

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Language continuously evolves to accommodate new concepts, technologies, and forms of human interaction. One of the linguistic mechanisms that enables this expansion is word formation, which refers to the processes through which new lexical items are created or existing words acquire new functions within a particular context. According to Yule (2010), word formation includes processes such as compounding, derivation, borrowing, clipping, blending, conversion, and coinage, all of which contribute to the growth of vocabulary in English. Bauer (2003) similarly argues that word formation reflects the dynamic nature of language because new communicative needs constantly encourage the creation and adaptation of lexical items. As new domains emerge, language responds by providing words and expressions that represent new experiences, objects, and systems.

Specialized terms are lexical items that represent specific concepts within a particular field or domain. Cabré (1999) explains that such terms function as linguistic labels that facilitate precise communication among members of a knowledge community. In digital environments, especially video games, specialized vocabulary is frequently used to describe gameplay systems, narrative concepts, character roles, and in-game mechanics. These lexical items serve as important elements of communication between developers and players while also reflecting the

distinctive features of a game world. Rather than functioning as ordinary vocabulary, they often carry meanings that are closely tied to the context in which they are used.

Video games have increasingly been recognized as productive environments for linguistic innovation because they require language to represent mechanics, fictional concepts, and interactive systems that do not necessarily exist outside the game itself. Ramón Méndez González (2019) argues that video game language contains a high concentration of specialized vocabulary and neologisms that are necessary for explaining gameplay systems, character classes, game modes, and other interactive elements. These lexical items are shaped not only by technical requirements but also by the creative processes involved in constructing fictional worlds. Consequently, video game vocabulary differs significantly from everyday language because it reflects unique systems of interaction, storytelling, and player engagement.

The relationship between language and video games can also be understood through the concept of digital discourse communities. Gee (2007) describes video games as semiotic domains in which participants learn specialized meanings, symbols, and linguistic expressions associated with particular practices and experiences. Within these domains, players acquire vocabulary that allows them to understand game mechanics, narrative structures, and social identities embedded in the game world.

Crystal (2006) further explains that digital communication accelerates linguistic innovation by encouraging experimentation, abbreviation, and the creation of new expressions that respond to technological contexts. Therefore, video games provide valuable material for linguistic research because they illustrate how lexical items are formed, adapted, and utilized within contemporary digital environments.

The study of word formation is particularly relevant in the context of video games because game systems frequently introduce concepts that require specific lexical representations. Many game-related terms are constructed through identifiable morphological processes that reflect broader patterns of language use. Yule (2010) explains that speakers create new words systematically through processes such as compounding, derivation, borrowing, clipping, blending, and conversion. Likewise, Bauer (2003) states that lexical innovation is closely associated with morphological productivity, especially in domains influenced by technological and cultural change. Since video games constantly introduce new mechanics, narrative concepts, and interactive systems, word formation provides an appropriate framework for examining how specialized lexical items are structured within this medium.

Previous studies have investigated language use in gaming environments, particularly in relation to slang expressions, esports communication, and online player interaction. Magria et al. (2021) analyze

slang words used by gamers in Mobile Legends through George Yule's word formation framework and identify processes such as compounding, clipping, and acronym formation. Similarly, Mudhoffar (2023) examines the vocabulary employed by casters during the IESF 2022 Mobile Legends tournament and demonstrates how various morphological processes contribute to language use in esports broadcasting. Further research conducted by Mudhoffar (2024) highlights the role of word formation processes in online gaming terminology within competitive gaming contexts, while Matiini (2022) discusses the emergence of neologisms in online gaming conversations as a result of interaction among players in digital environments.

Although these studies demonstrate that gaming contexts contribute to lexical innovation, their primary focus remains on gaming slang, esports commentary, and online communication rather than on the linguistic structure of terms found within a specific game system. Consequently, the word formation processes underlying game-specific lexical items remain relatively underexplored. Existing research has generally emphasized how players and commentators use language rather than how particular games employ specialized vocabulary to represent mechanics, narrative concepts, factions, and interactive systems. This gap suggests the need for further investigation into the morphological processes that characterize lexical items within a single game corpus.

Among contemporary video games, Honkai: Star Rail offers a particularly rich source of specialized vocabulary for linguistic analysis. Developed by HoYoverse and released globally in 2023, the game combines science fiction and fantasy elements within an extensive narrative universe. As a turn-based role-playing game, it introduces numerous lexical items related to character systems, gameplay mechanics, world-building concepts, transportation systems, factions, resources, and cosmological ideas. These expressions function as important components of the game experience because they organize both player interaction and narrative understanding. Terms such as Light Cone, Astral Express, Trailblazer, Fragmentum, and Warp represent concepts that are closely associated with the game world and therefore provide suitable data for examining word formation processes.

The selection of Honkai: Star Rail versions 1.0–1.6 as the research corpus is based on the characteristics of live-service game development. Contemporary digital games increasingly function as evolving media platforms rather than static products, with new content being introduced through regular updates. Kerr (2017) explains that ongoing updates continuously expand game systems, narratives, and player experiences, which consequently influence the vocabulary used within the game environment. Early release versions are particularly important because they establish many of the foundational concepts and lexical items that later expansions continue to employ. Similarly, Consalvo and Paul (2019) argue that shared vocabularies in live-service games emerge through interactions

between developers, gameplay systems, and player communities during the initial stages of a game's lifecycle.

Versions 1.0–1.6 of Honkai: Star Rail represent a coherent period in which many of the game's fundamental systems, locations, factions, and narrative concepts were first introduced. These versions include important lexical items that later become central components of the game's identity and player experience. The limited scope also provides a manageable corpus for qualitative linguistic analysis while maintaining consistency across the data. Therefore, focusing on versions 1.0–1.6 enables the researcher to examine a well-defined collection of game-specific terms that reflect the early conceptual structure of Honkai: Star Rail.

Many lexical items found in Honkai: Star Rail can be analyzed through identifiable word formation processes. Terms such as Light Cone, Astral Express, and Space Anchor illustrate compounding because they combine multiple independent lexical items into single conceptual units. Other terms, including Trailblazer and Emanator, demonstrate derivational processes through the addition of suffixes that create new meanings and functions. Borrowing is also evident in expressions such as Fragmentum, which reflects classical linguistic influences, while terms like Warp illustrate conversion through changes in grammatical function without morphological alteration. These examples indicate that the vocabulary of

Honkai: Star Rail provides diverse material for investigating how different word formation processes operate within a digital game environment.

Building upon previous research, this study addresses a gap in the existing literature by focusing on the word formation processes found in specialized terms within a specific game corpus. Earlier studies have successfully demonstrated that gaming environments contribute to lexical creativity and linguistic innovation; however, they have generally emphasized player discourse, esports communication, and online interaction rather than the internal linguistic structures of game-related lexical items. Furthermore, studies concerning Honkai: Star Rail have mainly focused on translation, user reviews, and limited lexical discussions without systematically examining the morphological processes associated with its specialized vocabulary.

Therefore, this research investigates the word formation processes found in specialized terms used in Honkai: Star Rail versions 1.0–1.6 by applying George Yule's framework of word formation. Through this approach, the study seeks to identify the morphological patterns that characterize game-specific lexical items and to provide a linguistic perspective on how vocabulary functions within a contemporary digital game environment.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the background of the study, this research focuses on the formation and function of specialized terminology in Honkai: Star Rail versions 1.0–1.6. Therefore, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What types of word formation processes are most frequently used in the specialized terminology of Honkai: Star Rail versions 1.0–1.6 based on George Yule's classification?
2. How are the word formations of game terminology in Honkai: Star Rail Versions 1.0-1.6 categorized based on their themes?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the word formation processes found in specialized terms used in Honkai: Star Rail versions 1.0–1.6 by applying George Yule's framework of word formation. This research aims to identify and classify the types of morphological processes represented in game-specific lexical items, including compounding, derivation, borrowing, clipping, conversion, and coinage. Furthermore, the study seeks to explain how these lexical items function within thematic categories of the game specialized terminology. By employing a qualitative descriptive approach, this research intends to provide a systematic understanding of the linguistic characteristics of specialized vocabulary in a digital game environment and to demonstrate the applicability of word formation theory in analyzing contemporary video game language.

1.4. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing the word formation processes found in specialized terms used in Honkai: Star Rail versions 1.0–1.6 by applying George Yule’s framework of word formation. The analysis is limited to identifying and examining game-specific lexical items that appear in narrative dialogues, character descriptions, gameplay systems, and other in-game textual elements. The study concentrates on word formation processes such as compounding, derivation, borrowing, clipping, conversion, and coinage, as proposed by Yule. It does not examine translation quality, player communication, community discourse, or semantic interpretation beyond the structural formation and functional use of the selected terms. Additionally, this research only analyzes English-language data from the official game version to maintain linguistic consistency and analytical focus. These limitations are established to ensure a systematic and manageable analysis within a clearly defined corpus.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to linguistic research, particularly in the fields of morphology and word formation. Theoretically, the research extends the application of George Yule’s word formation framework by demonstrating how morphological processes operate within digital game environments, thereby enriching discussions on lexical innovation in contemporary media. It also contributes to studies of specialized vocabulary by providing a systematic analysis of

game-specific lexical items within a structured fictional and technological context. Practically, this study may serve as a reference for future researchers interested in video game language, digital discourse, and linguistic analysis of interactive media. Additionally, the findings are expected to offer useful insights for translators, localization practitioners, and scholars by improving understanding of the structural characteristics and functions of specialized terms within complex narrative and gameplay systems.

1.6. State of the Art

Several studies have explored the emergence of new vocabulary within gaming environments. Magria et al. (2021) analyze slang words used by gamers in Mobile Legends and identify various word formation processes such as compounding, clipping, and acronym formation using George Yule's framework. Similarly, Mudhoffar (2023) examines lexical items used by casters in the IESF 2022 Mobile Legends tournament and demonstrates how linguistic creativity appears in esports commentary through several morphological processes. Mudhoffar (2024) further investigates word formation processes in online game vocabulary within esports broadcasting contexts, highlighting how new expressions emerge through language use in competitive gaming environments. In addition, Matiini (2022) analyzes neologisms in online gaming conversations and shows that digital gaming spaces are productive environments for the creation of new lexical items.

Despite these contributions, existing studies primarily focus on gaming slang, esports commentary, or online gaming communication rather than examining the word formation processes found in specialized terms within the internal systems of a specific game. Consequently, the morphological characteristics of game-specific lexical items remain relatively underexplored. Furthermore, studies related to Honkai: Star Rail have mainly discussed user reviews, translation issues, and limited lexical analyses without systematically investigating the word formation processes represented in its specialized vocabulary. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by applying George Yule's word formation framework to analyze specialized terms found in Honkai: Star Rail versions 1.0–1.6, providing a linguistic perspective on how game-specific lexical items are formed and function within a digital game environment.