Bakalářská práce

Lexical habits in written communication of players in SWTOR

Lexikální návyky v psané komunikaci hráčů SWTOR

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis deals with lexical habits in written communication of Star Wars the Old Republic players. Theoretical part describes morphemes, word's definition and compounding and focuses on derivational word-formation in English. In practical part quantitative research gathering words from written communication was conducted and its results were qualitatively analysed using #LancsBox app and explained by the author. The results show which word-formation process was the most frequent and had the most unique words.

Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá lexikálními návyky v psané komunikaci hráči Star Wars the Old Republic. V teoretické části popisuje morfémy, definice slova a skládání slov a zaměřuje se na derivační formy tvoření slov v anglickém jazyce. V praktické části za použití kvantitativního výzkumu byla získána slova z psané komunikace a výsledky byly kvalitativně analyzovány za pomocí aplikace #LancsBox a autorem vysvětleny. Výsledky zobrazují, která forma slovotvorby byla nejčastěji používána a která byla zastoupena největším počtem unikátních slov.

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1 <u>Introduction</u>

The early to late 2000s were an era of MMO genre in gaming. I grew up surrounded by people talking about their amazing accomplishments ranging from obtaining a legendary weapon by slaying a dragon, through winning daily conquest with their guild or obtaining that one prestigious title. I have been connected to the MMO genre for more that dozen years of my life whether it was playing or following the updates or talking to the players online and because they were rarely translated into Czech, I had to learn English. At first, I would improve by making connections between visual design and the name of a place or a monster and even constructing a sentence to ask for a help when the quest was too difficult to complete alone. Since I was quite lazy at school, I attribute my ability to speak and understand English mainly to language exposure in videogames and it wasn't a concern until I began to study English at the University of South Bohemia where many flaws were pointed out to me by the professors. In this bachelor thesis I will investigate written communication in the MMORPG game Star Wars the Old Republic which had a substantial influence on me and try to create a corpus of words that are frequently used while playing game modes that require coordination and cooperation of a group of players in a short period of time and analyse which process of word-formation is the most frequent, but let's first start with word-formation in English in the theoretical part.

2 <u>Theoretical Part</u>

2.1 Word, morpheme, morph, allomorph

Before we look at word-formation in English, it is vital to understand the definition of a word and what it consists of. Word might appear to have a simple definition, but in linguistic it is quite ambiguous. The definitions are usually divided into three of *word-form*, *lexeme* and *grammatical word* (Lipka,1992; Bauer, Lieber, Plag, 2013).

Example: Every time Fred sees violence on TV, he says seeing it destroys the soul. (Bauer, Lieber, Plag, 2013)

In the example the words *sees* and *seeing* if considered word-form are not the same, because *word-form* are defined as phonological or orthographic shapes irrespective of meaning. *Lexemes*, however, are defined as abstract units that convey the same lexical meaning, therefore the words *sees* and *seeing* are one and the same lexeme because they are the form of *see*. Lastly, multiple *grammatical word*s can be represented by the same sequence of sounds or letters (e.g. come) (Lipka, 1992).

Words, however, are not the smallest units in linguistics. That would be morpheme. Defined as the smallest meaningful unit by Plag (2003), Bauer (1983) and Lipka (1992) it can be easily understood in an example "*untouchables"* which is a single word that can be divided into four morphemes: *un-, touch, -able, -s*. From the given example *un-* is the form phonetically pronounced [ʌn] and denotes negative meaning, in other examples *unbelievable*, *unfair* or *undone*; *-able* or also occurring as *-ible* pronounced [əbəl] (for *-ibel* [ɪb(ə)l], Bauer, 1983) is also fixed in its meaning and *-s* phonetically pronounced in a range of ways and denotes plurality. Lipka (1992) divides morphemes into *lexical morphemes* (also called semantic) which denote particular extralinguistic object and state of affairs like actions, events, situations and relations, they are open class but often restricted and their combination with other morphemes results in lexemes and *grammatical morphemes* (also called functional) which denote general grammatical functions like tense, plurality or syntactic relations. Grammatical morphemes are a closed class with relatively any restrictions and combining grammatical and other morphemes results in word-forms.

Morphemes are abstract elements of analysis and do not occur in language, that would be phonetic (or orthographic) form which realizes the morpheme (Bauer, 1983). This is apparent in the example "These sheep are eating fodder." (Bauer, 1983) Although the word sheep is the same for singular and plural from context in the example it is simple to deduce plural form was intended. Therefore, the word *sheep* can be seen as consisting of two morphemes *sheep* and *plural*. This is called zero-morpheme (Lipka, 1992) or zero-form (Plag, 2003) and leads us to another term *morph*. A morph can be defined as a segment of a word-form which represents a particular morpheme (Bauer, 1983) and is easily understood in the example *was* which is a single morph, also a single word-form but consists of three morphemes meaning *be, preterite* and *singular*. In the original example *untouchables*, every part *un-, touch, -able, -s* is a morph representing one morpheme. Out of the mentioned four morphs, only one is a *free morph* (also called *potentially free morph* in Bauer, Lieber, Plag, 2013) and that is *touch*. *Free morphs* can stand alone and take a place of a word-form. The opposite is a bound morph, in the given example it would be *un-, -able* and *-s*. *Bound morphs* (also called *obligatory bound morphs* in Bauer, Lieber, Plag, 2013) are distinguished in literature by using hyphen indicating where the morpheme connects to the base word-form and is written in italics. *Bound morph* can never stand alone in a grammatical sentence, but it still carries meaning and form. Another example *hit* is morph representing two morphemes either *hit* and *preterite* or *hit* and *present*, because the form for the verb hit is the same in the present and past tense. Sometimes, for past tense creation in English the *replacive morph* is used and can be seen in the example of take [teɪk] into took [tʊk].

2.1.1.1 Allomorphs

Definite and indefinite articles in English are pronounced differently based on whether the following word starts with a vowel (e.g. *[ði] idea* or *ən apple*) or a consonant (e.g. *[ðə] park* or *[ə] branch*) and this is called an *allomorph* which is a phonetically, lexically or grammatically conditioned member of a set of morphs representing a particular morpheme (Bauer, 1983). Other examples for this phenomenon are *em-/en-* which are both forms of the same morph of the same meaning of "cause to be in" but different in phonetical realisation because *em-* occurs before bilabial consonants (e.g. *embed, embark*) and *en-* connects to bases starting in alveolar consonants (e.g. *ensnare, endanger*) (Bauer, Lieber, Plag, 2013).

2.2 Word-Formation

Word-Formation is described by Marchand (1969) as "branch of the science of language which studies the patterns on which a language forms new lexical units, i.e. words" or simply "a study of forming words" and notes that essential part of word-formation is relationship between morphemes. As stated in the previous chapter morphemes are the smallest units in language and by adding bound morphemes to bases of words new words can be created, hence the name word-formation. Plag (2003) divides this concept into two branches, one being derivation and the other compounding. Derivational morphology contains affixational and non-affixational subgroups which are explained in their chapters later on.

2.2.1 Compounding

Compounding is the most productive form of creating new words in English (Plag, 2003) and is done by combining two, sometimes more, base words like in the example *rattlesnake* which can be created from both "snake that rattles" or "snake with a rattle". Compounding is subclassified in many ways by many different authors a lot of whom use multiple classification. Bauer (1983) uses classification based on the form of classes of the elements of the compound. First group are *compound nouns* which is the largest group of compounds. These compounds are created by combining nouns with other nouns as in *boyfriend* and are mostly used for marking sex of a person or animal and other patterns like *jazz-rock*. Compound nouns can also be formed from nouns with verbs like *nosebleed*, verbs and verbs like *make-believe*, adjective with noun (*fast-food*), particle+noun (*over-kill*), adverb+ noun (*now generation*) and verb+particle (*drawback*). Compound nouns also include phrases e.g. *whisky-and-soda* and *bubble-and-squek*. Compound adjectives which are not as productive but are formed the identically to compound nouns and some examples include *childproof, fail safe*, *bitter-sweet*, *uptight*, *coffee-table* (book), *roll-neck* (sweater) and *in depth* (study). Compound verbs are usually a product of back-formation a word-formation where nouns like *formation* were back-formed into verb *formate*. Other compound are compound adverbs (*over-night*), rhyme-motivated (*hokey-pokey*), ablaut-motivated (*tick-tock*) and neo-classical compounds which include lexemes of Greek or Latin origin (Plag, 2003) like in *biology* and *bureaucracy*.

2.3 Affixational

Affixation is a form of derivational word-formation which creates new words by adding an affix, or a bound morpheme that attaches to base of words (Plag, 2003), to an original word. As a result, new words are related to the original one but carry a different meaning. This chapter was included because I believe that gamers could use this form of word-formation regularly.

2.3.1 Prefixation

Prefixation is a form of affixation which places a morpheme before the stem of the base word to create a new word with connected yet different meaning. Linguists such as Bauer (1983) classify prefixes as class-changing or class-maintaining, however Plag (2003) divides prefixes semantically into four groups based on meanings possessed by the new words. These groups are called locative prefixes, quantifying prefixes, negative prefixes, and temporal prefixes. I will use Plag's classification and occasionally use Marchand's (1969) notes on certain prefixes. Now, let's look at each of these groups individually to better understand what they do.

2.3.1.1 Locative prefixes

Locative prefixes denote position of base word. For example, prefix *counter-* denotes the base word is in position against as in *counterintuitive, counterdemonstrate* or *counterculture*. Notice that the prefix *counter-* can be used with words of verbal, adjectival and nominal base and doesn't change the word-class from base to the derivative and therefore is class-maintaining (Bauer, 1983). Locative prefixes can have many meanings such as "inside", "between" and also "along with" (*para-*, as in *paramedic*). The prefix meaning inside is *intra-* as in *intracellular*, and for "between" it would be *inter-* as in *intergalactic*. Word *epicentre* contains prefix *epi-* which means "over", this prefix also appears in the word *epiglottis*, which is a small lid in the back of a mouth above larynx. Prefix *trans-* is used frequently and means "across" as in *transcontinental*.

2.3.1.2 Quantifying prefixes

Quantifying prefixes, as written in Plag (2003), quantify over their base words' meaning. These prefixes are often related to numbers such as *bi-* (meaning two, as in *bilateral*), *di-*

(meaning twice, as in *ditransitive*), *uni-* (meaning one, as in *unification*), but also portions or quantifiers, as in *semi-autonomous* (*semi-*, meaning half), *micro-management* (*micro-*, meaning small), *macro-biotic* (*macro-*, meaning large) and *omnipresent* (*omni-*, meaning all). According to Bauer (1983) these prefixes are class-maintaining and always connected to science. (Marchand, 1969).

2.3.1.3 Temporal prefixes

This classification from Plag (2003) says that temporal prefixes establish their base words a location in time as in *forefathers*, prefix *fore-* meaning "before", which is also denoted by prefixes *pre-* (*predetermine*), or *ante-* (*antechamber*). There are also prefixes for "after", for example the prefix *post-* (*postmodernism*) and for "new" like *neo-* (*neoclassical*). Prefixes pre- and post- have roots in Latin and French dating back to as far as 14th century and all mentioned temporal prefixes attach to nominal and verbal bases (Marchand, 1969), therefore are class-maintaining (Bauer, 1983).

2.3.1.4 Negative prefixes

As Plag (2003) writes, negative prefixes express negation of the base word. Under these criteria fall prefixes such as *in-*/*an-* which only connects with Latinate base words meaning "without" as in *asexual* or *intolerant*. Prefixes like im- (*immoral*) and ir- (*irregular*) are derived from negative prefix *in-*. Negative prefix *anti-* has potentially two very similar meanings. One can mean "against" as in *anti-war*, in this case *anti-* prefix connects to nouns, adjectives and verbs. The other can mean "the opposite of (an) X" as in *anti-hero* or *anti-particle*. In this case, prefix *anti-* connects to nouns. Closely related to this prefix are another two prefixes *un-* and *non-*. *Un-* usually attaches to verbs and meaning "not having the proper characteristics of X" we can find this prefix in words such as *uneventful* and *uncelebrated*. Negative prefix *un-* can also have a meaning of "remove X" as in *unwind*, *unleash* or *unbind*. If the prefix *un-* attaches to a noun it is usually a result of back-formation and the new words such as *uneducated* express meaning of "absence of X". As stated above, prefix *non-* can be closely related to *anti-* and *un-*. It can give the new word meaning of "absence of X" or not having the character of X" as in *non-delivery*, *non-profit* or *non-stop*. However, in contrary to *un-* and *anti-*, negation with prefix *non-* does not carry evaluative force (for comparison *irrational* and *non-rational*). When *non-* attaches to adjectives it has a meaning of "not X" as in *non-biological* and *non-commercial*. Another negative prefix which attaches to nouns and verbs is *de-*. This prefix forms "reversative or privative" verbs such as *deselect*, *decolonize*, *dethrone*. Just like *de-*, negative prefix *mis-* modifies verbs and nouns into

meaning "inaccurately or wrongly" as in *mistrial* and *mispronounce*. Lastly, prefix *dis-* is often used to negate base verbs as in *disobey*, *dislike* or *disagree* meaning "not X, where X is a verb". It can also attach to foreign bases and create reversative verbs just like *disassemble*, *discharge* or *disassociate*. Very rarely *dis-* connects to nouns, but when it does it can mean "absence of X" or "faulty X" as in *disfluency*, *disinformation*. Words like *dishonest* and *disproportional* are a result of the prefix *dis-* attaching to a lexicalized adjective.

There are many other prefixes, however they are not classified above because they either don't fit the criteria, such as *mal-* ("wrong or evil", *malfunction*), *pseudo-* ("deceptive", *pseudoscience*), *mis-* ("badly, wrongly", *misinterpret*) *co-* ("together" *co-production*), *vice-* ("in place of" *vice-chairman*) and other or do not change the base word to express diverse notions and therefore act merely as modifiers. (Plag, 2003)

2.3.2 Suffixation

Suffixation is a process of adding a morpheme to the end of a base word to create a new word with a different meaning. Plag (2002: 86-98) divided suffixes according to the resulting part of speech into nominal, verbal, adjectival and adverbial which corresponds with Bauer (1983).

2.3.2.1 Nominal suffixes

Nominal suffixes are those that change the base verb or base adjective into a noun or change a meaning of a base noun into a variety of meanings. This part contains nouns that express activity with the suffix *-age* such as *leakage*. Words like *arrival*, *riddance* or *treatment* are action nouns with the suffix *-al*, *-ance* and *-ment,* respectively. Suffixes *-ee* (*employee*) and *-er* (*employer*) create nouns that mean "sentient entity that is involved (for -ee) or that is an active participant (for -er) in an event." Other suffixes can be for location, like *-ery* (*bakery*, *brewery*) and for gender inflection *-ess* (*princess*). Processes are denoted by the suffix *-ing,* as in *baking* or *sleeping*. Suffixes *-dom*, *-ship*, *-hood* denote state or condition or domain such as *kingdom*, *relationship* or *neighbourhood*.

2.3.2.2 Verbal suffixes

There are four suffixes used to derive verbs from mostly adjectives and nouns. The suffix *-ate* is shared by many words with different meanings. There are derivatives with chemical substances like *methanate* (make into X) or *fluorinate* (provide with X) but also indicators of verbal status such as *formate* (from formation) or *regulate* (from regular)

and conversion such as *citrate* (salt or ester of citric acid). Suffix *-en* mostly attaches to monosyllabic adjectives ending in plosive, fricative or affricative consonants, such as *blacken*, *quicken* or *broaden* and means "make (more) X". Finally, suffixes *-ize* and *-ify* are closely related and can be used to denote verbs that could mean "provide with X" (as in *fluridize* and *youthify*) "put into X" (*hospitalize*, *tubify*) "make X" (*randomize*, *humidify*), "become X", (*aerosolize, mucify*), "make into X" (*itemize, trustify*) "perform X" (*anthropologize, speechify*) and "act like X" (as in *vampirize*).

2.3.2.3 Adjectival suffixes

Adjectival suffixes are divided into two groups. Relational adjectives tend to occur in the attributive position and has only a relational role, connecting the noun to the base word of the derived adjective. Qualitative adjectives can stand in the attributive position but can also occur in the predicative position. These adjectives generally express more specific concepts. Among the common adjectival suffixes, we sort suffix *-able* (or *-ible*) as in *breakable* or *agreeable*, the relational suffix *-al*, which attaches to Latinate bases to create words such as *accidental* and *cultural*. Another relational suffix *-ary*, attaches primarily to nouns to create adjectives such as *legendary* and *complementary*. Other suffixes with meaning "somewhat like X" or "in the manner of X" are *-ish* (*clearish*, *piggish*) and *-esque* (*picturesque*). Antonymic suffixes *-less*/*-ful* fall under this section meaning "with/without X", as in *hopeful* or *hopeless*.

2.3.2.4 Adverbial suffixes

There are two noteworthy suffixes that create adverbials. The suffix *-ly* derives adverbs from adjectival base, however, occasionally the formed adverb has slightly different meaning e.g. *shortly, hardly* and the suffix *-wise* can denote adverbs from nouns to have two possible meanings "in the manner of X" or for spatial arrangements as in *lengthwise*.

2.3.3 Infixation

There is no bound morpheme that would qualify for infix status, however Plag (2002: 101) and Bauer (1983: 18) agree agree that infixation in English can exist through inserting expletives in the middle of multisyllable words. The new created words through infixation usually express strongly negative attitude of the speaker. Infixation is only possible if the base word keeps its original stress. For example, in the word *abso-blooming-lutely* the primary stress remains on the third syllable.

2.4 Non-Affixational

2.4.1 Conversion

Conversion is a process of word-formation where the new words are created without any overt making, meaning the base word seems to be left unchanged, yet the meaning is different. For conversion to work properly the two words, the base word, and the derived word, must be derivationally related and completely identical in phonetical realization (Plag, 2002) and there seems to be no restrictions on which word-forms can take part in conversion (Bauer, 1983).

For example, nouns can be converted to verbs as in *the bottle* into *to bottle*. It can also work in reverse where verbs are converted into nouns just like in an example of *to call* into *the call* and sometimes adjectives can be converted into nouns or verbs as in *poor* into *the poor* (adjective to noun conversion) or *better* into *to better* (adjective to verb conversion).

2.4.1.1 Directionality

Plag (2002: 108) presents a problem with conversion in directionality, in other words, which word came first because we need to determine which word is the base and which is derived. This question would appear to have an easy solution: Just find out which word was documented first and that one must be the base. That would be a promising lead, this solution however is misleading, because it is not always consistent. Take for example the word *moan*. When the word *moan* was recorded for the first time in 1225 it was used as a noun and later it was converted into a verb. Today's meaning of the noun would be transcribed as "the act of moaning" which means that the noun relies for its interpretation on the verb. Similarly, the word *crowd*. Today the first meaning that comes to mind is that of a noun which means "a large group of people who have come together" (Cambridge Dictionary) and secondly of the verb *to crowd*. However, the verb was recorded earlier than the noun which would make it the base word, but the meaning of the verb back then was slightly different. The meaning of the verb *crūdan* was "to press, hasten, drive" and only later was the main meaning of "to press" specialized to mean compression of multitudes and then, in the 16th century, was the verb converted into the noun meaning "compressed mass of people".

These two examples, however, can lead us in the correct direction as Plag (2002) states. In the first example of *moan,* we found that the present day's definition of the noun relied on the verb. This guides us to explore the semantic complexity of both words. Base words are generally more semantically complex than the derived words because the derived word relies on the base word in its semantic interpretation.

For example, the noun *bottle* must be the base as the derived verb *to bottle* (meaning "to put into/fill a bottle") relies in semantic interpretation on the noun. The same could be said for the noun *call* (meaning "the act of calling") which is derived from the verb *to call* and the noun *the poor* depends on the interpretation of the adjective from which it is derived from *poor*.

Another way presented by Plag (2002) we can go to decipher directionality is the path of inflection and whether it is regular or irregular. Generally, the derived verbs tend to be regular in their inflection, e.g., *to ring* in the past tense *ringed* (meaning "provide with a ring") is derived from the noun *ring*. Parallel example is of the noun *drink*. The verb *to drink* is of irregular inflection (past tense *drank*), therefore the verb is the base word, and the noun is derived.

Next formal property to determine directionality in conversion could be phonological stress. However, when using phonological stress to help determine directionality we run into a problem whether the new derived word was created by conversion or by overtly marking by a prosodic property. I will therefore skip this step. Last formal property mention by Plag (2002) is frequency of use. As written above derived words have narrower range of semantic meaning than the base words thus, they are used less frequently. Consequently, if we measure how frequently a pair of words is used to determine the base of conversion, we can with high probability say that the more frequent word is the base. Which would mean that the noun *water* is the base to derivative verb *to water* since it is more frequently used and also the verb relies in its definition on the noun "to provide with water".

If we use all the formal properties of determining directionality, we should always find which word is the derivative and which is the base. That, however, is not always the case as there are always some unsolvable cases take for example the word *love*. Both the noun *love* and the verb *to love* are dated to the Old English and both can be paraphrased in their meaning as reliant on the other. For noun can be described as "state of loving" and the

verb as "being in a state of love". Other criteria bear no fruit in solving this puzzle. Luckily, there are not many examples such as the word *love*, therefore we can establish the directionality of conversion in the vast majority of cases.

2.4.1.2 Zero affixation

There exists a theory that all morphological markings, e.g., affixation, conversion, truncation, are a form of affixation. This theory says that conversion is a form of affixation where the derived word is made of the base word and a zero-form. For example, if the verb *to water* was derived from the noun *water* by zero-form, the zero-form would function as an automatic addition of the meaning "apply X" and the meaning of *to water* (an act of using water or apply water) would be the same as one we used for determining derived word in directionality of conversion. Plag (2002) argues against this theory, and he brings up the argument of overt analogue criterion which is defined by De Gruyter (2013) as "principle that a zero morpheme may not be postulated in a language unless there is an overt morpheme that fulfils the same function." We can test this by assuming that if there exists an affix that would express the exact same meaning as conversion then the zero-affix exists. The test was done by Plag (1999) and he came to a conclusion that conversion can express many more types of meanings, e.g., locative, performative, causative, resultative, than any affix including suffixes *-ate*, *-ify*, and *-ize* for noun-to-verb conversion. Furthermore, he observed more idiosyncratic meanings such as *to eel* which can mean "to move like an eel" or "to fish for an eel" or *to crew* which can mean "act as a (member of a) crew" or "assign to a crew". With verb-to-noun conversion there seems to be no clear semantic difference between the overtly suffixed nouns and the converted nouns, however, Cetnarowska (1993: 113) found systematic differences in action nouns derived by the suffix *-ing* and converted nouns. Firstly, when the base verb is transitive the derived noun by suffixation relates to all senses of the base verb, but when the base verb is converted it only relates to one. For example, *drawing* (derived from *to draw* by suffixation) relates to any kind of drawing but the noun *draw* (derived from *to draw* through verb-to-noun conversion) is related only to the sense of drawing of cards or lots.

Secondly, when the base word can be used both transitively and intransitively, derivation by suffix only relates to the transitive meaning and derivation by conversion only to the intransitive meaning. For example, "the beat of my heart" but "the beating of prisoners".

Therefore, the overtly analogue criterion has not been met and hence the conclusion is there is no zero-affix.

2.4.1.3   Is conversion syntactic or morphological?

All previous arguments assumed that conversion is a morphological process. However, an argument could be made that conversion is a purely syntactic mechanism, then conversion could be defined as "the use of a word with a given syntactic category in a syntactic position that it normally does not occupy". For example, in the sentence "James watered the plants every other day." one could argue that the verb *to water* is just a noun *water* put into a verbal slot in a sentence, meaning it is a syntactic process, not morphological one.

Plag (2002) continues that if we were to follow this argument to the teeth and disregard any other syntactic rules, then the perfectly grammatical sentence "the lion will sleep in a cage" could be also written as "sleep cage the in will lion". This transformation of a sentence disregards rules such as the one where the auxiliary *will* must stand before the verb *sleep* and the article *the* does not precede its noun. These rules are vital to the language and without them any sentence, as nonsensical as can be, would technically be grammatically correct.

To be able to tackle whether conversion is syntactical or morphological process we must take a look at what distinguishes these two to begin with and then come back to determine under which conversion falls. The problem with this approach is that there is not one universal syntactic theory that we could quote. However, Plag (2002) notes that there is an argument that in its interpretation does not rely on any syntactic theory. Morphological rules and entities are distinguished from syntactic ones by idiosyncrasies of morphological formations. Syntactic patterns are rarely exceptional whereas complex words display a lot of exceptional properties. If we apply this to conversion, we find out that converted verbs rather commonly have idiosyncratic meanings and lexical gaps, which points in the direction of morphological nature. For example, if we look at "Jane wintered in Spain." the sentence is perfectly understandable, but change the converted verb *wintered* for analogous word *to spring* or *to autumn* and it will become strange. To add to that, many nouns can only take overt suffixes due to mainly morphological reasons and there are unclear restrictions on which nouns can be converted into verbs. Since loose restrictions are extremely rare in syntax, conversion is conceived as a morphological process.

2.4.2 Truncation

Truncation is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as "the act of making something shorter or quicker, especially by removing the end of it"[1] and by Ingo Plag (2002) as "process in which the relationship between a derived word and its base is expressed by the lack of phonetic material in the derived word". Truncation is in language used to express familiarity between the speaker and the listener, for example, instead of the formal "Harry" a friend of Harry could call him Hal and the word *Hal* is the result of truncation.

Truncation has not always been sorted under grammatical morphology (for example Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994, Dressler 2000) because at first glance they seem highly idiosyncratic. However, Plag (2002) argues that the word-formation process of truncation is systematic and therefore should be considered morphological. Other issue was that word-formation usually creates new meaning. With truncation, and infixation in other chapter, this is not the case as the meaning is rather the same, except for expressing more familiarity. To answer this issue, we would have to make broad assumptions about the nature of meaning and its place in the language. Let's assume truncation, diminutive suffix -*y* and clipping (which is related and discussed in the upcoming chapter) are products of word-formation and move onto the rules of truncation to prove it is a morphological process.

Truncation tends to confirm to a fixed prosodic structure from which Plag (2002) created a template that can be written as CVC (as in *Ron* from *Aaron*), CVV (for example *Sue* from *Susan*), VC (as seen in *Al* from *Albert*) where the "C" stands for consonant and "V" for vowel. This template, however, disregards the potential of doubled consonants or diphthongs. To adjust for that issue, we can use the template of "CcVvCc, CcVV, VvCc", where the lower-case letters stand for those additional elements. Also, in majority of cases, truncated words are monosyllabic even those derived from multisyllabic words, for example *Xan* from *Alexandra*, often have tendency to begin and end in a consonant even if base starts and ends in a vowel as in *Net* from *Antoinette* but it is not a rule as seen in *Al* from *Alonzo* and lastly, derived words are never composed only of vowels.

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[1] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/truncation

How can we predict which part of the base word makes it into the derivative? Barring some exceptions, e.g., *Aaron* into *Ron*, Plag (2002) states that truncation generally forms into these forms. First is a form of a first syllable as in *Alonzo* into *Al*. Next is the first syllable which is primarily stressed as in *Adolphus* into *Dolph* and lastly a group where secondarily stressed syllable survives the derivation as seen in *Abigail* into *Gail*. If two forms overlap, the choice is quite simple, as seen in *Barbara* to *Barb*.

Plag (2002) and Bauer (1983: 115) agree that in truncation, especially in truncation of names, another characteristic can happen known as segmental change. In some scenarios, where it is a single coda consonant *r* can be replaced by *l*, see *Sarah – Sal*, however it doesn't happen if it occurs in the onset of a truncation, e.g., *Albert – Bert*. The consonant θ can be replaced by *t*. Vowels can also change as seen in example of *Am[i]lia* into *M[ε]l*.

Let's now look at suffix *-y* diminutives, mentioned in both Plag (2002) and Bauer (1983), which sometimes can be encountered in its other orthographic variants of *-ie* or *-ee*. Suffix *-y* diminutives are in most cases disyllabic with the stress on the first syllable, even in derivatives from multisyllabic words not stressed on the first syllable, like *Aussie*" from *Australian* and never shows complex onset in the second syllable even if the base word has one (as in *Andy* from *Andrew*). Therefore *-y* diminutives are trochaic disyllables that are very similar in their alterations on the segmental level as truncated names, e.g., *Natty* (*Nathaniel*) and *Marty* (*Martha*).

2.4.3 Clipping

Clipping is closely related to truncation and is a form of word-forming where the new word, often monosyllabic or disyllabic, is an abbreviation of the base word as an expression of familiarity e.g. *ad* (advertisement), *photo* (photography)*, lab* (laboratory)*, disco* (discotheque).

2.4.4 Blending

A blend may be defined as a new lexeme formed from parts of two (or possibly more) other words in such a way that there is no transparent analysis into morphs. (Bauer, 1983: 234)

According to Plag (2003: 123) blends are words that are a result of combining two, rarely more, words into one and can easily be confused with compounds which are formed also

from two words, however, in compounds it is always one of the words that modifies the other, for example compound of words motor and camp result in *motocamp* which is a type of a camp not a type of a motor. Same with other examples like *motel* (motor and hotel) and *breathalyzer* (beath and analyzer). New words created by blending share properties of both original words e.g. *boatel* is both a boat and a hotel, *smog* is a combination of particles of both smoke and fog.

Blending in the past (Dressler, 2000) has been considered irregular but on a closer look patterns emerge, for example base words for blend are always the same syntactic category, which are often nouns, the base words are semantically related and the new words follow the Blending rule (which Bauer, 1983, pp 235 also described) where if we divided base words into parts of A, B for the first word (breakfast) and C, D for the second word (lunch) the new word will come out as AD (brunch). In the blending rule parts B and C can be null as seen in *guesstimate* where B is null. This rule is followed by 94% of blended words (Kubozono, 1991), the other few like *modem*, which is formed from modulator and demodulator and blend consists of parts A and C, have different structure than AD.

The place where the base words are cut and only one part is used for blending is decided by size and syllabic structure. Syllables consist of 4 parts: onset, nucleus, coda and rime which is formed by nucleus and coda. If both base words are monosyllabic, then the blend is formed from an onset of the first word and rime of the other as in *geep* (base words being **g**oat and sh**eep**) and *brunch*, or from an onset and nucleus of the first word and coda of the second base word like in *boost* (formed from **boo**m and hoi**st**). Blends where at least one base word is polysyllabic have more combinations and some blends can be examples of multiple combinations. One where both base words carry over whole syllable to the blend can be seen in *stagflation* (from words stagnation and inflation) or as already mentioned in *guesstimate* (guess + timate), which can also be seen as blending onset from the first word and syllables from the second word (g + estimate). Another example where more combinations can be argued for is *boatel*, which can originate from syllable of first base word and ultimate rime of second word (boat + el) or onset and nucleus for A and ultimate syllable for D (boa + tel) or onset for A and penultimate rime and ultimate syllable for D (b + oatel). The last not yet mentioned combination is where the first base word carries over onset and nucleus and the other base word adds coda and ultimate syllable as in *Spanglish* (blend from Spanish and English). The size of blends also offers

a pattern. If the base words are the same size in syllables, the blend is of the same size but if the elements are of different size like in *brunch, boatel* or *guesstimate* the new word will have the size of the second constituent.

Since blending follows restrictions of only combining first part of the first word and the second part of the second word, only combines syllable constituents or full syllables and lastly the size of new words is determined by the second element it is fair to say that this form of non-affixation is systematic and therefore part of grammatical morphology.

2.4.5 Abbreviation and Acronyms

This chapter deals with abbreviations which in my opinion will be the most common of word-formation used by players when creating new written words in SWTOR.

Abbreviations are created by losing large part of the base words therefore it is non-affixational word-formation similar to blending and truncation, but unlike those two, prosodic categories are not as important for abbreviations rather it is the orthography. (Plag, 2002: 126)

Abbreviations are formed by initial letters of a phrase e.g. *DC* (District of Columbia), *WHO* (World Health Organization, *EU* (European Union), but can also include non-initial letters such as *Inc.* (Incorporated), *kHz* (kilohertz) or *Ont.* (Ontario).

Abbreviations are divided into groups based on phonological and orthographical properties. They can be pronounced either as individual letters or initialisms as in *e.g.* or *CIA*, as an acronym meaning by using regular reading rules like in *NATO* or *radar* or by pronouncing the base words as in *etc.* Abbreviations can be written in lower case letters (*etc.*, *a.s.a.p*) or capital letters (*USA*, *CARE*).

2.5 Star Wars The Old Republic

2.5.1 Background

Star Wars The Old Republic (SWTOR) is a massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) developed by BioWare and released in December 2011 [2]for the North America and Europe and in March 2012 for Oceania and Asia[3] as a third instalment in the Knights of the Old Republic series following Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (2003) and Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic II: The Sith Lords (2004). The game launched on a subscription-based model branding itself story focused MMO with eight, four for each faction of the Republic and the Sith Empire, possible class specific storylines with branching outcomes based on the player's choices set in the Star Wars universe in a time long before the tale of the original Star Wars movies created by George Lucas. SWTOR has since adapted the free-to-play format with optional monthly subscription to unlock six expansions which continue the story and two that improve player's experience along with other quality of life perks. The game's player base has been slowly declining for years but in May 2023 the average number of active players playing through less popular Steam client was just below 7 000 players which is the highest since the release of Star Wars the Old Republic: Legacy of the Sith expansion in February 2022. [4]

2.5.2 Endgame

Players who have completed the main story of the game enter a stage called the endgame in which MMO developers reward them with extra content of various levels of difficulty. These game modes vary in names across the genre and in SWTOR for player versus environment (PvE) they are called flashpoints (FPs), for a group of at most four players, and operations (Ops), for eight or sixteen player groups, where players go through the gauntlet of enemies to reach and defeat the final boss through cooperation and tactics. There are also player versus player (PvP) modes of warzones for groups of six on each side where each side is fighting for control of capture points that award points for time

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[2] https://store.steampowered.com/app/1286830/STAR_WARS_The_Old_Republic/
[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Old_Republic
[4] https://steamcharts.com/app/1286830

under control and the side with more points at the end of the match wins or Huttball instances where players play a game similar to real-life Football and try to pass the ball into the other side's end zone to score and after ten minutes the team with more goals wins. Arena is second PvP game mode for party of three against three where winner is the group which survives more rounds in a best of 5 series.

2.5.3 Group finder and chat

To enter endgame modes player must be part of a group or find a group through group finder. Player can choose to play whichever game mode they desire, simply select it in a group finder menu, for PvE instances pick difficulty of the desired game mode and choose which story line of the game mode to play and for PvP modes the battlefield will be selected at random. Game will then pair the player with others who selected the same criteria. Since veteran flashpoint mode is of medium level difficulty the group finder will not take player's class role (tank, damage or healer) or level into consideration but in higher difficulty game modes these criteria have to be met as well for the game to start. Once players are grouped by the group finder, they will be automatically transported into the flashpoint where they must coordinate while battling difficult opponents. For PvP warzones the game divides players into groups based on their level to make the match fair and again will not consider players' class role or their PvP experience.

For cooperation SWTOR has written chat system. In PvE modes many players may ignore group chat, but others will use it to share strategies to defeat bosses or for laidback conversations about the game or real-world activities and in PvP where stakes are higher and game pace is quicker, players developed many abbreviations to make synchronization easier.

3 Practical Part

3.1 #Lancsbox

Software #Lancsbox was developed by Lancaster University as a corpus analysis tool. It is free for non-profit use and downloadable in 64-bit and 32-bit versions. As of version 6 #Lancsbox offers an option to download a corpus or upload your own corpus and provides seven functions to work with the corpus. The functions are:

Text tool is used to preview all uploaded files into the corpus in its full size and complex.

Words tool will display all words from the selected corpus, their frequency and dispersion and can be modified to show frequency of words per 10 000 tokens or search for a single part of speech and other criteria. It can also provide visual representation of the chosen word or word class in all uploaded corpora.

Ngrams tool composes a list of *n*-grams based on the frequency of appearance and is used to visualize frequency and analyse key ngrams in one or multiple corpora. The *n* in ngrams can be substituted by a number for words in a sequence e.g. bigram could be a sequence of words How are from corpus.

Whelk tool searches for the desired term and visually displays in how many of the uploaded corpora the term can be found, how many tokens the corpora contain, the terms frequency in all of the uploaded corpora and frequency of the term per 10 000 tokens. Whelk is used to determine frequency of the term and to filter the results according to different criteria.

KWiC tool is an abbreviation for "key word in context" and generates a list of all instances of a searched term from the corpus with context displayed next to the searched term. KWiC can be used to find frequency of a given word, word class and other linguistic structures.

GraphColl is a tool that finds all the words frequently used with the searched term and displays them as nodes around the term. The position shows where in the sentence the word stands next to the searched term and by clicking on the node we can either see

concrete examples from the corpus or find more collocations of the two words. This tool is most often used to find and visualize collocations and to identify shared collocates.

Wizard is a tool that combines all the other 6 tools to carry out simple research and produce research report.

3.2 Research

Research was realised between the dates of 1ˢᵗ June and 20ᵗʰ of June 2023 and data gathered from veteran difficulty flashpoints and player versus player warzones during the time window between 4pm CEST and 11 pm CEST on the Darth Malgus, also known as European English, server in Star Wars the Old Republic. This timeframe was selected due to higher population of players.

3.2.1 Player versus Environment

In total 63 runs of flashpoints were completed, and 8296 words gathered. All words were later transcribed from SWTOR's chat logs and analysed using #LancsBox's Word function and settings of relative per 10 000 words frequency and lemma type. After selecting the lemma type, all words from the corpus will be displayed with their part of speech (e.g. the verb *is* will be displayed as *be_verb*) and unknown words, those that were created by the players, will be automatically assigned as nouns. Therefore, I can search for nouns using the *_n command in the search bar and choose only the words created by players. However, I then noticed that some words were assigned to different part of speech probably because of their placement in the original sentence and added them up accordingly. Altogether, words created by players formed only 6.2% of total words written in chat spread over sixty-five different signs seen in the picture below. Words are ordered by relative frequency in files, each file containing twenty words for visual clarity.

Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
gg	169.280558	ppl	4.97884	etc	2.48942	smth	1.24471
def	49.788399	fr	4.97884	ds	2.48942	npc	1.24471
frags	39.830719	glhf	4.97884	kotor	2.48942	tor	1.24471
u	38.586009	ggz	4.97884	rp	2.48942	omg	1.24471
lol	34.85188	pls	4.97884	dk	2.48942	ggs	1.24471
gj	24.8942	bg	4.97884	idk	2.48942		
thx	16.18123	ezpz	4.97884	wtf	2.48942		
cc	14.93652	wd	4.97884	dps	2.48942		
inq	13.69181	fp	4.97884	op	1.24471		
cya	12.4471	wz	4.97884	kk	1.24471		
ty	11.20239	temp	4.97884	ocd	1.24471		
lmao	9.95768	ops	4.97884	pov	1.24471		
np	9.95768	imp	3.73413	ffs	1.24471		
tbh	7.46826	sry	3.73413	nvm	1.24471		
mb	7.46826	ofc	3.73413	lool	1.24471		
char	7.46826	vm	3.73413	cd	1.24471		
fps	6.22355	scav	3.73413	pic	1.24471		
omw	6.22355	bh	3.73413	rip	1.24471		
bb	6.22355	tho	3.73413	ia	1.24471		
invis	4.97884	aoe	3.73413	mara	1.24471		

3.2.1.1 Abbreviation and acronyms

GG and its variants *ggs* and *ggz* mean "good game" and is typically used at the end of a flashpoint and carries a hidden value of appreciation and satisfaction with the result and was the most used abbreviation from all gathered signs.

Lol, or barely used version *lool* with added enthusiasm, stands for "laugh out loud" and is used in times when the player is amused, like after an embarrassing accident or a joke. *Lmao* is closely related to *lol* because it shares the meaning of amusement and even though the base phrase "laughing my ass off" is quite stronger than *lol*'s, in general written conversation no difference in meaning is observed.

GJ abbreviation meaning "good job" and its purpose is to acknowledge the player's or groups effort and raise or maintain high level of morale. I anticipated *GJ* to be more common, because players of SWTOR have a good reputation for being kind and supporting and flashpoints can get quite difficult. That being said, I am not disappointed with it being the sixth most used term in PvE. Related abbreviation is *WD* for "well-done" and it carries the same meaning and is used in the same way.

CC is short for "crowd control" a term used for characters abilities to negatively affect the opponent like slowing their movement, blinding their vision, or knocking them back.

This abbreviation is quite surprising to be on the list, let alone be this high as I thought it would be more commonly used in PvP. Some players used this term to warn new players of opponent's capabilities.

Another sign that is most often found at the end of a game mode is *ty*, meaning "thank you". In other situations, it would be used for appreciation of another group members favour e.g., reviving or healing and very often *NP* would be said in return, meaning "no problem". *NP* would also be used when a person accidentally dies and has to catch up with the rest of the group.

Abbreviation *TBH* ("to be honest") is not used for any game specific function, rather just to save time when writing.

Word *mb* would appear in chat after someone accidentally hit an opponent that could have been spared or fell of a desired path and it means "my bad". It is not very common, because it was usually written by beginners as more experienced players rarely made these mistakes.

FPS is an abbreviation with multiple possible meanings. Outside of SWTOR it could mean "first person shooter" but in the Star Wars game it will most likely denote "frames per second" or the rate at which different frames (= single pictures that together form a film or video game) appear on a screen (Cambridge dictionary) and in conversation it could be used as a cause for slow or stagnating player.

Word *omw* read by pronouncing the base words "on my way" is another rarely used abbreviation because it is quite specific to times when an original group member leaves the flashpoint, and the game appoints a new player to join the group. The said player then must catch up with the group.

BB was a new abbreviation for me. At first, I thought it means "baby" but through context I was able to deduce it means "bye-bye" and is used at the end of the game mode. To me it felt more neutral than *ty* or *gg*.

Glhf read by pronouncing the base words "good luck have fun" is a polite statement written mostly at the start of the run.

To my knowledge *bg* can denote either "bad game" which I will comment on in the chapter about abbreviations in PvP, or "battleground" and since this abbreviation

appeared in a conversation with a former World of Warcraft player, I assumed this meaning. Merriam-Webster, however, defines *bg* as "background" or "bag".

FP is an abbreviation for a game mode "flashpoint". I have used this abbreviation myself when describing SWTOR in one of the previous chapters.

WZ is another game mode in The Old Republic called "warzones". It is a PvP mode and one I also mentioned in the previous chapters. *FP* and *WZ* abbreviations were used the same conversation about the latest gearing system in SWTOR and have no use in coordination between players similar to *tbh.*

VM or "very much" is an abbreviation that is rarely used, but when it is it is connected to the acronym *ty* to accentuate gratitude after completing a flashpoint.

BH or "bounty hunter" is a playable class in SWTOR. This abbreviation is mostly used when discussing strategy in PvP, or as in this case, arguing over which class-story was the best. It has nothing to do with PvE coordination.

AOE is short for "are of effect" abilities which every class possesses and is very effective against a group of many opponents. This abbreviation is commonly used during Hammer Station flashpoint as an effective strategy to quickly clear hordes of unavoidable enemies.

"Darkside" or *ds* in abbreviations on the list and Light side are part of the Star Wars universe to differentiate good and evil. In SWTOR players can make good (Light side, usually resulting in saving lives) or evil (dark side, usually resulting in killing people) choices. In certain Flashpoints, like the Eseless and the Black Talon, dark side choice can save the group some time and players will usually agree to choose this option.

Acronym *kotor* or written as *KOTOR* stands for "Knights of the Old Republic" which is a game series developed by BioWare that includes three games - Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic, Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic II: Sith Lords and Star Wars the Old Republic and its expansions. When the acronym *kotor* is used, it means only the two single player games. For the MMORPG, players either use acronym *SWTOR* or just *TOR* which is also on the list.

RP means "roleplay" and is a massive part of SWTOR as any character has an option to alter the story based on the choices they make during dialogues. Smaller portion of the

player base even likes to unite and invent their own stories outside of the ones constructed by the game.

DK is short for "Dromund Kaas" which is the capital planet for the Sith Empire faction and is notorious for strange conversations in chat.

Very common abbreviation online is *idk* which is short for "I don't know". This abbreviation is most often used condescendingly in PvE over something irregular done by a new player and usually it is preceded by rhetorical question of "What are they doing?". I assumed it would be more regular but on a second thought, endgame is mostly populated by players who have played for years.

WTF is well-known vulgar abbreviation meaning "what the F-word" and in PvE is mostly used to express surprise at e.g., unusual faults in the game (also called *bugs*) or strange behaviour of non-playable mobile opponents (also called *mobs*).

DPS or "damage per second" is another very common abbreviation connected to gaming that I thought would appear more frequently, especially because veteran flashpoints have no restrictions on role diversity. It was used only to compliment a player doing very well.

OCD or "obsessive compulsive disorder" is a medical term for mental illness and in written conversation during playing SWTOR it was used only to describe player's desire to complete every achievement in the game.

POV means "point of view" and can be commonly seen when analysing literary work. In my conversations it appeared once when discussing class-stories.

Another vulgar one is *ffs* meaning "for F-word's sake" and it was used just once in PvE when a player was agitated over someone not skipping dialogue in a flashpoint.

NVM or more commonly *nvm* meaning "never mind" is an abbreviation that includes non-initial letters.

CD or "cooldown" is the waiting period when a player's or opponent's ability cannot be used. It is often preceded by "wait" and in this case it is a player signalling to the group to wait for a couple of seconds and then go onto fight a difficult opponent.

RIP "rest in peace" is very well known and in SWTOR is used to poke fun at a group member who died.

Video games have players and "non-player characters" or *NPC*(s). They serve to give the player quests and make the world of the game look lively or give players someone to fight.

OP is an abbreviation for "over-powered" or something that is far superior in power or utility to other things.

OMG for "oh my god" is a phrase for disbelief.

IA is another abbreviation for one the classes in SWTOR, for "imperial agent".

Last clear abbreviation is *etc* with the widely known meaning of "et cetera".

3.2.1.2   Clipping

There are 12 player created words through clipping which is 18% of the total words from the list.

Clipping is word-formation process that leaves only a part of the base word.

The meaning of first clip *def* will vary in PvE section and PvP section. In PvE it will be used as "definitely" in general conversation as players in player versus environment game modes have no need to defend anything, whereas in PvP it would more often be a clip of the word "defence". Similar to that is clip *temp* from the base word "temporary" or "temporarily" depending on the context.

Next is a clip *inq* from "inquisitor" which is a playable class originally designed for the Sith Empire faction and similar is *mara* from "marauder" which is a name for class specialization of sith warrior class.

Clip *char* from base word "character" is used for only player characters not NPCs.

Certain classes in SWTOR have the ability to turn invisible and *invis* is a clipping from the word "invisibility" for that ability. It is quite handy for skipping enemies unseen.

Clip *imp* for "imperial" is one of two complementary clips the other being *pub* for "republic" (*pub* did not appear on the list). These clips are used to specify the in-game faction.

The clip for "scavenging" is *scav* which is one of the optional player crafting skills (called *crew skill*) and is sometimes needed to open hidden doors to skip passages of flashpoints.

Quite common clipping online is *tho* from "though" and is phonetically driven as the base word and the clip are both pronounced identically [ðəʊ].

Hard to categorize is *ofc* for "of course" but I believe it is a form of clipping where the first part of the phrase was preserved but the second part reduced to just a single letter.

Textbook example for clipping *pic* from "picture" has also appeared in conversations and last was the clip *ops* or less seen *op* for "operation" which is a PvE game mode for groups of eight or sixteen players from which players can acquire the best gear in the game.

3.2.1.3   Other methods

Under other there are 10 player formed words making up 15% of all player created words in PvE.

Sign *frag,* and its plural version *frags,* from "fragments" was created through clipping, however, the original name for a currency in SWTOR is *tech fragments*. *Tech fragments* were added to the game in 2019 as part of the Onslaught expansion and players over the years completely eliminated the "tech" part and "fragments" part was clipped into *frags*.

A single letter *u* is used in substitution of the pronoun "you" as they are the same in pronunciation.

Word *thx* read as the base word "thanks" does not fit the definition of an abbreviation as it is formed from one base word and one letter in *thx* is not part of the base word "thanks".

Word *cya* pronounced [si: jɑ] was created from the phrase "see you". The first part "see" [si:] was abbreviated through phonetic equivalency to just the letter *c* [si:] and second part of the phrase "you" was exchanged for its slang version *ya* [jɑ]. This word was used at the end of flashpoints to say goodbye.

Word *ppl* meaning "people" and read the same way was created as an abbreviation that does not follow discussed rules in the chapter and it only omits vowels. Its purpose is to

be written quickly. Quite the same is the word *pls* for "please" and *smth* for "something" which were formed the very same way.

 Second to last is the word *ezpz* for the phrase "easy-peasy". I contemplated placing it among abbreviations but *ezpz* contains letters which were not present in the base word. Otherwise, it would be a perfect abbreviation. Its meaning is to comment on lack of difficulty of an activity and is most written at the end of a flashpoint run.

 The creation of this word is quite strange because *kk* meaning "okay okay" or just "okay" has a related counterpart in *ok* which is a clip based on phonetic qualities (*ok* and "okay" are both pronounced [əʊkeɪ]). It was formed by omitting the [əʊ] sound resulting in just *k* (pronounced [keɪ]) and then the *k* was doubled for clarity of meaning.

3.2.2 Player Versus Player

In total 100 Warzones (player versus player mode) were completed and in only 45 of them any words were gathered. The corpus created from PvP runs consists of 2154 words of which 30% were player created. Words were analysed identically to words gathered from flashpoints and the results are in a picture below. There are thirty-eight unique words ordered by relative frequency per 10 000 words into files of ten items for visual clarity.

Words	Frequency
gg	578.8982
mid	205.4155
def	186.7414
2	186.7414
3	168.0672
east	168.0672
inc	149.3931
west	149.3931
cap	149.3931
pit	112.0448

Words	Frequency
gj	93.37068
orbs	93.37068
1	93.37068
4	74.69655
push	74.69655
cc	56.02241
w	56.02241
u	37.34827
6	37.34827
comp	18.67414

Words	Frequency
cya	18.67414
wz	18.67414
glhf	18.67414
omw	18.67414
stealthers	18.67414
pop	18.67414
5	18.67414
ggz	18.67414
bg	18.67414
lol	18.67414

Words	Frequency
+	18.67414
ppl	18.67414
left/west	18.67414
wd	18.67414
thx	18.67414
wincon	18.67414
invis	18.67414
ur	14.0056

3.2.2.1 Change of meaning

East and *West* are not player created words, but their meanings are slightly different in the warzone game mode. While Merriam-Webster[5] defines east as "situated toward or at the east" for an adjective and "the general direction of sunrise: the direction toward the

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[5] https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/east

right of one facing north" for a noun and west[6] is defined as "situated toward or at the west" for and adjective and "the general direction of sunset : the direction to the left of one facing north" for a noun, but when these two words are used in a game their meaning becomes "come help (defend) X" where X is a name of a control point which is different for every map situated on the left side (for west) or right side (for east) of the map. And sometimes players are thorough, and use *Left/west* or *right/east* (which did not appear in my game modes).

Pit is defined by Cambridge Dictionary[7] as "a hole in a ground" or "slightly lower area in any surface" neither of which fits the meaning the players use. When *pit* is used during warzones it is during the Huttball game where players must pass a ball across the battlefield into the "end zone" to score. Team that scores more goals wins. End zone in this game mode is called by players *pit* despite not being lower than the original position of the ball.

Orb is defined as "something in a shape of a ball"[8], however, players use *orb* to mean "energy stations" in the middle of the map during Hypergates Battleground. Delivering energy to the team-controlled pylon is one of the objectives of this warzone.

The verb *pop* used by players is very close to its definition of "to put or take something quickly"[9], but I decided to include it because in videogames it has a precise meaning of "be killed/kill someone very quickly".

Plus symbol indicates addition, when used in written communication + means "agree with previous statement".

3.2.2.2 Abbreviations

List of player created words in PvP contains some forms that were already discussed in the PvE chapter and if the meaning is the same I will not mention it again. That includes words *gg, ggz, gj, cc, wz, glhf, omw, lol* and *wd.*

Numerals 1 through 6 are abbreviations which changed over time from *1p, 2p, 3p,* etc. formed from "(number) of people". When a numeral is written during warzones it is

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[6] https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/west
[7] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pit
[8] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/orb
[9] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pop

always in association with *west*/*east* (discussed in change of meaning) and means "group of (number) people coming *west*/*east*".

Abbreviation *w* on this list has two meanings. It can be an abbreviation for above mentioned *west* (no data on *e* as an abbreviation for *east* was gathered) or for "win".

On the PvE list *bg* was determined through context to mean "battleground" in PvP matches a player may choose to write at the end of the match instead of "good game" *bg* for "bad game".

3.2.2.3   Clipping

Clipping *mid* from the base word "middle" denotes meaning "middle of the map" and equally to *east*/*west* there is a hidden meaning of "come help/defend middle control point".

Clipping *def* in PvE was through context determined to mean "definitely". However, in PvP it will almost always be created from the base word "defend".

Word *inc* from base word "incoming" is always used along with a numeral to signal "number of people incoming".

Word *cap* is a clip from base word "capture" and is used to coordinate either to acquire control point or to hold it.

Force push is an ability in the game that knocks opponents away and is essential for PvP where many tactics with force push are used to dispose or disable opponents. Word *push* is a clipping where the first part "force" was clipped. To my knowledge no abbreviation or blend of this ability ever existed.

Word *wincon* comes from the base "win condition" where only the second part of the original phrase was clipped.

Word *invis* comes from the base "invisibility" as a result of clipping. Invisibility is an ability in the game and essential part of strategy in PvP modes.

3.2.2.4 Suffixation

In the game, characters that can turn invisible (sometimes called stealth) are very rarely called *stealthers*. I couldn't find any mention of *stealthers* with the meaning of "characters with the ability to turn invisible" in any dictionary[10] and there was no mention of it in the Corpus of Contemporary American English[11]. The word was created by adding the suffix *-er* denoting occupation to the base word stealth.

3.2.2.5 Other methods

The word *u* was covered in the PvE chapter and in PvP *ur* appeared, which means "your". It was formed identically as *u*. Word *thx* was also covered and so was *cya* and *ppl*.

There could be an argument made that the word *comp* is a clipping from the base word "composition", however, the original phrase is "team composition" and the "team" part was at some point in the history of PvP communication in SWTOR omitted and then the word "composition" was clipped into *comp*.

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[10] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/spellcheck/english/?q=stealther
[11] https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/

3.3 Results

In the first graph we can see the total of unique player formed words in PvP and PvE side-by-side. Afterwards, results are divided into two groups. The first group visually represented in Graphs 2 and 3 is categorised by percentage of unique words from each word-formation process in the research. The second group seen in Graphs 4 through 7 is ordered according to frequency of word-formation processes in PvE and PvP game modes.

3.3.1 Total of Unique Words Formed Through Word-Formation Processes
3.3.1.1 Graph 1: Total of unique words formed through word-formation processes
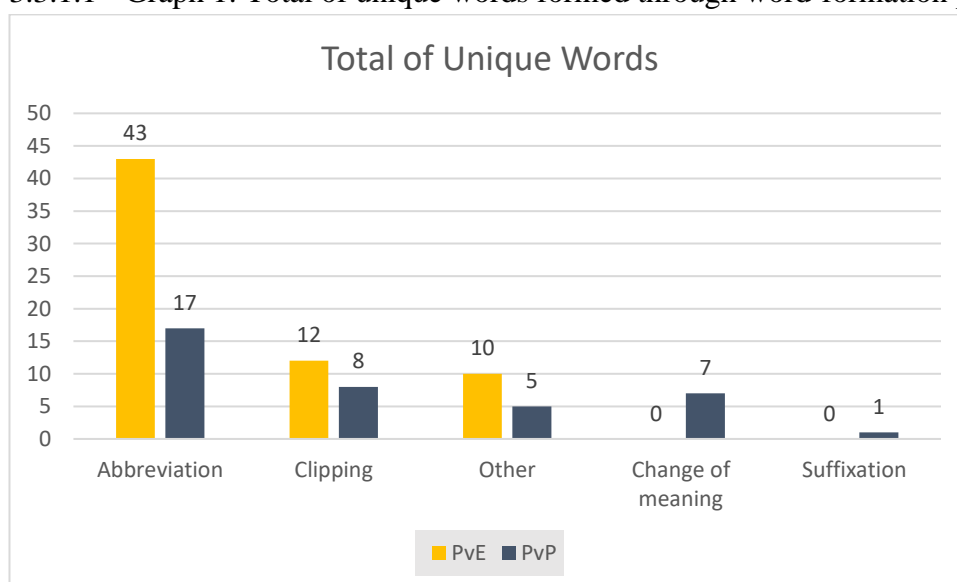
Yellow bars in this graph represent results from PvE game modes and blue bars show results from PvP modes. Each pair of bars is sorted according to their process of word-formation from left to right it is abbreviation, clipping, other methods, and two that appeared only in PvP modes - change of meaning and suffixation. In these pairs each bar is the total number of unique words gathered. This means that from PvE game modes 43 unique abbreviations, 12 clippings and 10 words formed by other methods were gathered. From PvP game modes 17 abbreviations, 8 clippings, 5 words formed by other methods, 7 words that changed meaning and 1 word formed by suffixation appeared. If the words appeared in both PvE and PvP (e.g. gg, cya) they were used in the graph for both sides.

3.3.2 Percentage of unique words formed through word-formation processes

3.3.2.1 Graph 2: PvE Percentage of unique words formed through word-formation processes

PvE Unique Words Percentage

- Abbreviation
- Clipping
- Other
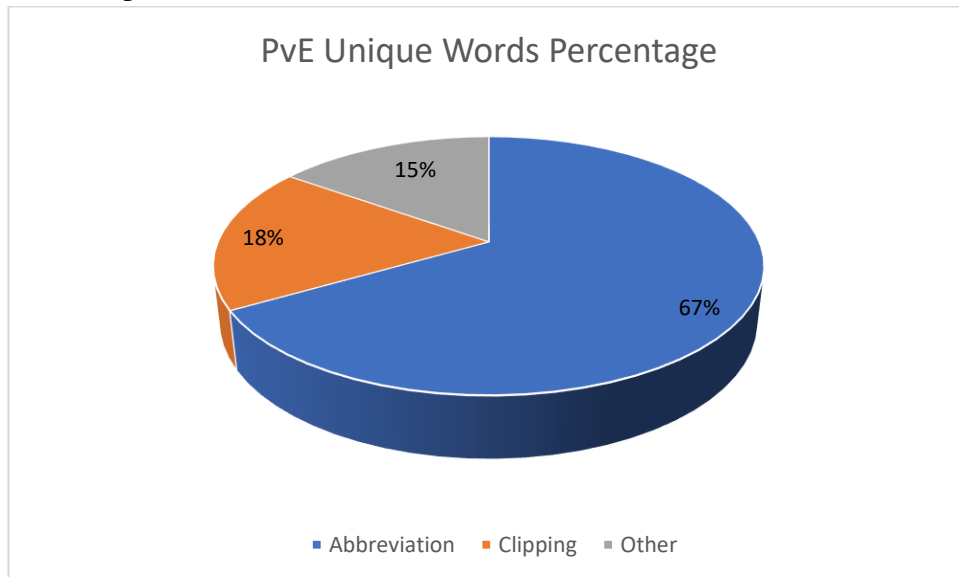
This graph shows how many percent of all words used by player community in Flashpoints were created by abbreviation, clipping and other methods. Abbreviations make up 67% of the total of words used by player community, 18% were clippings and 15% were word formed through other methods.

3.3.2.2 Graph 3: PvP Percentage of unique words formed through word-formation processes

PvP Unique Words Percentage

- Abbreviation
- Clipping
- Other
- Change of Meaning
- Suffixation
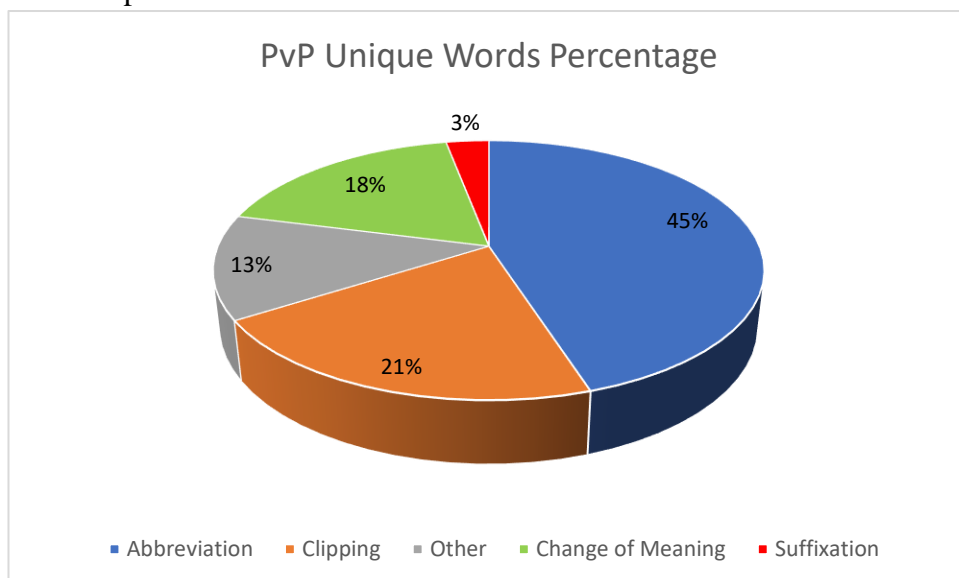
This graph shows how many percent of all words used by player community in Warzones were created by abbreviation, clipping, other methods, by changing the original meaning and by suffixation. Abbreviations make up 45% of the total of words

used by player community in PvP, 21% were clippings, 13% were word created through other methods, 18% of words posses different meaning from the original and 3% were formed through suffixation.
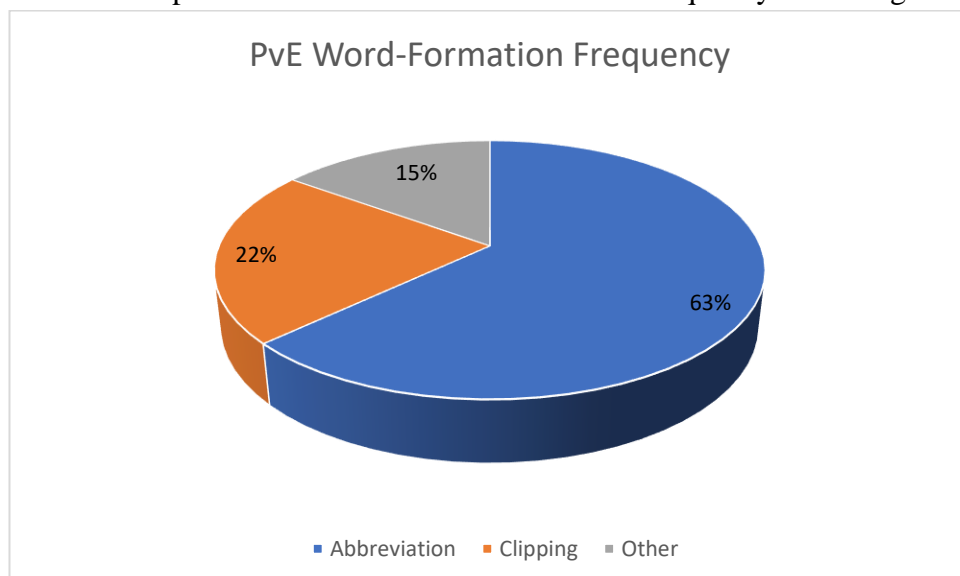
3.3.3 Word-Formation Process Frequency

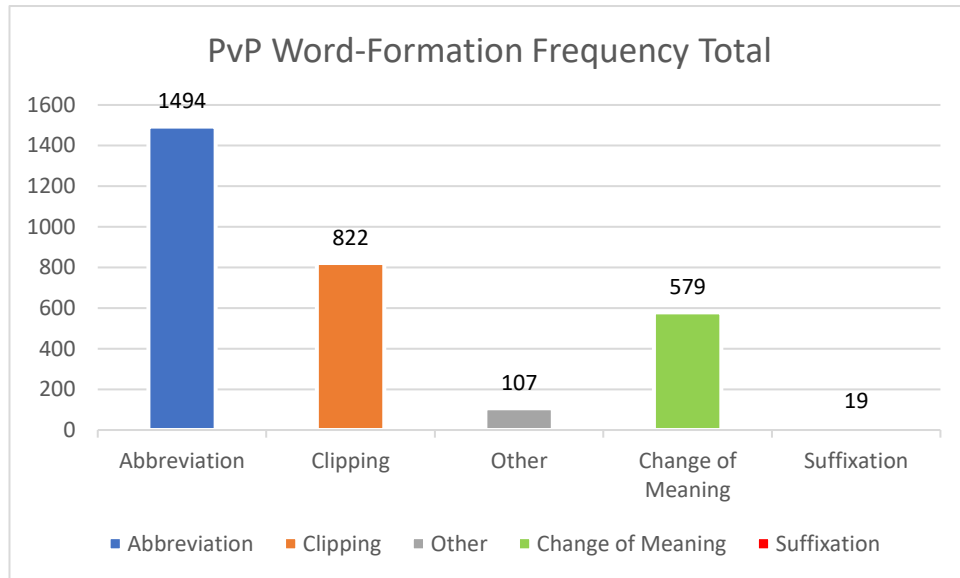3.3.3.1 Graph 4: PvE Word-Formation Process Relative Frequency Total
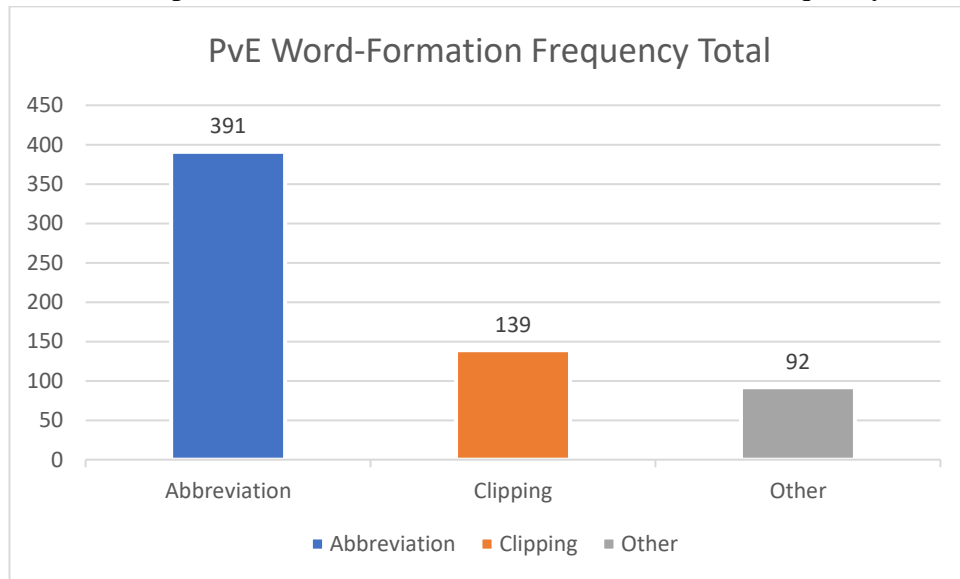
This graph represents the relative per 10 000 words frequency of words used by the player community ordered by their word-formation process in the PvE game modes. This means that abbreviations were used 391 times, words which were a result of clipping appeared 139 times and words formed with other methods emerged 92 times.

3.3.3.2 Graph 5: PvE Word-Formation Process Frequency Percentage

In this pie chart graph, we can see representation of each word-formation process's frequency out of all words used by players in PvE game modes. This means that, as seen in the Graph 4, out of 522 words used by players 63% were abbreviations, 22% are a result of clipping and 15% were formed by other methods.

3.3.3.3 Graph 6: PvP Word-Formation Process Frequency Total

This graph represents relative per 10 000 words frequency of words used by the player community in the PvP modes. This means that out of 10 000 total words used in PvP game modes 1494 are abbreviations, 822 are clippings, 107 are words formed by other methods, 579 are words with meaning different from the original and 19 words were created by suffixation.

3.3.3.4 Graph 7: PvP Word-Formation Process Frequency Percentage
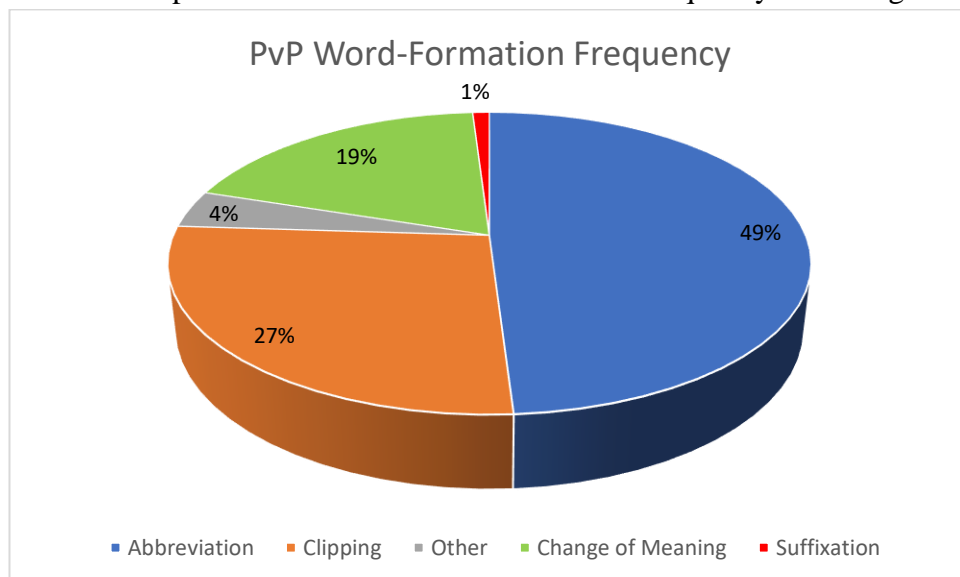
Last graph shows out of only words used by players in PvP 49% are abbreviations, 27% are clippings, 4% are words formed through other methods, 19% are words with different meaning than the original and 1% are words created by suffixation.

4 <u>Conclusion</u>

At first, conducting research in SWTOR was difficult because authentic conversation was desired but very few players began conversation on their own and that led me to devise a plan on how to nudge players to start writing. Afterwards, players would communicate but hardly ever about the game and gathered data rarely contained player created words which led to switching from PvE to PvP where I assumed given the nature of game modes players would be forced to write as they adapt to the enemy team. Warzones proved to be an outstanding environment for gathering words used by the community of gamers. Given this backstory it might be surprising that in both PvE and PvP abbreviation was the most common word-formation process among players, however I think that it only proves how frequently abbreviation is used in gaming slang. Looking back, what I find interesting is that in PvP modes clipping was used more frequently than in PvE modes, I had assumed that in PvP abbreviation would be even more prevalent and clipping 5-10% rarer given the time pressure of PvP modes and in PvE more clippings can arise because of the variety of topics that are discussed in those game modes. It is also noteworthy to mention that all words used by community of players from both environments except for eight were formed by using only three word-formation processes which correspond with modern word-formation productivity in English language. No new words formed through prefixation were encountered which is surprising as the Darth Malgus server is designated for Europe and includes players from non-native English-speaking countries and the Star Wars universe is largely advertised for children, therefore I assumed some players might create new words to compensate for their lack of vocabulary. Non-native players might also struggle with the words used by players with different meaning. However, these are usually intuitive.

Lastly, the results of this thesis might be dissimilar to the experience of players on the North American server where the majority of players are native English speakers.

5 <u>Sources</u>

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