INDONESIAN DISCOURSE PARTICLES FOUND IN THE TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH YES/NO QUESTIONS IN THE RPG HONKAI: STAR RAIL

Raden Roro Shinta Felisia
Gunadarma University

Abstract: In typical Indonesian dialogues or casual speech (cakap), particles are commonly used. The dynamics of the Role-Playing Game (RPG) Honkai: Star Rail are closely tied to character interactions, particularly through dialogues that include yes-no questions. This study aims to identify Indonesian discourse particles in the translation of English yes/no questions in the RPG Honkai: Star Rail. The researcher finds that there are thirteen (13) units or 69% of Indonesian discourse particles found in the translation of English yes/no questions. The discourse particles ya are the most frequent. This particle is 9 units, meanwhile, kan and dong are 3 units or 23% and 1 unit or 8% respectively. Since RPGs are a medium for delivering a variety of languages, it would be beneficial for other researchers to explore language use in RPGs further.

Keywords: Indonesian Discourse Particle, Role-Playing Game, Translation

INTRODUCTION

A Role-Playing Game (RPG) immerses players in a fictional world where they can assume the role of a character. These games often feature rich dialogues that enhance the storytelling experience and enable players to interact within the game's universe. According to Mäyrä (2017), dialogue is at the heart of role-playing games (RPGs).

In 2024, Honkai: Star Rail stands out as one of the most popular RPGs. According to PlayerAuctions, the game boasted an impressive player count of approximately 24.8 million in June 2024. This surge in popularity is reflected in its download numbers, which have skyrocketed from an initial 11 million pre-registrations to over 30 million downloads.

The main character in Honkai: Star Rail, known as the Trailblazer, is a synthetic human created and awakened by two Stellaron Hunters, Kafka and Silverwolf. This origin story is unveiled in the game's prologue. At the start of the game, players have the option to select the Trailblazer's gender, choosing between a male or female character. After making their choice, the Trailblazer is joined by Dan Heng and March 7th, members of the Astral Express, who become their companions on the journey. During this time, the Astral Express is being attacked by Trampler and Voidrangers. They manage to flee thanks to the assistance of Himeko's drone, who is also part of the Astral Express team.

The dynamics of the RPG Honkai: Star Rail are closely tied to character interactions, particularly through dialogues that include yes-no questions. Players can choose their responses to these questions based on their goals, which encourages them to pay close attention and read the questions carefully.

Mahmood (2014) notes that yes/no questions are fundamentally designed to elicit a "yes" or "no" response. According to Nordquist (2017), these questions typically start with an auxiliary or modal verb such as "be," "have," "do," or a modal like "can" or "should." Consequently, the defining characteristic of yes/no questions is their structure, beginning with an auxiliary or modal verb, to prompt a straightforward "yes" or "no" answer, or similar affirmatives or negatives.

The RPG Honkai: Star Rail provides an option to play in Indonesian within its settings. Players who choose Indonesian will enjoy all in-game dialogues and text in Bahasa Indonesia. This feature is especially convenient for those who prefer their RPG characters to state in Indonesian.
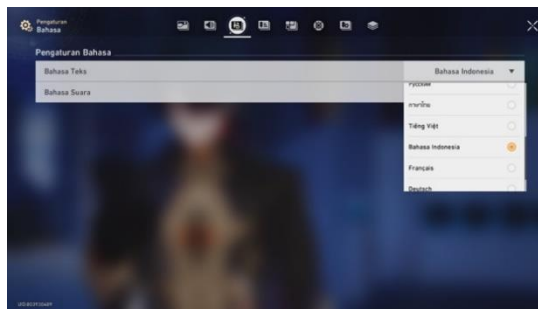
Figure 1. Language Setting in the RPG Honkai: Star Rail

In typical Indonesian dialogues or casual speech (cakap), particles are commonly used. These particles also appear in the translation of English Yes/No questions into Indonesian, making them a key focus for researchers. For instance, in this study, the translation of the RPG Honkai: Star Rail is examined to identify Indonesian discourse particles in Yes/No questions.

A similar study by Karaj (2021), titled "Indonesian Discourse Particles in Conversations and Written Text," explored Indonesian discourse particles in both spoken conversations and written texts. While both studies share a focus on Indonesian discourse particles, they differ in their data sources and objectives. Karaj's research analyzed spontaneous spoken conversations and articles from an online youth magazine, focusing on four common Colloquial Indonesian discourse particles: lho, kok, sih, and dong. It aimed to compare the use of these particles in spoken versus written contexts. In contrast, the current research uses translated data from Honkai: Star Rail and aims to identify Indonesian discourse particles in the translation of English Yes/No questions.

In her 2017 study, "The Distribution and Variation of Discourse Particles in Colloquial Indonesian," Zen analyzes data from four Teenlit novels authored by young writers. She explores the variations and sociolinguistic aspects of Indonesian discourse particles. The discourse particles found are dong, deh, sih, kok, lho, kan, nih/tuh, mah, nah, yuk, nah, masa, kek eh, toh, gih, lah, and wah.

Miyake's 2015 study, "Pragmatic Particles and Information Structure in Colloquial Indonesian Dialogue," examined four pragmatic particles in Jakarta Indonesian: sih, kok, lho, and dong. She concluded that sih functions as a phrase or sentence-final particle, indicating irony, complaints, topic marking, comparison, reasoning, and idiomatic expressions. Lho typically appears at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise or emphasize information. Dong is often used at the end of a sentence, serving functions such as soft imperatives, pleading, and definiteness. Kok is commonly placed at the start of a sentence to express unexpected statements or facts or to soften the tone.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Indonesian Discourse Particles
The word particles refer to the small unit of speech.
Karaj (2021) described discourse particles as follows:
Discourse particles are syntactically optional, short speech elements, usually without fixed meaning, providing a comment on what has just been said or done. Their meaning varies depending on the context and position in an utterance.

Sneddon (2006) mentions 13 Discourse Participles in Colloquial Jakartan Indonesian as follows:
1) *kok*
   (questioning particle) It expresses the speaker's surprise that it is the case. 'how come?'
      for example:
      ***Kok** pecah lampunya?*
2) *kek*
   The speaker has no particular interest in which of the possibilities is correct.
      for example:
      *Mau nakal **kek**, gua nggak peduli.*
3) *kan*
   Requesting agreement and marking shared knowledge 'right?; isn't it?
      for example:
      *Nggak ada tes **kan**?*

4) *ya/yah*

The speaker believes the statement is true and the listener agrees. 'isn't it'

for example:

*Seafood? Ya, semua orang suka seafood, **ya**?*

5) *sih*

A 'smoother' of a conversation. 'then'

for example:

*Lo ama Bowo uda berapa lama, **sih**?*

6) *deh*

Urging the listener to believe what is said 'I'm telling you'

for example:

*Gua udah bilang berkali-kali **deh***

7) *dong*

Utterance-initial) An expression of surprise at what has been said.

for example:

A: Diiket pita merah jadi aneh.

*B: Loh, enggak **dong**!*

8) *loh*

(Utterance-final) An assertion that it is true

for example:

*Temen gua Aries banyak **loh***

9) *mah*

Mildly stress or emphasize a statement

for example:

*Bikin jadwal **mah** gampang*

10) *masa*

It expresses surprise that what follows is true 'I don't believe it'

for example:

***Masa** nggak inget ama saya?*

11) *nah*

To introduce a new topic. 'well; now then'

for example:

***Nah**, sekarang gua nanya, kenapa lu putus sama Yopi?*

12) *nih/tuh*

After a verb, it is to emphasize

for example:

*Jadi pulang **nih**.*

13) *yuk*

Urging the listener to do something together with the speaker. 'come on; let's go'

for example:

*Makan bareng **yuk**.*

Yes/No Question

According to Quirk (1985), interrogative sentences are considered to be of two major types: yes/no interrogatives and wh-interrogatives. Interrogatives itself equals to in the form of question.

Mahmood (2014) stated that semantically, a yes/no question is supposed to be a question that seeks yes or no in response.

for example:

(1) Question: Does Muhammad live in London?

Answer: Yes, he does.

(2) Question: Are you going to watch the match tonight?

Answer: Unfortunately no, because I will be studying for the exam.

Additionally, yes/no questions can be phrased in either a positive manner, "without any bias towards expecting a positive or negative answer," or a negative manner, "which includes a negative element of some sort." (ibid: 808).

for example:

(3) Question: Do you go shopping every weekend?
    Possible answers: Yes, I do. OR No, I don't.

(4) Question: Haven't you told her the truth?
    Answer: - Yes, I have. – No, I haven't. (Expecting a positive response highly dominates a negative one, since the question can simply be paraphrased as 'Surely you have told her the truth, haven't you?')

Translation

Nida and Taber (1962) mentioned that the message from the source language to the target language is maintained in terms of meaning and language style.

As Venuti, cited in Judickaite (2009), explains, domestication entails the ethnocentric adaptation of a foreign text (including Indonesian cultural terms) to align with the cultural values of the target language (English).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher describes the Indonesian discourse found in the translation of English yes/no questions. According to Creswell (2012), the goal of the descriptive method is to systematically provide a thorough explanation and detailed description of the research subject. With this similar goal, this research applies a descriptive method.

The data is taken from the RPG *Honkai: Star Rail* in June 2024. Since the data is the translation of Indonesian discourse particle, they are written text.

Procedure of the Research

Regarding the steps, the researcher does as follow:
1. Collecting the English yes/no questions
2. Collecting the translation
3. Describing the translation
4. Providing conclusion and suggestions

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are thirteen (13) units or 69% of Indonesian discourse particles found in the translation of English yes/no questions. The discourse particles *ya* are the most frequent. This particle is 9 units, meanwhile, *kan* and *dong* are 3 units or 23% and 1 unit or 8% respectively.

Indonesian Discourse Particles found in the Translation of English Yes/No Questions in the RPG Honkai: Star Rail
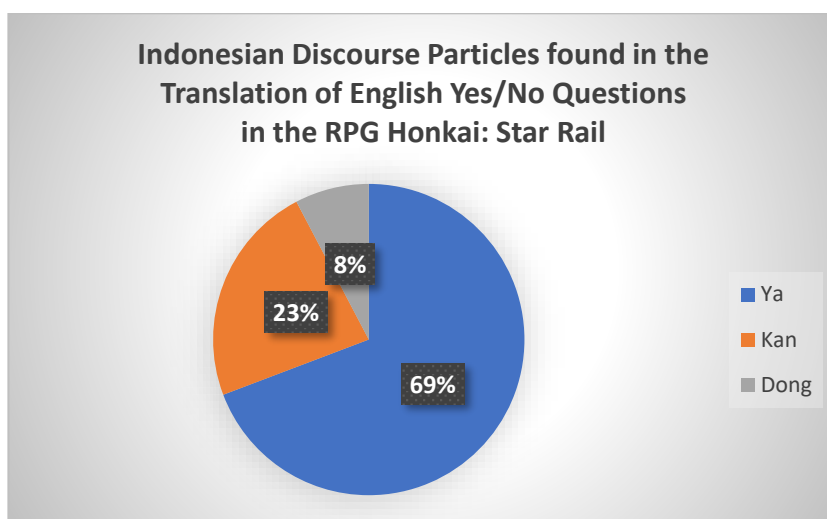
Indonesian Discourse Found

Ya

1. English   (Source Language)   : Did the Synthesizer explode?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Synthesizer meledak ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Did the Synthesizer explode?" is translated into "*Synthesizer meledak ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

2. English   (Source Language)   : Have I sent this to you yet?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Aku belum kirim ini ke kamu ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Have I sent this to you yet?" is translated into "*Aku belum kirim ini ke kamu ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

3. English   (Source Language)   : Are the expression different in all of them?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Beda-beda ekspresi ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Are the expression different in all of them?" is translated into "*Beda-beda ekspresi ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

4. English   (Source Language)   : Was it misunderstanding or something?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Ada kesalahpahaman ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Was it misunderstanding or something?" is translated into "*Ada kesalahpahaman ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

5. English   (Source Language)   : Was this all part of your plan?
   Indonesian   (Target Language : *Jadi ini semua rencanamu ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Was this all part of your plan?" is translated into "*Jadi ini semua rencanamu ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

6. English   (Source Language)   : Does anyone in this group chat actually
                                              need to do any work?
   Indonesian   (Target Language   : *Orang-orang di grup ini tidak perlu kerja ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Does anyone in this group chat actually need to do any work?" is translated into "*Orang-orang di grup ini tidak perlu kerja ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

7. English   (Source Language)   : Are we even working for the same space station?
   Indonesian   (Target Language   : *Memangnya kita ini bekerja di Stasiun Luar
                                              Angkasa yang berbeda ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Are we even working for the same space station?" is translated into "*Memangnya kita ini bekerja di Stasiun Luar Angkasa yang berbeda ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

8. English   (Source Language)   : May I have your name, please?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Bagaimana aku memanggilmu ya?*
   The English yes/no question "May I have your name, please?" is translated into "*Bagaimana aku memanggilmu ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

9. English   (Source Language)   : Have you gone mad?
   Indonesian   (Target Language : *Sudah gila ya?*
   The English yes/no question "Have you gone mad?" is translated into "*Sudah gila ya?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *ya* is found in the translation.

Kan

1. English   (Source Language)   : Are you okay?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Kamu baik-baik saja, kan?*
   The English yes/no question "Are you okay?" is translated into "*Kamu baik-baik saja, kan?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle *kan* is found in the translation.

2. English   (Source Language)   : Did you hit the "Send all" button?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Kamu bukan kirim ke grup **kan**?*
   The English yes/no question "Did you hit the "Send all" button?" is translated into "*Kamu bukan kirim ke grup **kan**?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle ***kan*** is found in the translation.

3. English   (Source Language)   : Say, did you see that, benefactor?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Ngomong-ngomong, tadi kamu melihatnya*
                                                          *juga **kan**, penyelamatku?*
   The English yes/no question "Say, did you see that, benefactor?" is translated into "*Ngomong-ngomong, tadi kamu melihatnya juga **kan**, penyelamatku?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle ***kan*** is found in the translation.

Dong

1. English   (Source Language)   : Did you not play with him enough?
   Indonesian   (Target Language)   : *Kamu tidak banyak main **dong** sama dia?*
The English yes/no question "Did you not play with him enough?" is translated into "*Kamu tidak banyak main **dong** sama dia?*". Therefore, an Indonesian discourse particle ***dong*** is found in the translation.

CONCLUSION

The three Indonesian discourse particles ya, kan, and dong are found in the translation of English yes/no questions in the RPG Honkai: Star Rail. The most frequent discourse particle is ya (69%), followed by kan (23%) and dong (8%). Interestingly, both ya and kan relate to an agreement that the speaker expects from the listener.

This research also sees that RPGs are a medium for delivering a variety of languages. Therefore, it would be beneficial for other researchers to explore language use in RPGs further.

REFERENCES

Bailey, C. A. (2017). A guide to qualitative field research. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Brown, G. & Yule. G. (1983). Discourse Analysis. London: Cambridge University Press.

Creswell, John W. 2012. Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Mixed. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2015). The Sage handbook of qualitative research. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Judickaitė, L. (2009). The notions of foreignization and domestication applied to film translation: Analysis of subtitles in cartoon 'Ratatouille'. Jaunųjų Mokslininkų darbai, 2(23), 36-43. Retrieved from http://su.lt/bylos/mokslo_leidiniai/jmd/09_02_23/ judickaite.pdf

Karàj, David-M (2021) "Indonesian discourse particles in conversations and written text," Wacana, Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia: Vol. 22: No. 2, Article 3.

Larson, Mildred L. 1998. Meaning-based translation: A guide to cross-language equivalence. Lanham, MD: University Press of America and Summer Institute of Linguistics. x, 586 p.

Leech, Geoffrey. 1976. Semantics. Harmondsworth: Penguin Ltd.

Mahmood, R. (2014). A Pragmatic Analysis of Yes/No Questions in English with Reference to Press Conferences. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 136, 36-40. 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.05.283.

Mäyrä, Frans. (2017). Dialogue and interaction in role-playing games: Playful communication as Ludic culture. Dialogue across Media (pp.271-290).

Miyake, Y. 2015. "Pragmatic particles and information structure in colloquial Indonesian dialogue", in: Proceedings of the second international workshop on information structure of Austronesian languages, pp. 103-114. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (ILCAA), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Napa, P. A. (1995). How to answer English questions. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius.

Nida, E and Taber, C. 1969. The Theory and Practice of Translation Leiden: E.J. Brill

Nordquist, R. (2017). Yes-no question (grammar): Glossary of grammatical and rhetorical terms – definition and examples. from https://www.thoughtco.com/yesno-question-grammar-1692617

Singer, M. (1986). Answering Yes-No questions about causes: Question acts and categories. Memory & Cognition, 14(1), 55-63.

Sneddon, James Neil. 2006. Colloquial Jakartan Indonesian. Canberra: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University. [Pacific Linguistics 581]

Yallop, C. eds. In press. Beyond Content: The Challenges of Translation and Multilingual Textproduction. Berlin, New York etc.: Mouton De Gruyter

Zen, Evynurul. (2017). The Distribution and Variation of Discourse Particles in Colloquial Indonesian. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Evynurul-Zen/publication/320180891_The_Distribution_and_Variation_of_Discourse_Particles_in_Colloquial_Indo nesian/links/59d30c43a6fdcc181ad629f7/The-Distribution-and-Variation-of-Discourse-Particles-in-Colloquial-Indonesian.pdf

Zhu, C., & Wu, X. (2011). A study of Yes-No questions in English and Chinese: With special reference to Chinese EFL learners' understanding of their forms and functions. Journal of Pragmatics, 43(2), 632-647.