this (see table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Respondent's Answer on the Preference of Playing Video Games is because of the English Titles

No.	Respondent's answers	Percentage
1	Yes	65.5%
2	No, because they are just complementary elements	34.5%
Total Percentage		100%

Based on the data above, the writer interpreted that English title is really important because Japanese game developers have used the same strategy of using English titles to attract players until they achieve international level popularity. Even if the original title of the video games was Japanese, they will usually have an alternate title that was written in English. An example of this was the writer's favorite horror game: *Resident Evil*. *Resident Evil* is the title of its international version, but in Japanese, the title was *Biohazard*. In Indonesia, Indonesian video games, which used English titles to popularize themselves are *DreadOut* (2014) and *Valthirian Arc: Hero School Story* (2018). Titles in the English language were believed to show high-quality products because it was expected for the game to not only be played by local but also global players. For that reason, the plot and challenges should have been organized with high quality.

In the writer's circle of gaming communities, *Mobile Legends* was shortened to *ML*. When a player wanted to ask another player to play together, they usually just

mentioned the word *ML* and the other player would nod as a sign of agreement and would start his or her phone to log into the game. This meant that the title *Mobile Legends* or *ML* was catchy, easy to memorize, and gave players the feel that they were accepted in a qualified community. This finding made the writer interpret that video games drove the players to be enthusiastic in learning more English language. This finding is supported by 93.1% of the respondents (see table 6) who agreed on learning English while playing video games.

Table 4.6 Respondent's Answer about English Learning in Video Games

No.	Respondent's answers	Percentage
1	Yes	93.1%
2	No	6.9%
Total Percentage		100%

Regarding the fact that English is the main international language in the world (Vodopija-Krstanović & Marinac, 2019), video games can *help* the players improve their English learning while refreshing their minds from staring a dictionary for hours to learn new English vocabulary, which was boring.

The writer is also a video game player. He never took any English course during his life. In learning English vocabulary, he merely studied English by watching movies and playing video games. Most people believed that understanding the English language used in movies or games needs the help of translated texts on a screen. If there were no translated texts it would be difficult to understand the goals or objectives. The

writer saw this translated text, however, not only to understand the objectives but to also learn the English language by matching up with the corresponding Indonesian texts on the screen. When he played the video games in *PlayStation 2* he felt like he was watching a movie while reading the gaming languages to understand the game's command, hints, and dialogue). It turned out that the writer's respondents used the same method that is why 96.7% of them agreed on the importance of learning English through playing games.

The following 2 questions were asked about the use of the English language:

Question number 17: "*Apakah bahasa yang dipakai dalam game yang anda mainkan mayoritasnya menggunakan Bahasa Inggris?* (Does the language used in the game you play in the majority used English language?)

Question number 18: "*Apakah dengan bermain video game kosakata dalam Bahasa Inggris anda bertambah?* (Does playing video games increase your English vocabulary?)

Both questions above basically discussed the use of the English language in a video game and what impacts it brought to the players. For example, *Mobile Legends* is a video game that forced its players to use the English language actively because the story and mechanisms to play the game cannot be understood if players do not learn English actively (Rudis & Poštić, 2018). Figure 6 below showed that the menu of playing the game is in the English language, so it means that players should have some English understanding if they wanted to play the game.

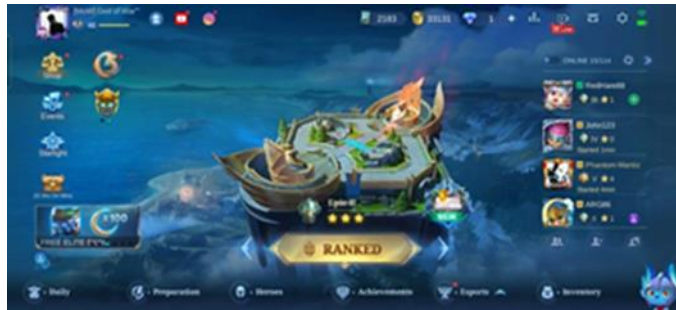


Figure 4.6 Mobile Legends Main Menu using English Language Terms
 (Source: Mobile Legends Application)

Similarly, in using the quick chat menu, players have no other choice but to also learn and use the English language actively to play the game. As can be seen in Figure 4.7, a player was given choices in answering a chat by choosing either a “thank you, well played, enemy missing, wait for me, on my way, okay, clear up lanes” and many more for their gameplay.

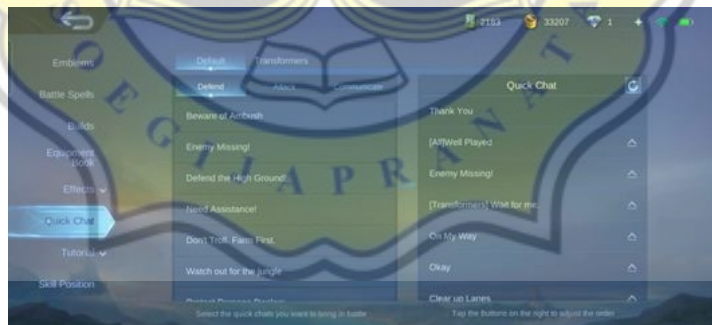


Figure 4.7 Mobile Legends Quick Chat Adjustment Function
 (Source: Mobile Legends Application)

The quick chat function was made for the players to communicate easily amongst each other. Although the game also provided an auto-translate facility, most

players feel that they are more distinguished when using the English language to chat with others.



Figure 4.8 Mobile Legends Quick Chat Adjustment Function
(Source: *Mobile Legends* Application)

As informed earlier. Although the game developers provided a chatbox for the players to speak freely with their teammates and even to their enemies using their respective languages, typing in the chatbox will get them distracted from the tense of the battlefield, so the developers made a single tap function in the quick chat for players to communicate. Playing video games, therefore, is an advantage for English Department students, who wanted to exercise their English entertainingly.

4.2.2 Plot

Based on the results of question number 13, it was found that 23.3% believed that the plot, which included the setting of the video games were complementary

elements because the main element in video games was the competing nature of the characters. This was why they often wanted to make up their own storyline.

Table 4.7 Respondent's Answer on Plot of Video Games

No.	Respondent's answers	Percentage
1	Yes	76.7%
2	No, because they are just complementary elements	23.3%
Total Percentage		100%

Those who thought the plot was an important element are giving their agreement that the Adventure, Mystery, Fantasy, and Science-fiction with love as sub-theme in the game is interesting to follow, and were therefore enjoying the game for not only the challenges faced but also for the storyline.

Just like *Mobile Legends*, the plot of the *Assassins' Creed* was an equally interesting video game because it relied on historical events and characters' costumes that were inspired by European to Greece culture. For example, was the scene when the Lisbon Earthquake occurred which was telling players of a historical event in the year 1755 (see <https://youtu.be/97cafnuufH0>). In addition, the costume in *Assassins Creed Odyssey* was telling players about Greek culture (see https://youtu.be/gLIcDTtoH_-s). This proved that Anita Ching's (2005) findings about the game giving cultural influences to players is found true.

The video games' plot and character's costume, was in fact, just as important as the mechanic (joy/gameplay/techniques) of the video game itself. Elliott (2016) supported this when he said that *Assassin's Creed* could rely on its historical and cultural lessons. Without a good plot, the video game would not be complete, because it was the mysteries and challenges that players would face that made the game interesting.

4.2.3 Characters

In addition to the plot, 80% of the respondents agreed that the accessories, such as the costumes worn by video games' characters were making players more interested in playing video games. This statement was supported by an interviewee who responded to interviewee 1's question as follows:

Interviewee 1:“*Yang menarik dari mobile legend yang pasti skinnya lebih bagus. Kemudian dari developernya itu banyak melakukan perubahan, sehingga mekanisme kita bermain selalu berubah, dan kita lebih bisa mengimprove untuk menemukan cara bermain yang lebih tepat untuk di match yang terbaru. Itu sih menurutku yang menarik.*”

(What's interesting from the *Mobile Legends* is the availability of the cool hero skins and the game developer's application of the many changes that affected our game mechanism. Thanks to that we can improve ourselves to find a better way to play for a new match.)

This was proof that the gamers have cultural senses, to which Ching (2005) related to the costumes of the video games' characters were inspired by cultural diversities. An

example of a scene in *Mobile Legends* was the Javanese hero's costume from *Gatotkaca*.



Figure 4.9 The Hero Gatotkaca as in *Mobile Legends*

(Source: *Mobile Legends* Application)

The writer found that *Gatotkaca* has a selection of costumes called *Sentinel* which made him more like a futuristic robot. This costume design could have been inspired by American robotics technology. Thus, the hybrid of modern (see Figure 4.10) and traditional (see Figure 4.9) cultures for the *Gatotkaca's* costume was impressive to see.



Figure 4.10 The Hero Gatotkaca as seen in *Mobile Legends*

(Source: *Mobile Legends* Application)

Mobile Legends video game was interesting to play not only for the hybrid costumes the hero wore. Question number 15 asked: “*Apakah penentuan peta jalan permainan yang anda terapkan ke karakter yang anda mainkan membuat anda lebih senang dalam bermain?*” (Does the determination of the roadmap that you apply to the characters you play within the game make you happier in playing?). This question is asking about the video flow preference of the players where they had the right to direct the characters in where they considered became the correct pathway for the gameplay. This was usual to do and was relevant with Zammito’s preference measurement indicators by Zammito (2019) which talked about the flow the video game players chose. With 73.3% out of 100% respondents, who said yes on this question, proved that this capability of determining the in-game characters’ path was what made players satisfied and happy.

Table 4.8 Respondent’s Answer on Determining Path for the In-Game Characters

No.	Respondent’s answers	Percentage
1	Yes	73.3%
2	No	26.7%
Total Percentage		100%

Mobile Legends. Despite *Mobile Legends* being made to have MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena) facility, the players could take control of the in-game characters by navigating each of their in-game characters to secure victory by taking down the enemy’s base.

4.2.4 Happy Feeling

Question number 16 asked: “*Apakah ketertarikan anda dalam bermain game adalah karena membuat anda dapat mengalir atau (nge-flow) untuk melanjutkan permainan sehingga bisa melegakan diri dan merasa rileks?*” (Is your interest in playing games because it allows you to flow or (flow) to continue playing so that you can relax and feel relaxed?). For this question, and 96.7% of the respondents agreed that they felt relaxed when playing video games. They felt relaxed and satisfied because they can control their players to win the game, and it was through the game that they felt they can free their minds off work and studying obligations.

Video games’ contents are not real, they are imaginary. It was these imaginary characters, setting, and a plot that made the game entertaining. This reasoning adheres with Russoniello’s (2009) opinion that video games are very effective in relieving players from stressful minds that were keeping them from being free and happy

In reflection to the writer’s personal experience, video game playing could be a let-out for stressful things. In the real world, if you hit someone because you are angry with him or her, you can be charged and arrested for an assault, which will not result in a happy ending. However, in a gaming world, when you kill your enemy hero by moving very swiftly with punching the right buttons to kill the enemies in *Mobile Legends*, you will not be charged nor be arrested for killing, because it is enclosed within the imaginary world of the game.

Based on question number 20 which asked:”*Apakah game yang anda mainkan mempunyai suatu mekanisme yang membuat anda memiliki gaya bermain tersendiri*

(*khas*)?" (Does the game you play have a mechanism that makes you have your own (typical) playing style?) and received 90% agreement from the respondents showed that satisfaction, happiness, and the feeling of being relaxed was also influenced by the fact that they can invent their own a playstyle signature on the game's characters.

Table 4.9 Respondent's Answer on The Preference of Inventing their own Playstyles in Mobile Legends (Video Games)

No.	Respondent's answers	Percentage
1	Yes	90%
2	No, because they are just complementary elements	10%
Total Percentage		100%

Inventing their own signature playstyles in the game was satisfying because their playing skills were increased alongside their creativity. The same creativity was experienced by the writer when playing a video game. He also can customize the provided elements of attack and in-game characters' powers based on his own created concept. The writer imagined that playing a video game was like drawing paper. What is done with that paper is up to the creator. Almost anything can be drawn on paper, with pencil, pen, eraser, and coloring pens, yet it needed creativity and innovation to make unique playstyles and have the character hero win the game.

Video games are not just about smashing buttons and yelling on victories, but video games also involve thinking and interpreting the ways of becoming a winner

inside the game, thus, proving the preference measurement by Zammito (2019) about players who preferred to play video games to have a signature playstyle for fun and opening up their creativity.

The last research findings was based on the last question, number 21 which asked: *“Apakah melalui bermain game membuat anda merasakan emosi yang menyenangkan atau emosi yang lainnya?”* (Does playing games make you feel pleasant emotions or other emotions?). Data about 90% of respondents who were satisfied was supported by interviewee 1’s answer that was attached to the previous section in 4.1.1 about the application of the character’s skin and gameplay mechanism that made the players happy in playing.

Being a product of popular culture, playing video games has been proven to provide people with happy emotions. The happy emotion from video games did not always result from being a player, but also in becoming an audience of video games whether it is in a regular match or tournament. This is worth mentioning; because recently the commentators of the *FBS Unika x Grand Order Semarang MLBB E-Sport Tournament S1* has made the event livelier and made the audience who watched through the zoom platform become happy.

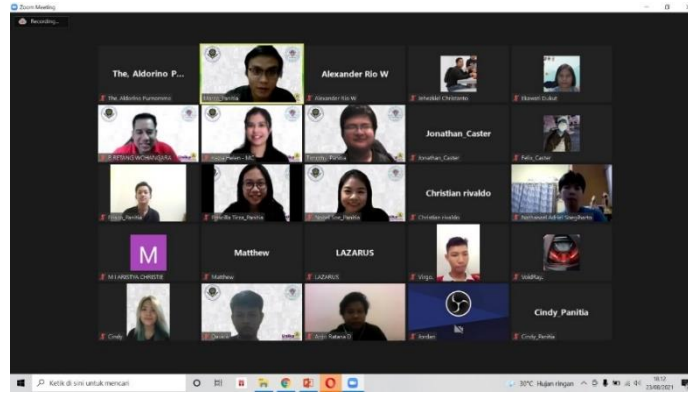


Figure 4.11 The Grand Final Attendees of FBS Unika x Grand Order Semarang MIBB E-Sport Tournament S1

(Source: Zoom Application)

In his experience as an audience or spectator rather than a player, he and the others found that they have the same happy intensity as the players. Playing *Mobile Legends* is like playing a soccer game, where two different teams are competing with each other to achieve victory. Not only do the players get excited, but the spectators who are sitting on a podium and seeing the game are also all excited and feeling happy. These people would buy any kind of merchandise to support their team and were willing to pay whatever was the entrance because they wanted to feel the excitement of the game by seeing the competition directly.

As said in the literature review, *Mobile Legends* is an online game. It has the potential to be broadcast on YouTube or any other media just like a soccer game which has the audience onsite and those watching on television as a form of entertainment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The writer has been a gamer since he was five. Ever since then, he has always found that playing a video game is about happiness and joy. Just like informed by Zammito (2019), a video game is made to bring up the players' happy emotions. By

having done so, the true purpose of a video game, which brings satisfaction to people who search for entertainment was achieved. In other words, a video game is a product that fulfills one of the characteristics of popular culture.

