

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

In today's digital era, e-Sports are considered as everywhere cultural phenomena around the world (Wagner 2006). According to Baek et al. (2007), e-Sports are competitive computer and video game play presented to its users through a TV relay broadcasting system and the Internet. This new kind of sport has grown extremely by the rising number of worldwide competitions (Ayar 2018).

Many organizers and video game companies have started to facilitate professional gaming competitions for live audiences (Wagner, 2006, p. 1). In Southeast Asia, e-Sport competitions were firstly held as a branch of sports in SEA Games 2019 with six different professional gaming categories which are *Mobile Legends: Bang Bang*, *Arena of Valor (AOV)*, *Tekken 7*, *Starcraft 2*, *Hearthstone*, and *Dota 2* (Diew 2019). One of the most popular games in e-Sport that were competed in SEA Games 2019 is Dota 2 (Fox Sports 2019).

According to Schubert et al. (2016), Dota 2 (*Defense of the Ancients*) is a video game developed by Valve which is based on the real-time strategy that involves multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA). Basically, this game is played by two teams of five players who work to attack their opponent's territory, destroy enemy defenses called "towers", and eventually devastate the enemy "ancient" or a large rock-like structure on the opposing team's base (Castaneda, et al. 2016). Additionally, Razer as a gaming utilized company has also supported the event of

Dota 2 by providing the live streaming matches through its official YouTube Channel.

According to Prihastomo (2019), YouTube platform is considered as one of the alternative broadcasting channels for gaming communities to collect information related to e-Sports competition of SEA Games 2019. In Razer YouTube Channel, the video of gold medal match of Dota 2 was led by sportscasters that provided the whole explanation about the ongoing match. Lewandowski (2012) stated that sportscasters usually involve a professional broadcaster whose job is to provide a detailed account of actions on the field and an expert summarizer such as a pundit – a coach or a former player – that reviews some of the game events. However, in the field of e-Sport, especially Dota 2, the sportscasters are usually called casters (British Esports Association 2019).

Casters commentary of Dota 2 match can be distinguished into two kinds in which one comments on the situation of the game and the other one comments about something outside the game. It is similar to what Holmes (2013) stated in sports announcer talk which is divided into two different types of commentary that are play-by-play description that focuses on actions on the game and colour commentary that focuses more on nouns that are tended to be heavily modified (p. 262).

In Dota 2 play-by-play commentary, there were some linguistic aspects produced by the casters, as one of them said, “*They will take the Undying.*” (“Esports @ SEA Games 2019 – Gold Medal Matches for Hearthstone, AOV and DOTA 2,” YouTube video, 11:55:00, live broadcasted by “Razer,” December 9,

2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAUwnPgbUas&t=34266s>). Firstly, the caster of Dota 2 tended to use specific vocabulary, which contains meaning that is different from its common meaning listed in a dictionary. In Merriam-Webster online Dictionary, the word “Undying” means not dying. Meanwhile, based on the context, the word “Undying” refers to a hero who serves as a formidable tank and a dangerous spellcaster. Furthermore, the use of a prefix “un-” and a suffix “-ing” in the word “Undying” may indicate a type of word-structure or morphological process which is affixation that changes the role of the verb into the noun. In brief, these two linguistic aspects are categorized as register.

Biber and Conrad (2009) stated that register is a variety that related to a particular situation of use. They argued that this variation can emerge in particular text types such as spoken and written. In addition, Wardhaugh (2010) described register as a set of language items associated with different occupational or social groups. Holmes (2013) also stated that register is the language of a group of people who share the same interests or jobs, or the language used in situations associated with such groups. She mentioned some particular groups such as journalese, criminals, and sports commentators that were able to be considered as the examples of different registers.

Holmes (2013) claimed that the language of such groups lately develops more characteristics such as lexical, syntactic, as well as phonological that distinct from other groups. As it was mentioned by Ferguson (1994 cited in Wardhaugh 2010) that individuals who commonly engaged in communication are likely to

evolve the same vocabularies, intonation, syntax and phonology. He added that these linguistic features emerged due to speedy communication that supported the speakers to communicate effectively. It was also stated that specialized registers are motivated by the demand of quick, efficient, and precise communication between the individuals in the same groups (Holmes 2013). In brief, register is used to convey shared meanings in effective way.

According to Holmes (2013), register cannot be separated from the context. In her perspective, this context refers to the social factors of the choice of language variation. These factors generally pointed out the fundamental components of the communication which capable to express the register meaning depending on the circumstances that occurred. Therefore, the common people who do not included in such a specific group may be hard to understand what the speakers intended to. As it was affirmed by Holmes (2013), outsiders who do not share the same experience and backgrounds may find it difficult to understand some specialized register used by such groups. As a conclusion, the writer intended to identify the linguistic features of the register and how they are used in Dota 2 play-by-play commentary of SEA Games 2019 that was live broadcasted by Razer YouTube Channel.

The video used in this study is entitled e-Sports @ SEA Games 2019 – Gold Matches for Hearthstone, AOV, and Dota 2. However, this study only focused on the Dota 2 match part because it is considered as the most played online game on platform Steam with the number of monthly active players about 11.19 in January 2019 (Gough 2019). The video is considered as an appropriate

main analysis because of some factors. First, the video presented the first competition of e-Sport, Dota 2, as a new professional sport in Southeast Asia. Second, the video was presented by two professional casters that were produced some linguistic aspects referred to register. Furthermore, the video contained the grand final episode of Dota 2 that successfully attracted more audiences about 335 thousands viewers. Finally, this game is categorized as the most popular e-Sport competition (Fox Sports 2019).

Motivated to conduct this research, the writer found some prior studies that were related to this study. Firstly, Lewandowski (2012) conducted a study that described about the language of commentary in football using theories from Biber and Conrad (2009). Next, Firmanida (2018) investigated the vocabulary and morphological feature of Bridge Club in Universitas Airlangga using Holmes (2013) theory. Moreover, Maysari (2019) identified register of swear words, abbreviations, and absorptions produced by the users of game online community.

As the writer explained above, there were many studies about register focusing on sports. However, it seemed that there was lack of studies that analyzed e-Sport as new form of professional sport from the linguistic aspects. Although there was a study analyzing register about video game community, yet the study only focused on registers that were produced by the player of the video games. In the other hand, this study focused on analyzing the linguistic features of the register from the casters' talk during the final match of Dota 2 in SEA Games 2019. Furthermore, by identifying the linguistic features of the register of Dota 2 play-by-play commentary as a new kind of professional sport, it was expected that

the output of this study could contribute to the field of study sociolinguistics, especially in the language variation of the casters of Dota 2.

### **1.2 The Statements of the Problem**

Based on the background of the study, this study is addressed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the linguistic features of the register used in Dota 2 Play-by-Play Commentary of “SEA Games 2019” in Razer YouTube Channel?
2. How are the linguistic features of the register used in Dota 2 Play-by-Play Commentary of “SEA Games 2019” in Razer YouTube Channel?

### **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

Based on the statements of problems, the objectives of the study are as these followings:

1. To identify the linguistic features of the register of Dota 2 Play-by-Play Commentary of “SEA Games 2019” in Razer YouTube Channel.
2. To describe how the linguistic features of the register are used in Dota 2 Play-by-Play Commentary of “SEA Games 2019” in Razer YouTube Channel.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

The writer hoped that this study was beneficial and contributed to the field of sociolinguistic study especially about language variation that occurred in Dota 2 Play-by-Play commentary of SEA Games 2019 that was live broadcasted in Razer YouTube Channel episode Gold Medal Match. Additionally, for the practical use, this study was designed to support and enrich the knowledge of