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Lexical exclusivity in the communication of League of Legends players

Lexikální exkluzivita v komunikaci hráčů League of Legends

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V Českých Budějovicích, dne

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Adam Kohout

ANOTACE

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá jazykem používaným v online hře League of Legends. V teoretické části je věnuji zejména sémantice, slangu a jeho poddruhům, slovotvorným procesům a in groups. V kapitole o slovotvorných procesech kladu největší důraz na abreviaci a akronymy. Dále pak v práci popisuji princip hry a jakým stylem probíhá komunikace. V praktické části jsem provedl analýzu lexikálních jednotek z in-game chatu, které program #LancsBox vyhodnotil jako nejpoužívanější. Cílem výzkumu je sestavení žebříčku nejpoužívanějších slov, slovotvorných procesů a odpověď na otázku jak moc je jazyk používaný ve hře exkluzivní.

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with the language used in the online game League of Legends. In the theoretical part, I mainly focus on semantics, slang and its subfields, word-forming processes and in groups. In the chapter on word-forming processes, I focus on abbreviations and acronyms. In the work, I also describe the principle of the game and the style of communication. In the practical part, I analyzed the lexical units from the in-game chat, which the #LancsBox program evaluated as the most used. The goal of the research is to assemble a ranking of the most used words, word-forming processes and answer the question of how exclusive the language used in the game is.

Table of contents

1   Introduction

In the era of digital platforms and internet, the way we communicate with each other has been transformed completely. With most of the communication taking place on the internet, probably due to its comfort and accessibility, it has become a unique linguistic domain. Such language can be found anywhere on the internet, whether its social media such as Facebook and Twitter, or discussion forums like Reddit. These examples are quite predictable; however, such language can be found in discussions, YouTube videos or even emails. This language has a unique trait, which is time saving, meaning that the usual form of the language is consisting of shortenings and clippings.

This time saving attribute is very important in communication of players of online games, because of its fast-paced gameplay where players need to share information as fast as possible. The language in online games is very efficient and it can be incomprehensible for inexperienced people. It's the fast-paced gameplay that is causing language to be shortened, even if the player wanted to properly express himself, he is not able to. If a new player was to start playing a game, it would be extremely difficult for him to understand others, as he is overwhelmed with learning the game and when he tries to chat with others, he doesn't understand them. In this thesis, I would like to shed some light on what makes online gaming language unique from common internet language. The game I chose for this research is League of Legends (LoL). The main reason I chose LoL is because of its enormous player base, which can be considered as the largest amongst online games. Other than that, it is my personal favorite and I have been around it for eleven years, which makes me more than eligible to understand its terms and to be able to this research. The result of this work will be a list of most frequently used terms in LoL chats, that will be divided by their exclusivity, word forming processes the terms will be analyzed.

To do such analysis, we shall explain the word forming processes and slang overall in the theoretical part of this thesis. Word forming processes such as abbreviations and acronyms or clipping will play a crucial role when it comes to understanding the results of the research part, because they are the most common.

2   Theoretical part

2.1   Semantics

From a linguistic point of view, semantics can be interpreted as a subcategory that studies the meaning of words. The focus of semantics can be on words, phrases, sentences, or even larger units in discourse. Semantics has two main subcategories, firstly its compositional semantics, which is not important in this research, but the second one, namely lexical semantics is very crucial and will be explained later in this chapter. By analyzing how a word acquires meaning, the connection between words and the level of meaning, we gain insight into lexical semantics. D. A. Cruse is a prominent figure in this topic, in his book "Lexical Semantics" (1986) he explores the complex nature of word meaning, emphasizing on factors that shape it. Cruse highlights the complexity by extensively examining various levels of word meaning. He argues that words carry both denotative meaning, which is the world's dictionary definition, and connotative meaning, which embraces the subjective and associative aspects of words. Connotative meaning is more complex, as it can convey the subjective and cultural sense that a word carries. Recognizing the distinction between these two categories is essential to understanding the complexity of lexical semantics. Words possess not only a dictionary-defined denotation but also an array of connotations that can evoke subjective and cultural interpretations. By acknowledging the multifaceted nature of word meaning, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of language and its expressive capabilities. From a linguistic standpoint, semantics is a subfield that focuses on the study of word meaning. It can encompass the analysis of meanings at various linguistic levels, including words, phrases, sentences, and larger units of discourse.

Polysemy of words is a single word with multiple related meanings. These related meanings may differ but are still connected by a shared idea. In language, polysemy is very common as words often develop and acquire additional meanings over time through processes such as metaphor, metonymy. As an example, we have the word "man" which has several polysemous senses. It can refer to a human species, male of human species or an adult of the human species. Despite these different senses, they are all connected through the central idea of an entity associated human species. Polysemy in the word "man" allows for diverse interpretations and contextual usage, showcasing the inherent complexity and flexibility of language. As a downside to polysemy and its versatility, it may be challenging in terms of interpretation and disambiguation, as its very context dependent. As for polysemy within the context of League of Legends, it can be observed in the diverse interpretations and contextual usages of certain terms. For example, let's consider the word "pick" within the game. Firstly, it may refer to the act of selecting a specific champion or character that counters or synergizes well with the opposing team's composition before a match begins. Secondly, in the context of

gameplay strategy, it can also be an attempt in the game to assassinate isolated champion to gain numerical superiority. Despite these distinct senses, both interpretations of "pick" are connected by the central idea of champion selection and strategic decision-making. Polysemy in the context of LoL provides players with the flexibility to adapt their tactics and make informed choices based on the context at hand. However, this versatility can also present challenges in terms of interpretation and disambiguation, as the meanings of certain terms are highly dependent on the specific in-game situation or the broader strategic context.

Another important topic in lexical semantics is a theory of semantic field. Originating in 1930s, it refers to a group of words related to each other based on their meanings and associations. This theory claims that lexical meaning cannot be fully understood by looking at a single word, but by looking at a group of semantically related words. Semantic relations refer to various types of relationships between words in terms of their meanings, such as synonymy, antonymy, hypernymy and hyponymy. There are no fixed criteria within semantic field theory that dictate the extent of these relationships between words. The validity of this theory is a topic of ongoing discussion and debate. Understanding the meaning of a lexical item involves being aware of the associated semantic implications that come with it. However, it is also possible to understand an individual word within a semantic field without necessarily understanding the meanings of other related words in that field. Within the League of Legends community, players and enthusiasts engage in discussions, strategizing, and analysis that heavily rely on the shared understanding of these lexical fields. Each field represents a cohesive set of words with related meanings and associations, allowing for effective communication within the gaming community. For instance, the "jungle" field includes words like "jungler," "camp," "buffs," and "ganking." These terms are semantically related to the specific role of the jungler. Understanding the terms and nuances of the jungle field is crucial for players who wish to excel in this role and communicate effectively with their teammates. By recognizing and familiarizing themselves with the various lexical fields present in League of Legends, players can enhance their understanding of the game's mechanics, communicate more effectively with teammates, and develop more nuanced strategies. The shared vocabulary within these fields enables concise and precise discussions, facilitates the exchange of knowledge, and contributes to the overall depth of the game's strategic landscape.

2.2   Lexical semantics vs Stylistics

Lexical semantics and stylistics are two distinct branches of linguistics that focus on different aspects of language analysis. Lexical semantics primarily examines the meanings and relationships of words, while stylistics is all about the expressive and aesthetic features of language use. In lexical semantics, the main objective is to understand how words acquire

meaning and how they relate to one another. This field explores the diversity of word meaning, including both denotative and connotative aspects. In lexical semantics, we analyze various levels of meaning, semantic relations, or semantic fields. The primary goal of that is to uncover connections that words possess. This analysis then sheds light on how language is interpreted by users and how they understand words. On the other hand, stylistics focuses on the expressive and artistic qualities of language. Stylistic analysis examines how language choices, such as vocabulary, syntax, and figurative language, contribute to the overall style, tone, and impact of a text. In stylistics, we pay close attention to rhetorical devices and linguistic patterns used by authors to convey meanings. By analyzing these stylistic elements shaping the form of language, we can highlight the creative aspects of communication. In summary, lexical semantics emphasizes the study of word meanings and their relationships, stylistics looks at the broader linguistic features that contribute to the overall style, tone, and impact of a text. Lexical semantics seeks to uncover the intricate meanings and connections within a language system, while stylistics aims to explore the expressive and artistic dimensions of language use. Both these branches provide valuable insights into the complexities of language. Lexical semantics deepens our understanding of how words get their meaning and how they relate to one another, while stylistics is all about expressive and aesthetic aspects of language use. Together, these branches of linguistics contribute to our comprehensive understanding of the intricate interplay between meaning, expression, and creativity within human communication.

2.3   Stylistics

In terms of lexicology, it is essential to understand the idea of stylistics before understanding the concept of exclusivity. Stylistics is part of linguistics that deals with language based on context. As part of lexicology, stylistics focuses on how words and phrases contribute to meaning and effect in discourse through their stylistic properties. Linguist Geoffrey Leech states that "Stylistics is concerned with exploring the attitudes and values which underlie linguistic choices" (Leech, 1969). Stylistic analysis involves inspecting the choices that speakers and writers make regarding vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical devices and the way they contribute to the overall tone, mood, and style of a text. This analysis gives valuable insights into cultural, social, and psychological elements that shape language use, or as Widdowson (1998) states that stylistic analysis can help us to understand the ways in which language is used to create meaning and effect, and to explore the relationship between language use, social and cultural factors, and psychological factors. In LoL, this analysis is no different, as it plays an important role in analyzing the exclusive language patterns and stylistic choices within the game. The result of such stylistic analysis should be overall better understanding of the exclusive language used in the game. This includes noting the stylistic functions, along with vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical

devices, that players and developers use in their communication. Through this analysis, researchers can perceive linguistic elements that contribute to the game's authentic tone, mood, and style. Scoping on the mechanisms of lexical exclusivity in the League of Legends community. Moreover, analyzing examples from League of Legends further complements our understanding of the way stylistic analysis applies to the game. For instance, the usage of different vocabulary associated with the game's lore, including terms like "summoner," "champion," or "jungle," creates a sense of immersion and exclusivity within the League of Legends community. Furthermore, champion's unique phrases and expressions contribute to the overall stylistic richness of the game through setting up their distinct personalities. Such analysis of stylistic choices made by players in the game would provide a great insight of how lexical exclusivity is created in LoL or in games overall.

2.3.1 Stylistic analysis

In lexicology, stylistic analysis is an important aspect of understanding how language works in unique contexts. As Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) noted, "The study of stylistics involves the examination of the choices of language made by the writer or speaker." This chapter will explore the unique aspects of stylistic analysis in lexicology, which include the role of vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical devices in creating meaning and impact in language use. One of the key components of stylistic analysis in lexicology is the study of vocabulary. According to Stubbs (1996), "vocabulary choices are a fundamental means of creating meaning in texts." This includes looking at the methods in which speakers and writers use specialized vocabularies, metaphors, and different figurative language to create meaning and effect. For example, the usage of medical terminology in a textual content about healthcare emphasizes the knowledge and authority of the speaker or author. Another important aspect of stylistic analysis in lexicology is the study of grammar. As Carter and Nash (1990) referred to, "grammar is not only a set of rules, but a powerful tool for shaping meaning in texts." This includes analyzing the choices that speakers and writers make regarding sentence structure, tense, and voice, in addition to the usage of rhetorical devices such as repetition and parallelism. For instance, the use of passive voice in a text can create a sense of objectivity and distance, while using active voice can emphasize agency and action. Finally, stylistic analysis in lexicology additionally involves the study of rhetorical devices. As defined by Corbett and Connors (1999), rhetorical devices are "tools which could help writers and speakers achieve specific effects, such as emphasis, clarity, and persuasiveness." This involves inspecting how writers and speakers use devices along with metaphor, simile, alliteration, and parallelism to create a particular tone or mood in a textual content. This analysis can be used to understand communication in LoL, especially the use of jargon and specialized vocabulary. The game has its very own unique terms and acronyms which can be used by players

to talk with each other, such as "jungler" (a player who in most cases remains within the jungle vicinity of the map) and "gank" (to surprise attack an enemy player). Stylistic analysis can help us to understand the meanings related to these phrases, as well as how they are used in unique contexts within the game. Analyzing the language use in League of Legends can provide insights into the social dynamics and power structures within the game's community. For example, analyzing the use of language in player interactions can reveal patterns of cooperation and competition, as well as the methods in which players set up and hold their positions of power within the game. Stylistic analysis of language use in League of Legends can therefore provide valuable insights into the culture and social interactions of the game's community.

To close out this chapter, it must be mentioned that stylistic analysis is an essential tool for understanding how language is used to create which means and impact in unique contexts. By inspecting the choices that speakers and writers make regarding vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical devices, we can gain a deeper knowledge of the way language works in exclusive genres and for unique purposes. As Carter and Nash (1990) mentioned, "stylistic analysis is not just a matter of identifying figures of speech or grammatical structures, but a way of understanding how meaning is created in texts". In the long run, the study of stylistic analysis in lexicology is vital for understanding the complicated relationship among language use, social and cultural elements, and psychological factors.

2.4   Slang

Slang is a phenomenon that is extremely difficult to define, even though it is often discussed, the definitions are not useful in any way to linguists. But Dumas and Lighter (1978) clarify that a very few linguists have tried to define slang:

> Annoyance and frustration await anyone who searches professional literature for a definition or even a conception of *slang* that can stand up to scrutiny. Instead, one finds impressionism, much of it of a dismaying kind.

Adams (2009) brought a different definition, which says that slang is a liminal language, it is often impossible to tell, even in context, which interests and motives it serves, slang is on the edge. It is very unlikely we will ever have a general definition of slang, with how much it is different in every group, generation, or nations. For example, the first definition of slang on the internet, when you type "What is slang" is a vague interpretation. On CambridgeDictionary.org it says, "Slang is a very informal language that is usually spoken rather than written, used especially by particular groups of people." And as example they state army slang and "chicken" as someone who is not very brave. These slang expressions are one of the main reasons for these

websites to exist, because what do people do when they do not understand a reference in terms of slang? They google it. Slang refers to words or phrases that are informal and non-standard and are often created within subcultures of a society as new expressions or innovations in language. Thorne (2007) defines slang for these subcultures as "A private code that embodies their particular values and behavior and reinforces their exclusivity", meaning it can be a key to distinguish certain group identity. However, Thorne (2007) added that "slang expression may escape the original group and become more widely used". Meaning a slang word can escape its origin and become a regular word for people outside the group.

Expressions used as slang:

- can take on various forms such as metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech.
- They may be newly invented words or existing words that acquire new meanings.
- Sometimes the meanings of words can become more general, even though they were originally used in a specific context.
- Additionally, slang can include abbreviated forms of words or phrases.

As Crystal (1987) states "the slang of one generation can be standard English of the next"
Dumas and Lighter (1978) argue when should an expression be studied as a "true slang", and they came up with theory that the expression is true slang if it meets at least two of the following criteria.

- For the time being, it diminishes "the dignity of formal or serious speech or writing."
  To put it differently, someone who knows the phrase would not encounter it in the middle of a serious discussion in standard English, except for when the speaker or writer intends to be informal or friendly with their audience. In those situations, the use of the expression will appear as a strikingly inappropriate use of language style.

- The usage of the expression suggests that the person who uses it is either acquainted with the subject matter or is part of a group of individuals who are knowledgeable about it. This group might be perceived as being of lower social status or less responsible than others.

- The expression is considered taboo in regular conversations with individuals of higher social standing or greater responsibility. Nonetheless, the use of taboo language can differ depending on the circumstances, time period, and culture.

- The expression is utilized to substitute a commonly accepted word, primarily for two reasons: (a) to prevent the user from experiencing unease caused by the conventional term, or (b) to shield the user from the inconvenience or irritation of providing additional explanation.

In According to Dumas and Lighter's (1987) findings, if an expression meets at least two of the criteria, "a language-aware audience will respond to it in a specific manner." This response is regarded as "the definitive identifying feature of true slang." Now that what slang was introduced, it is demanding to present what slang is not. To diminish what slang is, we must ask, what is the function of slang expression? Thorne (2007) argues that slang phrases and expressions have distinguishable functions such as:

- A slang word may fill a gap in the existing lexicon (e.g., glomp for jumping and hugging someone from behind).

- A slang expression may be substituted for an existing term, i.e., relexicalization (e.g., blamming'for exciting; chuffie'for chewing gum). The motives behind this might be by renaming something, you make it yours, and you make it funnier or ruder.

- Many slang synonyms or near-synonyms may be invented because —the words in question have an emblematic force over and above their primary fifteen meanings. The most important groups of terms continue to be in the following semantic fields the categories of drunkenness and druggedness, of terms of approval and enthusiasm, of insults and pejorative nicknames and of expressions relating to sex and partnership.

Finally, it is important to address the matter of using slang. It is undeniable that attitudes towards the use of slang compared to standard or formal English tend to be negative. For example, previous discussions in this chapter, or references to slang as expressions "lowering the dignity of formal or serious speech" or expressions used by "less statusful or less responsible class of people" support the theory (Dumas & Lighter 1987). To close this chapter, let us use the words of Crystal (1987), Crystal agrees that slang is "a colloquial departure from standard usage" as it is often imaginative, vivid, and brilliant in its construction. Therefore, it appeals greatly to individuals who desire to stand out linguistically, either due to their personal inclinations or social

affiliations, aiming to be part of a specific group, regardless of the group's nature, whether the group in question are soldiers, nurses, actors, footballers, prisoners, warders, linguists, or pop singers.

2.4.1   Internet slang

With slang covered, now we look at internet slang. This specific type of slang is hugely widespread today thanks to the massive use of social networks and the internet in general. Defining internet slang is not a simple task, just like standard slang. There are many definitions from various authors, but my favorite is from Jones's Internet slang dictionary (2006) says that internet slang is "the broad definition given to almost any acronym or abbreviation created to eliminate keystrokes online (whether it's IM, email, chat, or text message)", this definition is rather finite, because its focused mainly on abbreviations and acronyms. A more definite definition is provided by Thorne (2007) when he talks about cyberslang as "informal, abbreviated or humorous terms". Now it's important to note where we can see internet slang, firstly, its social media, which is by far the most common representative, after that we can see slang being used in text messaging, emails, and instant messages. Slang used on these places will most likely consist of a variety of exclusive words, phrases, acronyms, and abbreviations. Website dictionary.cambridge.org defines cyberslang as a type of slang that is used in digital communication, such as texting, email, and social media. It often incorporates acronyms, abbreviations, and other linguistic shortcuts. Crystal (2011) explains that this kind of slang is a type of language that has emerged in online communication, characterized by a range of features that distinguish it from traditional written and spoken language. Cyber slang is often used to convey humor, express emotions, or communicate information quickly and efficiently, big part of expressing emotions are emojis and emoticons, which are graphical representations of emotions and other nonverbal cues. As noted by linguist David Crystal, emojis and emoticons are important for context and understanding of the tone that might be difficult to understand in textual conversation. Crystal follows this with a theory that the usage of emoticons is becoming increasingly frequent, with emojis created for almost any emotion or reaction. For example, the simple "smiley face" emoticon :-) has evolved into a range of different variations, such as ;-) (a wink) and :-D (laughing), suggesting that the use of emoticons is a significant aspect of internet slang, and an important part of online communication. By using these graphical representations of emotion and nonverbal cues, users can enrich their online communication and create a more personal and expressive form of language. Another important topic of cyberslang is misspelling, it can sometimes include misspellings intentionally used to convey a certain meaning or tone. However, not all misspellings used on the internet necessarily qualify as internet slang. It is important to note that many websites include misspellings under the umbrella of internet slang

while others may not, additionally, there is no one definitive list of internet slang terms or rules for what qualifies as such, due to the language still being relatively new, and as its constantly evolving, with new terms and phrases being created and popularized on a regular basis. It is often used by specific subcultures or groups of people, and may be regional, generational, or occupational. Examples include LOL (laugh out loud), BRB (be right back), TTYL (talk to you later), and IDK (I don't know) and in League Of Legends players may use ADC (Attack damage carry), BotRK (Blade of the Ruined King), etc. It is mainly used within item names or champion names J4 (Jarvan IV.). Major downside of the usage of this slang is that it is very confusing for people that are not familiar with it. It is also important to note that even though slang is useful and creative, it may be offensive or inappropriate at times, meaning users must exactly know what they are saying. Even though the internet is still as Crystal (2011) says in its infancy, it has become more than a major part of our lives. We get up and we instantly check emails, private messages, social media for news. Crystal (2011) points out that we live in cyberspace.

2.4.2   Unconventional spelling

In his book, David Crystal (2008) makes a distinction between deliberate and unintentional misspellings. While deliberate misspellings are typically due to poor language skills or typos, the deviant spellings found in Internet slang suggest a conscious manipulation of the writing system, rather than a simple mistake. Crystal notes that while the list of non-standard spellings is not extensive, they are distinct and may reflect informal or regional speech patterns. The Oxford English Dictionary even includes some non-standard spellings as they have become so widely used. These words, such as "cos," "wot," "luv," "thanx," and "ya," are part of the English literary tradition and have been in use for over a century. According to Benjamin Dreyer, intentional misspellings are intentional bad spelling or phrasing, as a means of conveying a down-to-earth friendliness, among other possible motives (Dreyer, 2019). He argues that while it may be appropriate for certain contexts, such as social media or informal communication with friends, it has no place in professional or formal writing. Dreyer believes that using proper spelling and grammar is an essential component of good writing and communicates respect for one's audience. One such example is "Teh," which originated from typing "The" incorrectly, but has since become a common misspelling in online communication. Other examples would be "cuz" instead of "because", "ur" instead of "your" or "you're", "wanna" instead of "want to".

Another group of misspellings is shortening. Shortenings are a form of abbreviation in which a word is shortened by omitting one of its meaningful elements. David Crystal notes, shortenings are typically the sorts of word forms that occur most frequently in everyday language, because they tend to be the shortest and easiest to say and write (Crystal, 2008). This can occur

at either the beginning or end of the word, as in (photo)graph and (auto)biography, respectively. Other examples of shortenings include (info)graphic, (math)ematics, and (in)flu(enza). Shortenings are created by cutting a major part of the word and leaving just the first few letters, then they are used to represent the whole word. They are commonly used in informal communication, particularly in digital contexts like texting and social media. For instance, individuals may use shortenings like (lol) to represent "laughing out loud" or (btw) for "by the way." Additionally, some shortenings can become so widespread that they enter the lexicon as stand-alone words, such as (fax) and (blog). Next class of shortenings are omitted letters, Crystal (2008) observes that in text messaging and instant messaging, people often shorten words by omitting letters from the middle, which are commonly referred to as "contractions." In some cases, all vowels are removed from a word, resulting in a type of contraction that does not include any vowels, which is called disemvoweling, which is vowel removing. Additionally, people often drop a letter from the end of a word, which is a phenomenon known as "clipping." That is done by dropping the letter "g" from words that end in "-ing," a type of clipping that is often referred to as "g-clipping." These types of shortenings can involve omitting vowels, and final or silent consonants. Moreover, double medial consonants are often reduced to singletons. Crystal notes that some contractions that were once common are no longer used, and it is likely that new ones will emerge while current ones disappear.

The last major group of misspelling is Leetspeak, also known as "1337speak" or simply "leet". Leetspeak works by replacing certain letters in words with similar-looking numbers or symbols, in order to create a code-like language. Its origin is probably from the times of early internet for gamers and hackers creating their own language so outsiders can't understand them, but it has since become a more mainstream form of online communication. Some examples:

• "H3ll0" instead of "Hello"

• "1337" instead of "elite"

• "//0w" instead of "wow"

• "pwn" instead of "own"

• "5uX0r" instead of "sucks"

As you can see, leetspeak involves replacing letters with numbers or symbols that resemble the original letters. As you can see in the first example, the number "3" is used to replace the letter "E" because they have a similar shape. While it can be a fun and creative way to communicate online, linguist David Crystal argues that it is not a legitimate form of written English. Crystal notes that leetspeak violates many of the rules of standard spelling and grammar and can be difficult for non-initiates to understand. He writes, leet symbols are primarily a way

of communicating graphically, not linguistically. They are based on a different kind of logic from that of ordinary English spelling, and are used for different purposes (Crystal, 2008). As popular leetspeak may be, it is important to realize it's very informal language and shouldn't be used as a substitute for English grammar and spelling. To close this chapter, I would like to paraphrase David Crystal, he writes people are beginning to see the language of texting and social media not as a corruption of English, but as an alternative way of using language that is both creative and playful. This new form of language has its own rules and conventions and requires a different set of skills to traditional writing. But rather than being a threat to traditional literacy, it is an extension of it, and offers exciting new opportunities for linguistic innovation and expression (2008).

2.5   Vulgarism

Now that we have gone through slang and its many forms, we shall look at vulgarisms, because it is necessary to introduce this topic in order to fully understand the research part. Vulgarisms or vulgarity refers to language, behavior, or expressions that are considered crude, coarse, indecent, or offensive. It typically involves violating social or cultural norms of decency and can encompass various forms, including profanity, obscenity, or lewdness. Vulgarity is subjective and varies across different societies and contexts. It often involves the use of explicit or sexually explicit language, gestures, or actions that are considered inappropriate or offensive in polite or formal settings. According to an internet dictionary Dictionary.com vulgarism is "a vulgar expression; a word or phrase used only in common colloquial, and especially in coarse, speech." Other sources even state that the origin of the word is from Latin "vulgaris" which can be translated as "the common people" which indicates that the origin refers to language or behavior that was characteristic of the common people rather than the elite or educated classes ("Vulgarity"). Over time, the term evolved to encompass language or expressions that were considered crude, indecent, or offensive. In the context of League of Legends, vulgarisms play a significant role in shaping the community's linguistic landscape. Players engage in intense and competitive moments, where vulgar language, trash-talking (engaging in provocative, derogatory, or boastful speech or behavior aimed at intimidating or mocking opponents), and offensive expressions become prevalent. For example, phrases like "ur trash," "get rekt," "suck it," or "git gud" are are often directed towards opponents to provoke, dominate, or assert superiority. They create a distinct atmosphere of competitive banter, contributing to the formation of an exclusive linguistic community within the game. Moreover, vulgarisms extend beyond in-game interactions. Player-created content, such as memes, forums, and social media platforms revolving around League of Legends, are infused with vulgar language. Players adopt and circulate specific vulgarisms, integrating them into the game's culture. For instance, phrases like "gg ez" (meaning good game,

easy) are often used sarcastically or mockingly to taunt opponents after a victory, adding an element of vulgarity to post-game interactions. This shared linguistic repertoire reinforces the sense of identity and belonging among players, contributing to the lexical exclusivity observed within the League of Legends community. Understanding the use of vulgarisms in League of Legends sheds light on how language serves as a tool for social dynamics and linguistic exclusivity within the gaming community. By examining the impact and consequences of vulgar language, we can gain valuable insights into the formation of player identities, community interactions, and the perception of the game by external audiences.

2.6   Word forming processes

Within the context of language transformation, we will closely look at word forming processes and semantic shift, which are key for research part of this thesis. The aim of this chapter is to introduce the transformation of words and their meanings over time and explore the processes through which words form and evolve, both in form and meaning. These processes shed light on how languages expand their vocabulary and adapt. Word formation is a method of creating new words or modifying old existing words. It explores the processes how new vocabulary is formed and added to the language. By analyzing these methods, we gain insight into the creation of new words. After that, we will take a look at semantic shift, a phenomenon which explores how meaning of words change over time.

2.6.1   Abbreviations and Acronyms

The kings among slang and informal internet language, it is really the most frequently used slang, they are essentially just shortened or reduced words. Abbreviations are nothing new, they have been here for centuries working as a time saver, but they have become much more popular and spread with the growth of internet (Lee, 2013). The difference between abbreviations and acronyms is simple yet must be explained. While acronyms like LOL (laugh out loud) are formed by using the initial letters of other words and pronounced as a single word, initialisms such as BTW (By the way) consist of the initial letters of words that are pronounced separately. Although this difference is simple, it is important to realize that internet abbreviations are almost never pronounced, and as Lee (2013) argues, there are notable distinctions between traditional and internet abbreviations. Traditional are usually nouns carrying the name of a company or an institute i.e., CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) or UEFA (Union Of European Football Associations), UCL (UEFA Champions League). Internet abbreviations on the other hand mostly carry phrases expressing an emotion or an activity such as IDK (I Don't Know), BRB (Be Right Back) or ROFL (Rolling On The Floor Laughing). In online communication platforms like instant

messengers, chat rooms, online forums, and social networking sites, there are numerous abbreviations being used. While some of these abbreviations are familiar to most internet users, others are specific to certain subcultures or internet communities. There is no standard protocol regarding the capitalization of these abbreviations, and both upper and lower cases are acceptable. However, lower case letters may be used more frequently as they can help in typing faster. Dixon (2011) breaks down internet abbreviations into nine categories:

- Greetings e.g., Sup (What's up), HRU (How are you)
- Relationships e.g., BF (boyfriend), BFF (best friend forever)
- Mood/Reaction e.g., OMG (oh my god), LMAO (laughing my ass off)
- Negative Descriptions e.g., BS (bullshit), FOS (full of shit)
- Affection e.g., ILY (I love you), LOL (lots of love)
- Closings e.g., CYA (see you), GN (good night)
- Disclaimers e.g., AFAIK (as far as I know)
- Timing e.g., ASAP (as soon as possible), B4 (before)
- And lastly a category of other frequently used e.g., PLS (please), BTW (by the way)

Sometimes there can be a combination of abbreviation and phonetic translation, B4 meaning Be(four) = before, CU meaning C (see) U (you) = see you. Understanding of the context is key, because of multiple meanings. As it can be noted in Dixons categories, LOL can mean many things, either League of Legends, laugh out loud, lots of love and many more. It is only possible to distinguish what the given abbreviation stands for if we understand the context. To explain this matter even more in detail, we shall look at two of the most popular abbreviations such as LOL and BTW. Starting with BTW, it is one of the most used abbreviations of the modern world. BTW (By the Way) has been in use for decades, primarily in written communication such as letters, memos, and emails. With the growth of social media, the use of BTW has become widespread, especially in the area of informal internet communication, such as texting or instant messages. A study by Tagg and Sergeant (2012) a found that the use of abbreviations and acronyms, including BTW, was common in digital communication among teenagers and young adults. The study noted that these individuals used shorthand to convey information quickly, create a sense of intimacy, and maintain a sense of privacy. The abbreviation has become a useful tool for conveying additional information or a side note during a conversation, without disrupting the main topic or to introduce a topic or add information that is not directly related to the main point of the conversation. In an article for The Washington Post, writer Vanessa Giang (2019) discusses the use of BTW and other shorthand in professional emails. Giang notes that while abbreviations like BTW can save time and convey a sense of familiarity in casual communication, they can also come across as unprofessional in certain contexts. She advises that it is important to consider your audience and the tone of your message before using shorthand like BTW in a work email.

However, the evolution of the usage of BTW over the years has also been influenced by changes in communication technology and social norms. For example, as mobile devices and texting became more popular, the character limit of text messages led to the development of new abbreviations and shorthand, including BTW. As for the origin of BTW, it is assumed that BTW started to be used in the late 1990s or early 2000s. According to Cambridge dictionary, btw is used to add an extra comment or information, pointing out something that is not the main topic of discussion ("BTW"). Today, it is widely recognized and used in digital communication. Overall, while the usage of BTW has remained consistent in its general meaning and purpose, its frequency and context have evolved with the changing communication technology and social norms.

LOL on the other hand is much more diverse and it may be used in lots of meanings. It is safe to say that LOL is by far the most diverse and popular abbreviations both on the internet and real life. As can be found in Merriam-Webster dictionary, "LOL is used to indicate that something is funny or amusing and is often used in electronic communication" ("LOL"). It is obvious that the meaning of LOL has changed through the years, and it has also became commonly used in spoken English. As linguist Ben Zimmer notes, "LOL had been undergoing a semantic shift, with its original humorous connotations becoming toned down or even disappearing entirely" (Knibbs, 2013). This shift in meaning is evident in the wide variety of contexts in which LOL is now used. The growth of LOL's meaning is attributed to the term's huge use in various forms of virtual communication, such as text messages, social media, and online forums. In these contexts, LOL has taken on new meanings and connotations, leading to its slow transformation from a simple expression of humor to a complicated device for showing emotions and attitudes. While "LOL" is a common abbreviation used almost everywhere, there are interesting stylistic variations among "LOL," "lol," and even "lol." the use of all capital letters in "LOL" may be used as a louder expression of laughter, while the lowercase "lol" may suggest a more ironic or casual reaction. Then again, "lol." with a period at the end can be used to deliver sarcasm or a greater insincere tone. Additionally, the use of various letter case or punctuation in "LOL," "lol," and "lol." can also reflect variations in social and cultural norms, with "LOL" being used in serious contexts, while "lol" and "lol." are often used in more casual or sarcastic cases. As a result, the stylistic variation in the use of "LOL" and its variations can bring additional meaning beyond simply indicating laughter. Moreover, linguists advise that the meaning of LOL may also continue to evolve over time as its usage adjusts. As stated by linguist Michael Adams, As stated by linguist Michael Adams, "when people use LOL, they're not just signaling that they're laughing, but also signaling that they're part of a group that uses LOL in a particular way" (Briggs, 2014). This highlights the social factor of LOL's meaning, as it is closely tied to the social norms and practices

of online communication. As such, the meaning of LOL isn't always fixed or static, however rather dynamic, and subject to change based on the cultural and social contexts in which it is used.

2.6.2   Word clipping

Word clipping, a linguistic process widely observed in various forms of communication, involves the truncation of longer words or phrases to create shortened forms. It is a common feature of digital communication, where brevity and speed are prioritized. This practice is particularly prevalent in online contexts, with clipping being rampant in internet communication. Notably, one of the most common products of word clipping is the creation of abbreviated names. As explained in the book "Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction," names like Liz, Ron, Rob, and Sue are clipped forms derived from Elizabeth, Ronald, Robert, and Susan (O'Grady et al., 2019, p. 125). The authors further note that clipping is often popular among students, leading to the formation of abbreviated terms like prof (professor), and poli-sci (political science). While word clipping frequently occurs in informal and online contexts, many clipped forms have become widely accepted in general language usage. O'Grady et al. provide examples of such widely adopted clipped forms, including doc (doctor), ad (advertisement), auto (automobile), lab (laboratory), sub (substitute), porn (pornography), demo (demonstration), and condo (condominium). The authors further highlight the expansion of clipped forms beyond specific domains, such as fax, from facsimile (meaning "exact copy or reproduction") which has become part of general English vocabulary. These examples show how word clipping plays a significant role in language evolution and adaptation. As Crystal (2006) notes, the process of clipping reflects the need for brevity and efficiency in digital communication, enabling individuals to convey meaning in a succinct manner. Moreover, the widespread adoption of clipped forms in general language usage demonstrates the fluid nature of language and its ability to blend innovative linguistic features.

2.6.3   Semantic expansion

Semantic shift, as described in "Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction," refers to the process whereby a word undergoes a transformation in meaning, often retaining some connection to its original sense (O'Grady et al., 2019). This process can occur gradually over time or through a series of shifts, resulting in a meaning that is entirely unrelated to the word's initial definition. The book provides an intriguing example of semantic shift with the word "hearse." Initially, it referred to a triangular harrow used in farming. Over time, its meaning evolved to denote a triangular frame for church candles, then the device that held candles over a coffin, and later the framework for hanging curtains over a coffin or tomb. Then it came to refer to the coffin itself before finally adopting its current sense as a vehicle used for transporting a coffin. This example

illustrates the extensive semantic changes that can occur over an extended period. Furthermore, the book discusses the rapid shifts experienced by the word "gay" in the late twentieth century, as it transitioned from meaning "lively, carefree, happy" to being associated primarily with homosexuality. This highlights how semantic shifts can be particularly striking and swift. Metaphor plays a significant role in triggering semantic change, as it involves drawing comparisons between distinct objects or actions. Through metaphorical usage, words can acquire abstract meanings while still retaining their original sense. For instance, words like "grasp" taking on the meaning of "understand," or "high" being associated with being "on drugs" illustrate how metaphor contributes to semantic expansion in English. Overall, semantic shift showcases the dynamic nature of language and its ability to adapt and evolve over time.

As for semantic expansion in the context of my work and League of Legends overall, it very important as it influences communication in the game. Semantic expansion extends to the game's broader terminology and jargon. For instance, the term "ADC" (Attack Damage Carry) traditionally refers to a ranged damage dealer focused on dealing consistent damage in the late game. However, with the introduction of non-traditional ADC champions, players have expanded the meaning of "ADC" to include any champion in the bot lane position regardless of their damage type. This semantic expansion allows for a more inclusive and adaptable understanding of the role within team compositions. In addition to that, semantic expansion plays a role in the development of guides, tutorials, and educational content within the League of Legends community. As players experiment with different playstyles and strategies, they contribute to the expansion of the lexicon by introducing new terms or redefining existing ones. By understanding the process of semantic expansion in League of Legends through examples like these, players can effectively communicate, adapt their strategies, and stay up to date with the game's language.

2.7   In groups

In-groups are a fundamental part of human social behavior, providing people with a feel of belonging and identity. One could define in group as people that share their beliefs, characteristics and feel united together. In-groups can vary relying on the context and are based on a wide range of factors, including ethnicity, faith, gender, age, social class, or shared experiences. The idea of in-group is important as it affects our attitudes and behaviors toward individuals of our very own group as well as towards members of another group. As Tajfel (1978) argues that an in-group is a group of people who share a sense of belonging, a feeling of common identity. This feeling of belonging, or just being a part of a group can root in shared experiences, beliefs, or interests. Key factor is that mostly members of an in group get along very well and have positive interactions. This results in members favoring each other and identifying with one another, creating a sense of unity, but causing favoritism and maybe even discrimination towards out group members, as they are seen as distant and different. Factors that result in forming an in group have been studied

extensively, with researchers trying to understand the interactions in the groups and outcomes of in group/ out group differences. This has also been implemented to real-world situations, along with intergroup conflict, prejudice, and favoritism and has implications for promoting intergroup harmony and lowering social inequalities. According to McCallion (2007), an in-group refers to a social group or entity to which a person belongs. This means that the person can engage with different members of the group, and they share a common sense of identity in relation to their interests or ideas, creating a feeling of togetherness and a sense of "we-ness." a few examples of in groups can be:

- Circle of relatives: this could include parents, siblings, and extended family members who share a close relationship and sense of belonging.

- Friends: this can include a close circle of friends who share similar interests and values, and frequently spend time collectively.

- Sports teams: This can include a team of athletes who work together towards a common goal, and often form close bonds through their shared experiences.

- School or university groups: This can include groups of students who share a common academic or extracurricular interest, such as a club or organization.

- Religious or cultural groups: This can include groups of people who share a common religion or cultural background, and often come together for worship, celebration, or social events.

- Workplace teams: This can include colleagues who work together towards a common goal or project, and often form close bonds through their shared experiences in the workplace.

These are just a few examples of in-groups, and there are many more that exist in different contexts and cultures.

2.7.1   In group favoritism

In-group favoritism, a term also known as ingroup bias, refers to a phenomenon in which people tend to pick and exhibit more positive attitudes towards members of their own group, often at the price of individuals from outgroups. This bias has been widely studied in social psychology and may lead to negative outcomes which include discrimination, prejudice, and stereotyping. Understanding the underlying psychological processes that drive this bias is vital in reducing intergroup conflicts. A process that divides people into groups based on their similarities is called social categorization and it is one of the reasons favoritism in on the rise. According to Tajfel and Turner (2004), once people identify with a group, they generally tend to view their group as superior and show more favorable attitudes towards their fellow group members. Additionally,

the bias can be amplified through social identity theory, which suggests that individuals derive their self-esteem from their group memberships and try to keep a positive image of their group. As a result, they may engage in behaviors that enhance their group's reputation and discriminate towards outgroups (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). In-group favoritism has severe consequences for interpersonal and intergroup relations. Tajfel and Turner (2004) said that "The ultimate significance of our research is to be found in the possibilities it opens up for the reduction of intergroup conflict, discrimination, and prejudice". Therefore, acknowledging and addressing in-group favoritism can cause a more equitable and inclusive society. Any actions aimed at reducing this bias including increasing awareness, developing intergroup contact, promoting empathy toward outgroups, and emphasizing shared identities to minimize differences between groups. By adopting these measures, we should attempt lowering intergroup conflicts and promoting harmony and inclusivity in our societies.

2.7.2 Out groups

Outsiders, that's how an out group can be viewed as, which means that a person feels like they just don't belong, doesn't recognize their traits, and doesn't sympathize with them at all. As Hogg and Vaughan (2018) state, "As social beings, we humans are deeply influenced by our membership in groups, and these groups are not only sources of identity, pride, and belonging, but also sources of differentiation, prejudice, and discrimination against out-group members." To support this quote even more, these people are often considered and viewed as by a lack of characteristics that they should possess such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or nationality, among others. Our own behavior is vital realizing how we look at outsiders is important because it can influence both our attitudes and the members of an out group. We as individuals tend to view members our own in-group more favorably than members of the out-group, leading to an intergroup bias and hatred. This behavior leads to negative outcomes such as bullying. This part of out-group has been a target of study in social psychology, with researchers investigate the beginning of bias, the dynamics of intergroup interactions. This research has implications for promoting intergroup harmony and restoring equality by reinforcing positive attitudes and behaviors towards members of other groups and promoting a sense of shared identity. It is hard to pick an example of out groups, since it is any group of people we do not agree with, for example:

- Apple and Android users – world is divided into two groups, making each side an out-group for the other.
- Prisoners – not only the gangs are out-groups to each other, the guards are out-group as well.
- Rival sports teams: In sports, fans of one team hold a negative relationship with rivals, which can even become hate.

- Ethnic or racial minorities: Members of dominant ethnic or racial groups may view minority groups as different or inferior, leading to negative attitudes and discrimination.
- LGBTQ+ individuals: Some people may view those who identify as LGBTQ+ as different or immoral, leading to negative attitudes and discrimination.
- Religious groups: Members of one religious group may view those from another religion as different or misguided, leading to negative attitudes and conflict.
- Immigrants or foreigners: In some countries, immigrants or foreigners may be viewed as different or unwelcome, leading to negative attitudes and discrimination.

In conclusion, in-groups and out-groups are stereotypes that we see each day, but one of the groups is considered "cool" and the opposite is usually struggling, they can be described through social, cultural, or other types of group membership, together with ethnicity, religion, or career. In-group members regularly view themselves just like one another and share a sense of shared identity and purpose, while out-group participants are seen as special or weird. In-group members frequently show favoritism or preference towards other in-group members, while showing bias in the direction of out-group members. While both groups get into a social or physical conflict, it almost never ends good, examples of injustice or discrimination, or in good cases it may serve as a foundation for cooperation and mutual help, depending at the context and the people involved. Both in-groups and out-groups are important topics in social psychology, as they create our perceptions of us around other people, whether we fit in or we don't, and how we behave towards each other. It is important to recognize the potential dangers and biases that may form from group membership and work toward promoting positivity and respect for all people, no matter what group they belong to.

2.7.3 Out group Derogation

An opposite to in group favoritism, that's what derogation can be considered as, it is a topic that has been extensively studied in social psychology and can be considered a phenomenon nowadays. It is defined as a tendency of individuals to consider members of an out-group as an outsiders, holding prejudice and often even bullying. As stated by a social psychologist Marilynn Brewer, "out-group derogation involves making negative judgments about an out-group and its members, as well as derogating the out-group's values, beliefs, and social practices" (Brewer, 2007, p. 243). Derogation can arise very easily, all it takes is a different point of view at the differences between the in-group and out-group, and will in most cases lead to negative behavior, such as discrimination or bullying. As mentioned before, derogation is the root of discrimination and has been observed across all contexts, such as race, religion and many more. Researchers came up with a theory that out group derogation might have roots far back in evolutionary

processes favoring loyalty and group sticking together, while some researchers argue that it is a product of socialization and culture. Regardless of its origins, out-group derogation remains a significant challenge and a big problem with no real solution on the horizon, which is tragic because promoting positive intergroup relations and reducing prejudice in society is something people should focus on.

2.7.4　In groups in slang and jargon

Slang in in group can be defined very simply, an exclusive language for each group. Every group has its own set of slang terms and phrases which only they do understand and for anyone outside their group it sounds strange, or it does not make sense at all. According to linguist Howard Giles, "Slang is one of the most powerful mechanisms for establishing and maintaining group identity" (Giles, 1971, p. 172). Slang phrases and words can be limited to their nature, behavior, or their subculture in general, which can harden the group and create a sense of identity create a sense of identity and belonging. As mentioned above, people outside given group will most likely have no idea what you are referring to or worse, they can assume you are mocking them, it can be considered a code language if the groups vocabulary is extensive. Many factors are playing an important role, when it comes to what the slang is based on, it can be very diverse, such as age, gender, ethnicity, work career or just lifestyle. Just imagining any group and thinking about their jargon is a great example of exclusivity and their jargon, they can be groups of skateboarders, metal enthusiasts, gamers, global warming protestants, which are all great examples, as they all have their own unique sets of slang terms that are specific to their group of friends or whole communities. One of the main benefits of being in an in group is the sense of intimacy or the feeling of being unique in a way, just talking with your friends and knowing people around do not have the slightest clue what you are saying. As it can be read in great research by Thorne, "Slang offers insights into the attitudes, values, and social dynamics of the group who use it, and provides a means of examining the wider culture" (Thorne, 2008). The downside of being exclusive in terms of language is that you can mock people outside your group, and it can be extremely hard or even impossible for them to understand. It is obvious that slang exclusive to a group is highly dependent on context, which means understanding the group might be difficult but rewarding, as it can provide valuable opinions. In his book, linguist David Crystal states that "jargon can be seen as a badge of membership of a professional or social group, indicating that the user is a member of a select company" (Crystal, 1991).

To explain jargon more to the detail, it is important to know the difference between slang and jargon. Slang is any nonstandard language, but jargon is usually more complex than slang, meaning that only groups that have large dictionary should be considered speaking in jargon. Jargon differs from slang by being more specific, much more formal than slang and can be associated with fields or disciplines. For example, on Academic ground it can be used to convey

complex ideas and theories, while in professional settings, it may be used to communicate valuable information quickly and efficiently among colleagues who share a common understanding of the specialized language. The use of jargon can also function as a barrier to outsiders just like slang in general, creating a feeling of power and intimacy in the group. Another downside of being too exclusive is the fact that it can often lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication with people outside the group if they do not share the language. Understanding the use of jargon in different contexts is difficult but rewarding as it can provide valuable insights into the social dynamics, power structures, and general knowledge how these groups work.

Both in-group slang and jargon serve important functions in communication within specific social groups and subcultures. In-group slang is creating a feeling of privacy and uniqueness and is mostly associated with informal language. Jargon is considered much more technical and formal, can be associated with specific fields, disciplines, or professions. They both share many similarities, but differ in formality, they both are distinct forms of language that serve different purposes in different contexts. Understanding the use of these specialized forms of language can provide valuable insights.

2.8   What is League of Legends

League of Legends, generally known as LoL, is a famous multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game developed and managed by riot games. League of Legends is exclusive to only one platform, windows, as it has not been released anywhere else. There is a mobile version of LoL, but it is so simplified, that I consider it a different game. Since its launch in 2009, LoL has gained huge popularity, mainly since the year 2018 in which many new players began playing and since then it has grown to be one of the most played online video games in the world. With millions of players worldwide, League of Legends has created a large community and an active esports scene. In LoL, players choose the role of a "champion," a mighty hero with unique abilities and strengths, and compete against a team of different champions. The objective is to destroy the enemy team's base, which is known as the "Nexus." Players start the game at level 1 and gain experience points (XP) through killing enemy minions and champions, destroying turrets, and completing objectives. Through levelling up, their champion becomes a lot stronger, upgrading their abilities and increasing their base stats. The primary game mode is played in a five versus five arena, with each team starting on opposite sides of the map (Blue side vs red side). Each player chooses a champion to play as, and the team must work collectively to coordinate attacks, defend their team base, and control objectives on the map. The map in LoL is split into three lanes, each with turrets that need to be destroyed to advance closer to the enemy base. There also are neutral monsters

located inside the jungle, which players can defeat to gain gold and XP. Players can buy items and get stronger and "scale" by using gold earned throughout the game, which give additional stats and abilities to their champion. There are numerous game modes with unique maps in LoL that are temporary, in most cases added during some events, such as Christmas. Very popular is game mode known as ARAM, which is basically just one lane and players have random champions, which could be understood from ARAM meaning "all random all mid". In general, LoL is incredibly strategic and competitive game that calls for teamwork, large amount of individual skill, quick thinking, and finally constant positivity, which means it is key not to surrender. With its active player base and esports scene, LoL has gained massive reputation through the years, it has become a cultural phenomenon, attracting players from all over the world. The game's regular updates and improvements ensure that it remains fresh and thrilling for gamers, making it one of the most beloved and enduring on-line video games of all time.

2.8.1 Communication in League of Legends

With the basics of League of Legends (LoL) explained, it makes sense to look at how communication takes place in LoL. There are many ways to communicate, from text chat to smart pings and voice communication. There are multiple text chats in LoL, each has a different purpose. Firstly, its pre-game chat where its mostly just strategy and team coordination such as what champion to pick, which lane to play for and overall win conditions for the team. In-game chat is where I took all my data from and is the most frequently used, because of how fast paced LoL is, they constant coordinating with your teammates is vital for having a chance at winning. Last one is post-game chat which is rarely used simply because players tend to quit the game or look for next one and when they are used, its mostly just a player unleashing his anger at a person that made him mad. Next method of communication are smart pings, smart pings are probably the most important and most used in LoL even though they are nonverbal. Pings are contextual messages that represent the sound they make on the minimap. They can convey many meanings, varying from a signal to run or fall back to asking for assistance. Lastly its voice chat, which is barely used due to it being only available for people that are playing together on purpose. For example, if you get in game and want to join voice with four of your teammates, you can't. I would say that it's because of the toxicity and the amount of trolling that's happening in LoL. Which was disappointing because many people were excited when developers of the game announced it. Voice chat can be accessed by clicking the microphone icon at the bottom of the screen. In addition to that, majority of players are communicating together on third party programs, such as Discord or TeamSpeak. This way is the most used for its simplicity and better quali

3 Practical part

In my research focused on League of Legends chat, I undertook an investigation to examine the extent to which the language used by players is exclusive or inclusive. Specifically, I sought to determine whether the most frequently used words and phrases were common knowledge among the general population, applicable to gaming in general, or specific to League of Legends players. To conduct this analysis, I utilized #LancsBox, a powerful linguistic analysis tool that enabled me to explore the patterns and trends within the chat logs. By inputting the collected chat data into #LancsBox, I was able to extract meaningful insights regarding the prevalence and context of certain words and expressions. This approach provided a rigorous and systematic methodology for analyzing the language used in League of Legends chat, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of its inclusiveness and exclusiveness. Through this research, I aimed to contribute to our understanding of communication dynamics within the League of Legends community and the formation of community identities within the game.

3.1 Method of research

For my research project, I collected and analyzed League of Legends chat logs. With its status as the largest online game and my passion for it, choosing LoL as the subject of my study was a natural decision. In order to capture a comprehensive view of player interactions, I collected data from various chat sources, including team chat, all chat (where all 10 players can communicate), champion select chat, and post-game lobby chat. By including these different chat channels, I managed to capture the entirety of communication dynamics within the League of Legends community. Throughout the data collection process, I followed strict rules such as ethical guidelines, guarding the privacy of individual players and anonymizing all collected data. This extensive dataset, consisting of chat logs from team chat, all chat, champion select, and post-game lobby, provided a valuable resource for examining the complex patterns, dynamics, and social factors that shape communication and player behavior in online gaming environments.

3.1.1 #LancsBox

LancsBox is a powerful linguistic analysis tool that you will utilize in your research on League of Legends chat. LancsBox is a software suite developed by researchers at Lancaster University, designed to assist in the analysis of textual data. With its complex set of analytical tools, LancsBox enables researchers dive deep into the linguistic aspects of a given corpus. In the context of my research, it has helped me to gain insights into the exclusivity and inclusivity of language used in League of Legends chat. By inputting the collected chat logs into the program, I was able to apply various linguistic analysis techniques, such as word frequency analysis, collocation analysis, and semantic analysis, to uncover patterns, trends, and context-specific

usage of words and phrases. Through LancsBox I was able to come up with research supported by a robust and systematic approach, allowing you to extract valuable findings about the language dynamics within the League of Legends community and the extent of accessibility and exclusivity of the vocabulary used in the game. I personally used the function "Word Frequency Analysis" which enabled me to analyze the frequency distribution of words and phrases within a corpus. This function helps identify commonly used terms and highlights linguistic patterns and trends. Other than that, #LancsBox has functions such as corpus management for efficient organization, preprocessing and annotation tasks like tokenization and part-of-speech tagging, word frequency analysis to identify common terms and patterns, collocation analysis to uncover word associations, semantic analysis for exploring word meanings and relationships, keyword analysis for identifying significant terms, visualization tools for visual exploration of linguistic patterns, and statistical analysis for quantitative insights.

3.2   Research

The overall size of the corpus is made from 100 732 words collected from League of Legends chat, pre-game lobby and post-game lobby. Then I processed all those words using the Words function in the already mentioned program, but I encountered the challenge of handling inflection in the word list. Inflection can lead to multiple variations of a word with the same underlying meaning, which can complicate the analysis. Fortunately, thanks to the powerful functionality of #LancsBox, I was able to address this issue effectively. Using LancsBox, I leveraged its built-in capabilities to filter and normalize the word list, removing inflections such as plurals, verb conjugations, or tense variations. This allowed me to consolidate words with the same core meaning into a single entry, resulting in a more streamlined and accurate representation of the vocabulary used. By utilizing LancsBox's inflection filtering function, I was able to focus on the essential content and patterns of language within League of Legends chat, enabling me to gain clearer insights into its linguistic dynamics. Additionally, within League of Legends (LoL), inflection may not be as prominent as in traditional spoken language due to the nature of online communication and the limitations of text-based interactions. However, there are still instances where inflection can be observed in LoL slang. One example is the use of repeated letters or elongated spellings to convey emphasis or intensity. For instance, instead of simply typing "gank," a player might write "gggank" or "gankeeeed" to express the gravity or significance of the situation. These variations in spelling through inflection contribute to the overall tone and emotional expression within the game's chat. It is important to note that LoL slang and its inflectional patterns may vary among players and communities, evolving over time as new trends emerge. Overall, only nouns filtered by inflection function and abbreviations were included in the final corpus. This approach ensured that the corpus comprised words with stable meanings, eliminating variations due to inflection and abbreviations. By focusing on nouns, the corpus

provided a solid foundation for analyzing the linguistic aspects of League of Legends chat. It allowed for a more accurate exploration of the vocabulary used within the game, shedding light on the unique language dynamics and patterns that exist in the community. By carefully curating the corpus through the inflection filtering function and considering the impact of abbreviations, I was able to generate valuable insights into the linguistic landscape of League of Legends. Additionally, to further refine my analysis, I selected the twenty-five most frequently used words from the filtered corpus. These words were chosen based on their high frequency and relevance within League of Legends chat. By arranging them in descending order, which was made in Microsoft Excel, I could identify the most prevalent and impactful terms used in the community, which meant I was able to identify patterns of word creation, such as compounding, blending, or borrowing from other languages, shedding light on the creative linguistic strategies utilized by the community. This selection of key words allowed me to focus on the core vocabulary that drives communication and reflects the unique language dynamics of League of Legends. Analyzing the frequency and order of these words provided valuable insights into the prevalent themes, popular expressions, and linguistic patterns that shape interactions within the game.

Table 1: Twenty-five most frequently used terms

	Word/abbreviation	Number of entries
1.	gg	4855
2.	fuck	4532
3.	flash	4019
4.	ff	3464
5.	wtf	3453
6.	gank	3114
7.	lol	2950
8.	ez	2927
9.	gap	2698
10.	omg	2569
11.	ss	2417
12.	wp	2354
13.	BotRK	2130
14.	nash	1833
15.	cs	1391
16.	ffs	1236
17.	ping	1112
18.	ult	989
19.	feed	910
20.	gj	652
21.	ward	600
22.	stfu	584
23.	scale	545
24.	jg	366
25.	idk	214

I have decided to divide my analysis of these 25 most frequent terms into distinct groups based on their familiarity. This categorization aimed to differentiate between terms known exclusively to League of Legends players, terms known to online game players in general, and those considered common knowledge across various contexts. By thoroughly examining the frequency and usage patterns of these terms, I could identify and classify them. Each of the three groups will have a list of terms included and a graph to visualize the data better at the end.

3.3   Terms exclusive to players of League of Legends

Firstly, its key to state the parameters according to which I judged whether the expression is exclusive to LoL players or to all online game players. Exclusive in the context of LoL is a term, that has a specific meaning and is often inflected in various meanings depending on the state of the game. However, some terms might have similar meaning in other games of the same genre, but since LoL is the most popular, I consider it to be the ideal representative. To differ them from terms known by most online game players, I must state online game players are not only players of the same genre as LoL, but for example players of shooter games, building games or simulators. Therefore, terms exclusive to LoL might be understood by some players, but only a slim portion, since someone that plays simulator games won't have a slightest clue what "ward" means.

Table 2: Terms considered exclusive to LoL players

	Word/abbreviation	Number of entries
1.	flash	4019
2.	ff	3464
3.	gank	3114
4.	gap	2698
5.	ss	2417
6.	BotRK	2130
7.	nash	1833
8.	cs	1391
9.	feed	910
10.	ward	600
11.	scale	545
12.	jg	366

The exclusive lexical terms were divided into three groups based on their word-forming processes. The first group consists of terms formed through word clipping, where a part of a word is shortened to create a new term. Examples in this group include "gap" that is derived from

"gapping," "Baron Nashor" and "Feed." The second group comprises abbreviations and acronyms, which are commonly used in online gaming communities. Terms such as "SS," "CS," "JG," and "FF" fall into this category. "SS" represents "miss" or "missing" and is used to notify teammates about an enemy champion's absence from their designated lane. "CS" stands for "creep score" and refers to the number of enemy minions a player has killed. "JG" is short for "jungle" and refers to the role of a player who focuses on the neutral jungle monsters. Lastly, "FF" is an abbreviation for "forfeit" and indicates the desire to surrender the game. The third group includes terms that have undergone other word-forming processes or are unique to LoL. For instance, "flash" has undergone a semantic shift within the context of the game, where flash refers to a champion's ability to quickly move a short distance. Ward is more of a unique jargon to the game and refers to a placed object that provides vision and map control. Lastly, "scale" is used to describe the growth and power progression of a champion throughout the game. By categorizing these exclusive lexical terms based on their word-forming processes, we can gain insights into the linguistic creativity and adaptations within the League of Legends community, showcasing the development of a specialized vocabulary that enhances communication and gameplay strategies.

3.3.1   Products of Clipping

Clipping is a word-forming process commonly observed in language, including within the lexicon of League of Legends (LoL). It involves shortening a word by removing one or more of its syllables or sounds to create a new term. This process allows players to express complex ideas or concepts using shorter and more convenient words. Clipping in LoL has led to the formation of various exclusive lexical terms that are widely used among players. These terms often emerge from the need for efficient communication during intense gameplay. By shortening longer words or phrases, players can quickly convey information without sacrificing clarity. The first item is "Nash, the word "Baron Nashor" has been clipped by removing the latter part of the word, resulting in the abbreviated form "Nash." Clipping is a common word formation process used in various contexts, including language, where words are shortened for convenience, brevity, or to create informal or slang terms. In the gaming community, clipping is often employed to create shorter, more concise words or phrases that are easier to type or say during gameplay. In the context of League of Legends, "Nash" serves as a clipped form of "Baron Nashor" and has become widely recognized and used within the game's community. This clipping process allows players to refer to the powerful neutral monster with a shorter and more convenient term, enhancing communication efficiency during matches.

When it comes to of "gap," it is made by clipping the word "gapping." The original word "gapping" refers to the act of creating a gap or space between two objects or entities. However, in the context of League of Legends, the term has been metaphorically extended to represent a

significant difference or discrepancy in skill or power between players or teams. This extension of meaning is common in language, where words take on metaphorical or figurative senses to describe new concepts or phenomena. Therefore, while "gap" in League of Legends does not exhibit a distinct word-forming process, it showcases the creative and adaptive nature of language in assigning new meanings to existing words. In LoL, "gap" is used to describe a significant difference in skill or power level between opposing players or teams. It represents a skill discrepancy that can lead to a disadvantage for the losing side, and players use it to express the noticeable gap in performance. Clipping plays a crucial role in shaping the unique language of LoL players. It allows for efficient and effective communication within the fast-paced environment of the game, enabling players to convey information quickly and concisely. This linguistic phenomenon showcases the creativity and adaptability of gamers, demonstrating their ability to create new terms and streamline their communication to enhance their gameplay experience.

Last product of clipping is feed, Feed in League of Legends underwent a word-forming process known as clipping. Clipping involves shortening a word by removing one or more syllables or sounds. In the case of "feed," it is a clipped form of the word "feeding." The word "feeding" in gaming contexts originally referred to providing sustenance or resources to someone or something. However, in the specific context of League of Legends, the term "feeding" took on a new meaning. It became associated with players repeatedly dying to their opponents, which inadvertently grants them experience points and gold. This behavior is considered detrimental to the player's team, as it allows the enemy team to grow stronger and gain an advantage. It has become a commonly used term within the League of Legends community to discuss and criticize players who exhibit this behavior. Through the process of clipping, the term "feed" has been adapted and repurposed to fit the specific gaming context of League of Legends. It highlights the linguistic creativity and flexibility of the gaming community in developing concise and easily recognizable vocabulary to describe common actions and strategies within the game.

3.3.2   Products of Abbreviations or Acronyms

Abbreviations and acronyms are widely used in League of Legends (LoL) and many other gaming communities as a word-forming technique to create time efficient terms. This technique includes shortening phrases or words by taking the first letters or syllables of each word and combining them to form an abbreviation or acronym. Abbreviations are formed through truncating a word and keeping the initial letters, while acronyms are created by taking the initial letters of more than one phrases and pronouncing them as a single word. Both forms serve as shorthand representations of longer terms, allowing players to communicate more quickly and efficiently

during gameplay. In the context of LoL, several abbreviations and acronyms have become prevalent and ingrained in the community's communication.

First, we shall look at FF. The acronym abbreviation "FF" for "forfeit" in League of Legends exemplifies the efficiency of expression prevalent in online gaming. From a lexical perspective, "FF" represents a form of shortening, where the word "forfeit" has been condensed to create a shortened and recognizable term. This process of shortening words or phrases is a common linguistic phenomenon in digital communication, allowing players to save time and effort. While the act of forfeiting games may be common across various online gaming communities, in League of Legends, it is specifically referred to as "surrender." However, within the League of Legends community, the acronym "FF" has become exclusive to represent the concept of surrendering and ending the match prematurely. This lexical adaptation not only facilitates communication during gameplay but also reflects the community's familiarity with the act of forfeiting and their acceptance of the widely recognized abbreviation "FF" for this purpose. LoL players usually call for a "FF" vote when they believe victory is highly unlikely. It's important to note that for the surrender vote to pass, a minimum of 70% of the team must agree to surrender. To surrender, players must wait for 15 minutes, as any attempt to forfeit the game before that timer is disabled. Typically, the request to surrender arises during the final stages of a game, when the outcome seems inevitable. From a strategic standpoint, there is no tangible advantage to initiating an 'ff' vote in League of Legends, apart from saving time for both you and your teammates. By surrendering, players can swiftly exit the current match and move on to the next one, ensuring a quicker transition and the ability to jump into a new game promptly.

Secondly, SS. "SS" in League of Legends is an abbreviation derived from the phrase "missing in action" or "stay safe." From a linguistic point of view, it can be considered as a a case of initialism, which is a word-forming technique where the first letters of a word or expression are combined to create a brand-new word. The initial letters of "missing in action" or "stay safe" have been condensed to form a concise and easily recognizable abbreviation. This abbreviation is commonly used by players to alert their teammates that an opponent is absent from their lane and may pose a potential threat to other areas of the map. The word-forming process of initialism allows for efficient and streamlined communication in online gaming, where quick and concise messages are crucial during fast-paced gameplay. By reducing the original phrase to just two letters, "SS" serves as a shorthand way to convey important information without the need for extensive typing or communication. In digital communication and online gaming communities, the use of initialisms is a common practice to save time and keystrokes. By creating these compact abbreviations, players can convey information rapidly and effectively, enhancing teamwork and coordination within the game. In summary, the term "SS" in League of Legends exemplifies the

word-forming process of initialism. It condenses the phrase into an abbreviation, allowing players to efficiently communicate the absence of opponents and the need to exercise caution.

Thirdly it's BotRK, short for Blade of the Ruined King, is the only item from League of Legends on this list, which might seem strange considering it is ranked only 8th in League of Legends according to website *Leagueographs.com* ("Items"). The simplest explanation is that this item has been in the game for over twelve years and has always been very popular amongst players. The abbreviation "BotRK" is used by players to refer to this item quickly and efficiently during gameplay. The word forming process involves condensing the original name, "Blade of the Ruined King," into the abbreviated form. This item's origin can be traced back to the game's lore and thematic universe, often associated with a significant character or event. BotRK has established a lasting legacy in gaming due to its strategic importance and impact on gameplay dynamics. It has become a staple item for specific playstyles or champion compositions, offering unique benefits that can turn the tide of battles. Its recognition and effectiveness have solidified its enduring popularity among gamers, making it a sought-after and influential item in various iterations or adaptations of the game.

Fourth is CS, a slightly different abbreviation from the first three, because it's not an action, but a statistic. It represents another example of word formation through abbreviation in LoL. "CS" stands for "creep score," which indicates the number of minions or neutral monsters a player has successfully killed or "last hit" to gain gold and experience. This abbreviation streamlines communication during gameplay by condensing the phrase "creep score" into the two-letter acronym "CS." By using "CS," players can quickly convey information about their farming progress and resource accumulation. Similar to other abbreviations and acronyms in the game, "CS" has become a widely recognized term within the League of Legends community. It reflects the community's ability to develop a specialized vocabulary that efficiently captures important game elements. The process of forming "CS" involves truncating the phrase "creep score" to create a concise and easily understandable abbreviation.

Lastly it is JG, an abbreviation for jungler or jungle in general. JG" in League of Legends represents an abbreviation that showcases the word-forming process of condensing a term for concise communication. "JG" stands for "jungle," which refers to the role and position of a player who navigates the jungle area of the map, farming neutral monsters and providing support to the team. The abbreviation "JG" allows players to quickly refer to the jungle role without the need for typing out the full word. This abbreviation has become widely adopted and recognized within the League of Legends community as a shortening for the jungle position. The process of forming "JG" involves taking the initial letters of the word "jungle" and creating an abbreviated form that is easy to understand and use in conversations during gameplay. This linguistic adaptation reflects

the community's ability to streamline communication and create efficient vocabulary that represents specific roles and positions within the game. By using "JG," players can quickly coordinate strategies, call for assistance, or discuss the jungle-related aspects of the game or quite often flame the player that is in the mentioned role of jungle.

3.3.3   Other Word Forming processes

In this category, I will analyze terms that are results of different word forming processes than clipping, abbreviations, and acronyms, or they are unique to the LoL lexicon. The term "flash" in League of Legends carries connotations of speed, agility, and surprise. It draws upon the idea of a sudden burst of light or movement. When it comes to "flash" in terms of linguistics, it can be considered a repurposed word, which means the word has or had a certain meaning, originally "flash" refers to a sudden burst of light or extreme brightness but in LoL its quite different which I will explain later. Its etymology can be traced back to its origins in Old English, where it denoted a sudden spark or gleam. However, in the specific context of LoL, "flash" is used as a noun to represent an in-game ability that allows champions to quickly move a short distance. Linguistically, this repurposing of the word "flash" involves a semantic shift where the original meaning of the word is extended or adapted to fit the unique game mechanics and actions within LoL. The choice of the word "flash" for this ability may be attributed to its association with quickness, speed, and sudden movement, which aligns with the functionality of the in-game ability. Additionally, the brevity and impact of a flash of light may metaphorically capture the ability to swiftly reposition or engage in fights. This linguistic phenomenon of repurposing words within a specific community or context is not uncommon. Communities often develop their own specialized vocabulary and assign new meanings to familiar words based on their shared experiences and activities. In the case of "flash" in LoL, it demonstrates how language can adapt and evolve to serve the needs and concepts unique to a particular gaming community.

Whilst the origin of the term "gank" in LoL is not definitively known, it is alleged to have derived from the word "gang up on a person." The term "gank" has grown into an exemplary jargon in the gaming community and is specifically used to describe the act of coordinating an ambush or surprise attack on an enemy players or a group. Unlike other word-forming processes, such as blending or clipping, "gank" does not involve a specific linguistic mechanism. Instead, it has evolved as a unique term within the gaming lexicon, showcasing the community's ability to develop and adopt specialized vocabulary. The term "gank" in League of Legends is an example of the way gaming communities can create their exclusive jargon to describe particular actions or techniques in the game. In the context of League of Legends, "GANK" refers to the act of launching a wonder assault or ambush on an enemy player, usually in their lane or jungle. It

involves one or more players coordinating their efforts to catch the opponent off-guard and secure a kill. The term is often used to indicate a strategic maneuver that takes advantage of the element of surprise and teamwork.

The term "ward" in League of Legends refers to a game mechanic where players can place little totems known as wards on the map to gain vision on for a certain amount of time, usually for 3 minutes and during that, they can gather intel about the enemy team's positions. Linguistically, the term "ward" does not involve any specific word-forming process or origin. It is a word that is usually used in gaming contexts, mainly within strategy and multiplayer on-line battle arena (MOBA) genres, however it has its own meaning in League of Legends. The concept of wards and their function as vision-providing objects have become integral to the gameplay of League of Legends, with players using wards strategically to gain an advantage in map control and objective control. Ward can be considered as a League of Legends jargon, whilst it may not involve a particular word-forming process, it is a term that holds an exclusive meaning within the game and is usually used by players to refer to the act of putting vision-providing items on the map. Same as "flash," "ward" is considered an exclusive term to the LoL community and may not be widely understood outside of the context of League of Legends.

In the context of League of Legends, the term "scale" does not fit into a specific word formation process like clipping, blending, or acronym formation. Instead, it can be considered a word that has been repurposed and adapted within the gaming community. "Scale" in LoL means to grow strong, to gain experience and wait the game out. That is because some champions are stronger in later parts of the game, and some are not. From a linguistic point of view, the term "scale" in League of Legends demonstrates a semantic shift, where the original meaning of the word has been extended or adapted to match the game mechanics and ideas. In its standard usage, "scale" refers to the act of measuring or weighing, but within the context of League of Legends, it has taken on a metaphorical experience related to the growth and improvement of a champion's strength. This repurposing of words within specific communities or contexts is a common phenomenon in language, where existing words are given new meanings based on shared experiences and activities. In the case of "scale" in League of Legends, it showcases how language can adapt and evolve to accommodate the needs and concepts unique to a particular gaming community.

In conclusion, the world of League of Legends (LoL) is not only filled with thrilling gameplay and strategic battles but also a rich lexicon of terms exclusive to its passionate community. These terms vary in their word-forming processes, showcasing the creative and adaptive nature of language within the gaming realm. By exploring these exclusive terms, we gain insight into the linguistic phenomenon that arises within online gaming communities. The distinct

word-forming processes employed by LoL players, whether it be clipping, abbreviation, or semantic shift, contribute to the formation of a unique and cohesive language that binds players together in their shared experiences on the Summoner's Rift. Ultimately, the lexicon exclusive to LoL players reflects the depth of their engagement with the game and their dedication to developing a specialized vocabulary. It is a proof of the immersive nature of gaming communities and their capacity to form and redefine language in the pursuit of effective communication and shared understanding. The graph below reflects this part in graphic, as it's the most balanced graph among the three groups, with abbreviations and acronyms leading with nearly a half of the terms, followed by unique or other word forming processes having a third of the terms. Lastly products of clipping, only with a quarter of the terms.

Graph 1: Word forming processes in terms exclusive to Lol players
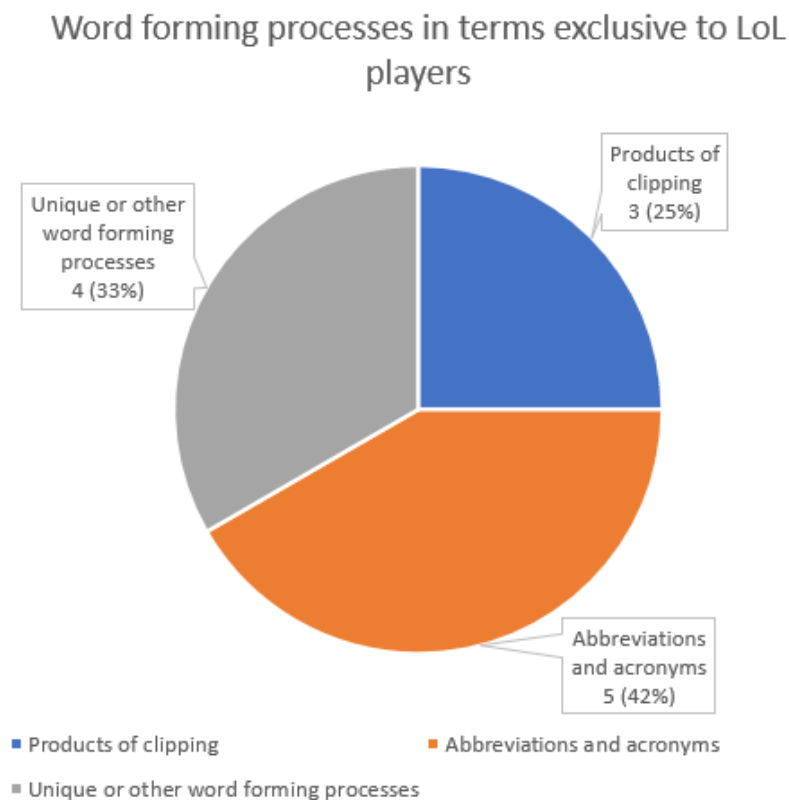
3.4 Words exclusive to players of online games

As stated before, words or phrases exclusive to online game players are be considered common knowledge amongst majority of all gamers, not only gamers playing games of the same genre as LoL.

This exclusivity is a fascinating aspect of gaming, as certain terms have emerged as exclusive markers within the gaming community. These terms hold specific meanings and connotations

within the gaming context, they act as a sort of coded language understood primarily by gamers, serving as a means of communication unique to the gaming community. When gamers use these terms, they establish a sense of belonging and shared experiences, as well as demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the gaming world. This exclusivity of gaming language creates a distinct cultural identity for gamers, reinforcing their bond and facilitating a sense of camaraderie within the gaming community.

Table 3: Terms exclusive to online game players

	Word/abbreviation	Number of entries
1.	gg	4855
2.	ez	2927
3.	wp	2354
4.	ping	1112
5.	ult	989

3.4.1 Abbreviations and acronyms

The first and the most frequently used term in my corpus is "GG". A gaming phenomenon originating from the early days of online gaming, "gg" has evolved into a powerful and influential term within the gaming community. The precise origin of "gg" is somewhat difficult to pinpoint, as its usage emerged organically across various multiplayer games and platforms. It is believed to have originated in competitive gaming environments, where players sought a concise way to express sportsmanship and acknowledge the efforts of their opponents. The term "gg" quickly gained traction due to its simplicity and versatility. Its brevity allowed for quick communication at the end of a match, where time was often limited. As online gaming grew in popularity, "gg" became a cultural phenomenon, transcending individual games and finding its place as a widely recognized expression of sportsmanship and respect. Word forming process of "gg" follows a common pattern in gaming language, where abbreviations and acronyms are used to convey meaning efficiently. In this case, "gg" serves as an acronym of the words "good game." By condensing the phrase into two letters, players can quickly type or say it at the conclusion of a match, saving time and effort. This acronym also enhances the universal appeal of the term, as it can be easily understood across different languages and gaming communities. Furthermore, "gg" has become more than just a phrase. It has become a cultural marker that carries significance within the gaming community. Typing "gg" after a match signifies a level of sportsmanship, acknowledging both the skill of the opponents and the enjoyment derived from the game itself. It serves as a way to gracefully accept victory or defeat while fostering a positive gaming environment. The impact of "gg" extends beyond its literal meaning. It promotes fair play, respect, and camaraderie among gamers. By using "gg," players contribute to the formation of a

shared gaming culture that values good sportsmanship and encourages positive interactions. It has also influenced the development of other gaming terms and phrases, further solidifying its role as a fundamental part of gaming language, and apart from that, it is starting to influence standard language.

The term "ez" is an abbreviation of the word "easy" and has become a distinctive part of gaming culture, particularly in competitive online gaming. The origin of "ez" can be traced back to the competitive nature of gaming, where players often seek to assert dominance or boast about their victories. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact origin of "ez," as it emerged organically within gaming communities over time. The usage of "ez" in gaming can be seen as a form of taunting or provocation towards opponents, asserting that the victory was effortless or that the opposing team or player lacked skill. It is often employed when one team or player achieves a clear and decisive win over the other. By using "ez," some players aim to exacerbate feelings of frustration or inferiority in their opponents. Some view it as unsportsmanlike and disrespectful, as it is very provocative and considered very toxic. Others argue that it can be seen as a form of banter or playful teasing among friends or within the gaming community. To underline this point even more, it's worth stating that most gaming platforms and communities have guidelines and rules against toxic behavior such as ez. It's worth noting that a variant of the term "ez" exists in the form of "izi." While "ez" is the more widely recognized abbreviation, "izi" follows a similar pattern of shortening and carries the same meaning. The word forming process of "ez" follows a pattern commonly seen in gaming language, where abbreviations or shortened versions of words are used for quick and efficient communication. By abbreviating "easy" to "ez," players can convey their message swiftly during or after a match. The brevity of the term allows for easy typing or saying, emphasizing its usage as a quick taunt or remark.

Acronym "wp" has gained prominence within the gaming lexicon as "well played." It serves as a commendation for skillful gameplay and is often used to acknowledge an opponent's or even a teammate's exceptional performance. The origin of "wp" can be traced back to the gaming community's desire to express admiration for impressive moves, strategic maneuvers, or an overall display of expertise. In multiplayer games, "wp" is commonly used as a form of positive feedback and sportsmanship. By using "wp," players can convey respect and appreciation for the quality of gameplay exhibited during a match. It can be a way to recognize and acknowledge the efforts and skills of others, fostering a sense of mutual admiration within the gaming community. The word forming process of "wp" aligns with the tendency in gaming culture to use abbreviations and acronyms for efficient communication. By condensing the phrase "well played" into two letters, players can quickly type or say it during or after a match, allowing for timely and concise acknowledgment of exceptional gameplay. The abbreviation also facilitates cross-language communication within diverse gaming communities, as "wp" is easily

understood and recognized across different languages. While "wp" generally carries a positive connotation, it is essential to consider the context and tone in which it is used. It is intended as a genuine expression of admiration and sportsmanship, but it is important to avoid using it sarcastically, as this can undermine its intended meaning.

3.4.2   Products of clipping

The term "ult" in online gaming originated as a clipping of the word "ultimate," where "-imate" was clipped to create a shorter and easier to use term "ult". In games like League of Legends (LoL), "ult" refers to a character's most powerful and game-changing ability. It is a widely recognized abbreviation used by players to refer to these impactful skills quickly and conveniently during gameplay. The word formation process of "ult" through clipping reflects the gaming community's inclination towards abbreviation and efficiency in communication. By clipping "ultimate" to "ult," players can easily coordinate and strategize around these significant abilities, enhancing their gameplay experience. The term "ult" is not exclusive to LoL and is also commonly used in other games with similar mechanics, where it refers to a character's ultimate ability or special move that can turn the tide of battles and have a significant impact on the game.

3.4.3   Other word forming processes

As mentioned above, terms in this category don't fit any of the already discussed categories, such as clipping, abbreviations, and acronyms. The only representative in this category is "Ping", a term that can be understood as both as exclusive to LoL or exclusive to all online game players. Firstly, "ping" in the context of communication within LoL refers to the in-game feature that allows players to issue quick commands or notifications to their teammates by clicking on the game map. For example, players can ping a specific location on the map to indicate danger, request assistance, or communicate objectives. The word forming process of "ping" as a communication tool in LoL can be described as a form of onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia is a linguistic phenomenon where words are formed to imitate or represent sounds or actions. In this case, "ping" is a representation of the sound that is produced when a player issues a ping command in the game. When players click on the map to issue a ping, it generates a distinctive sound effect accompanied by a visual indicator. This sound effect is often described as a "ping" or a short, sharp sound that grabs attention. As a result, the term "ping" was adopted to describe this specific action and the sound associated with it.

The graph following this part shows that abbreviations and acronyms dominate terms known by online game players, with unique or other word forming processes and products of clipping split at 20%.

Graph 2: Word forming processes in terms exclusive to players of online games

Word forming processes in terms exclusive to online game players

Unique or other word forming processes 1(20%)

Products of clipping 1 (20%)

Abbreviations and acronyms 3 (60%)

■ Products of clipping ■ Abbreviations and acronyms ■ Unique or other word forming processes
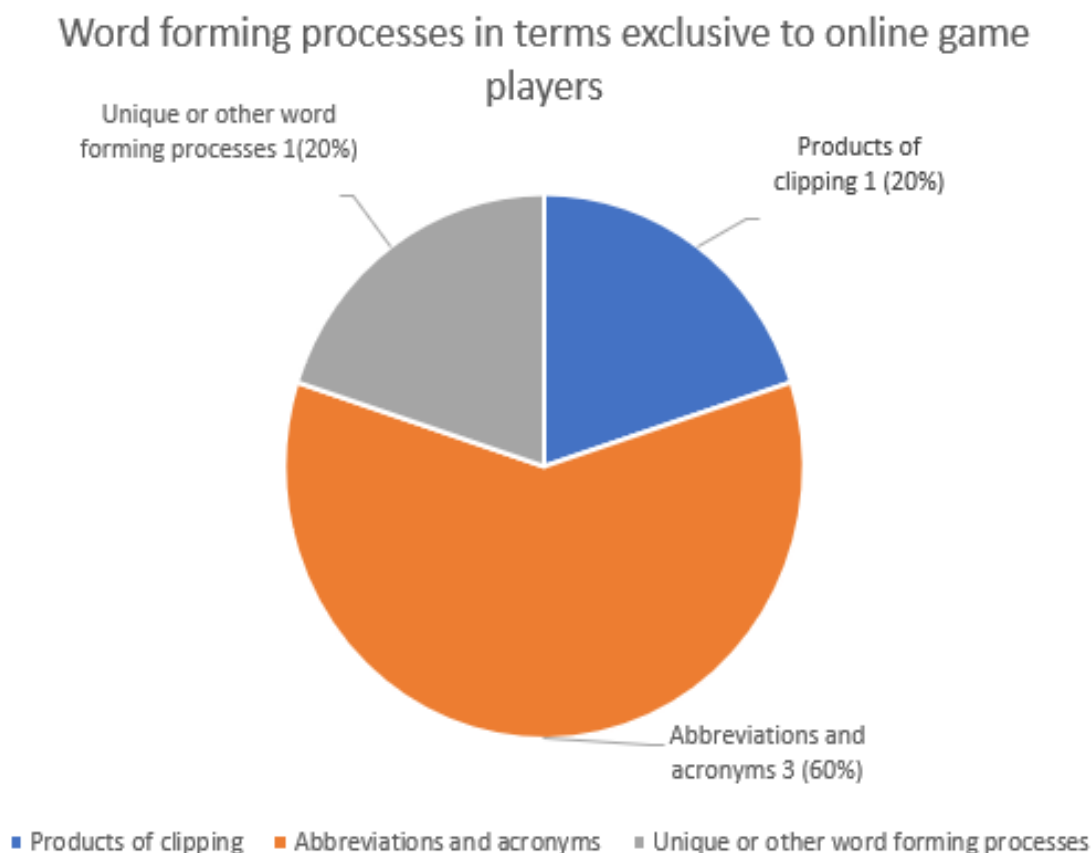
3.5   Terms considered common knowledge

In the context of LoL, many terms that are used on daily basis occur. They are mostly abbreviations or acronyms from real life that have become a part of the game's communication tools. Terms and expressions like "wtf" (what the fuck), "lol" (laugh out loud,) and "idk" (I don't know) have seamlessly integrated into the virtual battlefield. These familiar expressions, primarily used in real-life conversations and online interactions, now serve as shorthand to convey emotions, reactions, and sentiments within the game. Their widespread usage reflects the similarity of gaming culture and everyday language, bridging the gap between the virtual and real world and establishing a shared understanding among players. As these words keep changing and adjusting, they affect how people communicate in League of Legends. They show how language can change and be flexible in our digital era. Below are eight terms that will be explained and analyzed in this part.

Table 4: Terms considered common knowledge

	Word/abbreviation	Number of entries
1.	fuck	4532
2.	wtf	3453
3.	lol	2950
4.	omg	2569
5.	ffs	1236
6.	gj	652
7.	stfu	584
8.	idk	214

3.5.1 Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviations and acronyms borrowed from real-life conversations have seamlessly integrated themselves into the game's vibrant language, they also make up most of this group. Starting with the most popular item on the list in this category of most frequent terms is "wtf". "WTF" is an abbreviation standing for "what the fuck," formed by a word forming process that involves taking the initial letters of each word, "w," "t," and "f," and combining them to create a condensed expression. This formation wraps the powerful and vulgar nature of the phrase. According to dictionary.com, "WTF" is an informal expression widely used to convey a spectrum of emotions, including surprise, disbelief, or frustration ("WTF"). In the immersive world of League of Legends, players commonly use "WTF" to react swiftly to unexpected situations that arise during gameplay. Whether it's witnessing an extraordinary play or encountering a strange game mechanic, this abbreviation serves as a method to express a wide range of emotions, from astonishment to frustration. Within the fast-paced and aggressive environment of the game, "WTF" turns into a compact and impactful device for capturing the intensity and complexity of the gaming experience.

"LOL," an acronym for "laugh out loud," is a widely recognized slang term that has transcended the limits of electronic communication. While it has lost some of its authentic meaning through the years, "LOL" remains one of the most common and universal terms utilized in online conversations and social media. Originating in the 1980s, "LOL" can be used as an interjection and a verb. Although it once referred to audible laughter, its usage has evolved to primarily indicate a smile or slight amusement. While some individuals emphasize its impact by writing it in all capital letters, there are no strict rules for capitalization in informal communication. Interestingly, "LOL" has even made its way into spoken language, creating a paradoxical situation where one claims to be laughing out loud without doing so. Despite its

semantic shift, "LOL" continues to be a pervasive and versatile term, conveying positive emotions and humor in the digital age.

"OMG," an abbreviation of "oh my God," is an extensively used slang term that has turned out to be deeply embedded in both online and offline communication. It serves as an expression of excitement, astonishment, or disbelief. The abbreviation is shaped by taking the initial letters of every word and combining them into a condensed expression. "OMG" has gained significant popularity and has become an integral part of everyday conversations, transcending its origins in electronic communication. Its usage extends beyond written text and has found its way into spoken language as well. As a testament to its cultural impact, "OMG" has even been added to dictionaries, solidifying its status as a commonly recognized term. Its widespread usage and recognition highlight its influence on contemporary language and its ability to reflect the evolving nature of communication in the digital age. Whether used sincerely or ironically, "OMG" continues to be a versatile expression that effectively conveys a range of emotions in various contexts.

Following the frustrating context of OMG, "FFS" is next one the list. "FFS," can be considered as an abbreviation or initialism for "for fuck's sake," is a common slang term used to express frustration, annoyance, or exasperation. It is formed by taking the initial letters of each word and combining them to make a shorter expression. "FFS" has become popular in both online and offline communication. It serves as a straightforward way to show a sense of anger or disbelief. Whether used humorously or with genuine frustration, "FFS" allows individuals to express their emotions succinctly and assertively. The abbreviation has become ingrained in contemporary slang and showcases the adaptability of language in capturing and conveying a range of emotions in our everyday interactions. It has become a part of the gaming jargon within the LoL community, enabling players to express their emotions and frustrations in a concise and immediate manner.

As the last two entries were formed to express mostly frustration, "GJ" is the exact opposite, it is an abbreviation commonly used to convey the phrase "good job." The abbreviation is formed by taking the initial letters of each word and combining them into a condensed expression. The word forming process simplifies the original phrase while retaining its positive meaning. The origin of "GJ" can be traced back to online gaming communities, where players sought quick and efficient ways to acknowledge and praise their teammates for a job well done. Nowadays, "GJ" has breached the gates of everyday language, obviously, it is still more popular on the internet, but it has found its way to real life conversations, it is often used informally as a shorthand way to express appreciation or congratulate someone for their achievements or efforts. It can be seen in various contexts such as work environments, sports, and social interactions, where individuals use it to acknowledge the accomplishments of others.

In League of Legends (LoL), "GJ" is frequently used by players to recognize and commend their teammates for making successful plays, demonstrating skill, or contributing to the team's success.

Next abbreviation is by far the most offensive and straight forward on the list. "STFU" is an acronym commonly used as a shortening for "shut the fuck up." The acronym is formed by taking the initial letters of each word and combining them into a condensed expression. The word-forming process allows for a straightforward and assertive way to convey a strong message of silencing someone. In everyday conversations, "STFU" is an informal and often blunt expression used to command someone to stop talking or to cease their speech. It is primarily used in situations where there is frustration, annoyance, or a desire for someone to be quiet. In the context of online gaming, including League of Legends (LoL), "STFU" is sometimes used by players to express frustration or to silence disruptive or toxic behavior.

Last from this group is "IDK," one of the most used terms in standard language and in online gaming. It is an initialism, specifically an abbreviation formed by taking the initial letters of each word. It stands for "I Don't Know" and is pronounced letter by letter. When used in conversations or online messaging, "IDK" is commonly employed as a quick and informal way to express uncertainty or a lack of knowledge about a particular topic. It has become prevalent in both real-life and digital communication as a convenient shorthand for indicating one's lack of information or understanding.

3.5.2 Unique words

The only representative in this group is the word "fuck". Fuck has a complex and debated origin, making its precise etymology difficult to trace. It is believed to have derived from various Germanic and Scandinavian languages, with possible connections to word like "ficken" in German. Over time, "fuck" gradually entered the English language and gained its explicit and vulgar connotation. As for the word forming process, "fuck" does not follow a specific acronym or abbreviation pattern. It is a monosyllabic word that has remained largely unchanged throughout its history. However, it is worth noting that the diverse variations and expressions of "fuck" mentioned earlier, such as "fucking" or "motherfucker," showcase some word forming processes like suffixation or compounding, where additional elements are combined with the base word to create new forms and intensify its meaning.

This graph shows extreme dominance, as only one out of eight terms was formed by other word-forming process than abbreviation or acronym. Also, this graph unlike the first two doesn't include products of clipping.

Graph 3: Word forming processes in common knowledge terms

Word forming processes in terms considered common knowledge

Unique or other word forming processes 1 13%

Abbreviations and acronyms 7 (87%)

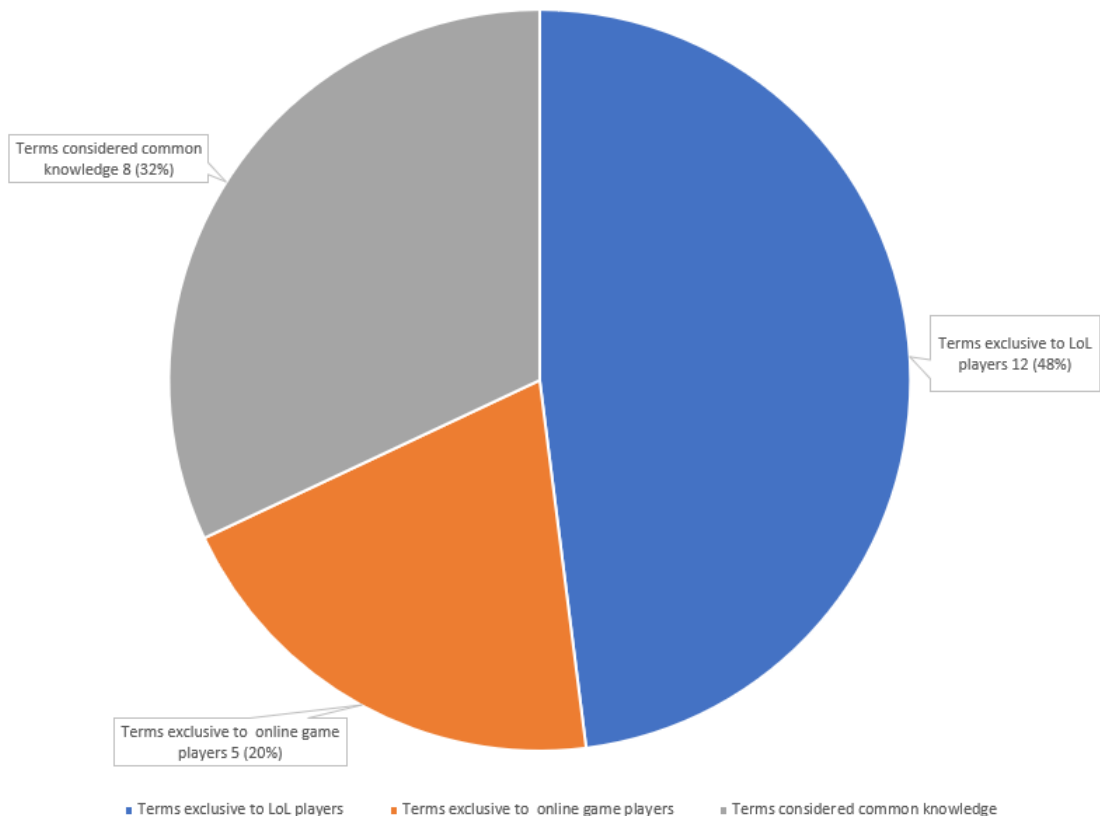■ Abbreviations and acronyms   ■ Unique or other word forming processes

3.6   Results of the research

Although it is clear from the length of the text that exclusive expressions are the most numerous, support my results with graphs. First graph shows how exclusive language in League of Legends is. As we can see, nearly a half of the terms in the 25 most frequently used terms are exclusive to LoL players. As mentioned before, it is key to define what is considered exclusive to LoL. I consider a term exclusive when majority of online game players don't know that term, which means certain players might understand it, but they would be players of the same genre as LoL, but there are not many games like that, and apart from Dota 2, they aren't very popular either. After a solid gap, we have terms considered common knowledge, which may be surprising. I expected terms exclusive to online game players to be the second largest group but they are just one fifth of the list. That would mean that starting players have a chance to understand some parts of communication, but this groups consists mostly of terms that are associated with reactions or emotions, which will not help new players in any way. As mentioned already, one fifth of the list are terms exclusive to online game players, which are terms such as gg or ez. These terms are commonly found in all online games, and they are not hard to understand even if someone does not know them.

Graph 4: Terms usage in LoL

Terms usage in League of Legends

- Terms exclusive to LoL players
- Terms exclusive to online game players
- Terms considered common knowledge

Terms considered common knowledge 8 (32%)

Terms exclusive to LoL players 12 (48%)

Terms exclusive to online game players 5 (20%)

The second graph below is about the word forming processes that were used for the 25 most frequently used terms in LoL. The two graphs are fairly similar when it comes to the most dominant part, the major word forming process abbreviation is almost a half of all the terms used in LoL at 44%. Which to me is no surprise, due to the games fast-paced style, where players need to communicate as fast as possible. Unique terms or other word forming processes contribute to 24% of the overall usage. These include the creation of new words through processes like derivation as in "gank" or semantic shift as "flash". Players often come up with innovative and game-specific vocabulary to describe game mechanics, strategies, and character interactions. Products of clipping make up 16% of the word forming processes used. Clipping involves shortening existing words, resulting in more time efficient terminology within the gaming context. Similarly, acronyms also account for 16% of the terms used. These acronyms typically consist of initials or abbreviations formed from the initial letters of a term, offering a shorthand way to refer to various in-game elements. The distribution of these word forming processes showcases the linguistic creativity and adaptation within the LoL gaming community. By employing these processes, players create a unique and specialized vocabulary that enhances their communication.

Graph 5: Word forming processes usage in LoL

Word forming processes usage in LoL
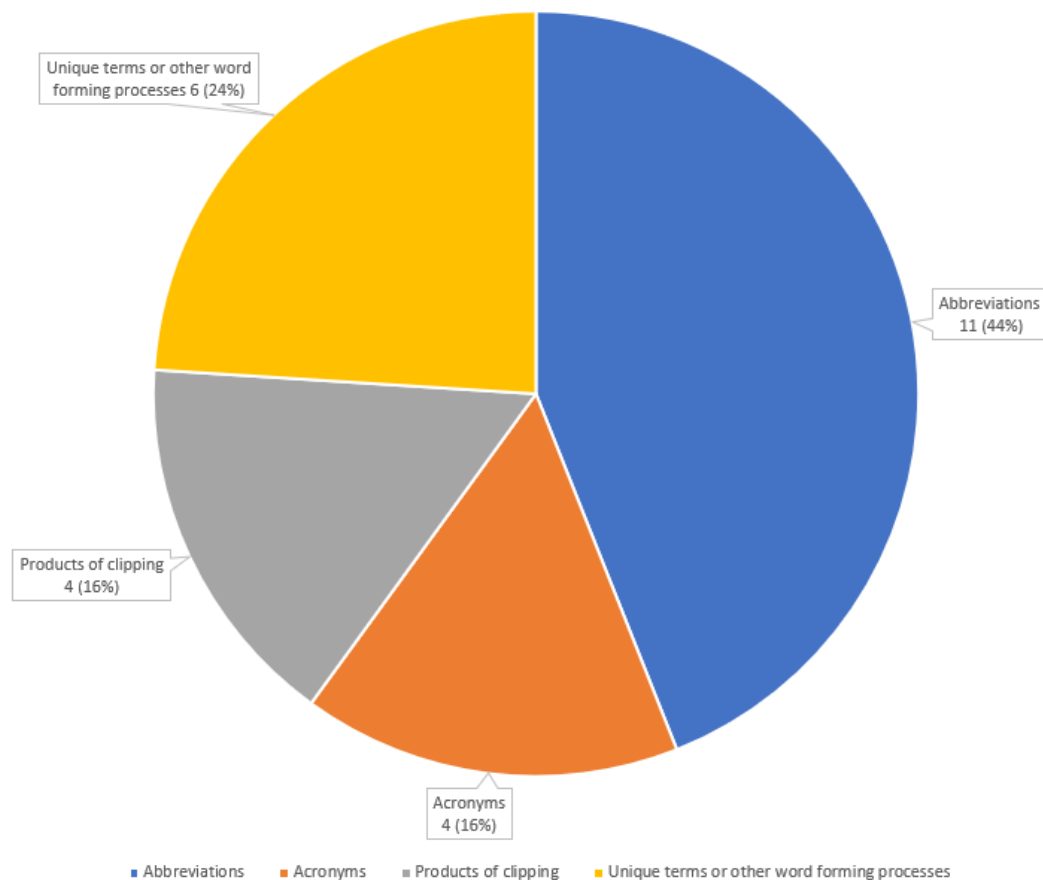
4   Conclusion

In conclusion, the research on lexical exclusivity in League of Legends has provided insightful findings regarding the prevalence of exclusive terms within the game. Notably, the analysis of the 25 most frequently used terms reveals a prominent dominance of abbreviations, followed by acronyms and clippings, confirming a trend that was not surprising. As a researcher, while I was well-versed in the terms used in League of Legends, I was genuinely surprised by the frequency with which some of these terms were employed. The extent to which certain terms emerged as recurring elements in player communication highlighted the deep-rooted nature of these linguistic shortcuts within the community. The abundance of abbreviations, acronyms, and clippings in League of Legends demonstrates the collective knowledge and shared understanding among players. It underscores the importance of efficient communication and the development of a common language that facilitates effective teamwork and strategic gameplay. The findings of this research emphasize the significance of these frequently used terms in League of Legends, indicating their integral role in player interactions and game dynamics. Understanding the extent of their usage can provide valuable insights into the intricacies of player communication and the shared gaming experience. In conclusion, the research confirms the significant role played by abbreviations, acronyms, and clippings as the primary forms of lexical exclusivity in League of Legends. It also highlights the surprising frequency with which these terms are used, even for those who are already familiar with them. This study reinforces the understanding that the dominance of these language forms is a natural consequence of the game's unique communication requirements, while also shedding light on the dynamic interplay between language, gaming culture, and effective communication strategies in this popular online game.

This bachelor thesis provided insight into the language used in League of Legends and showed the trend in the English language to shorten words. This trend is documented by analyzing the most frequent expressions appearing in player communication in the game League of Legends. For the twenty-five most frequent expressions, the word-forming process by which they were created was given, their meaning, use and origin explained. In the end, this ranking of the most common expressions can also function as a dictionary or an idea of what to expect for players starting with League of Legends.

5 Summary

This bachelor thesis deals with lexical exclusivity in the online game League of Legends. The theoretical part begins with an introduction to semantics, comparison with stylistics and stylistic analysis. The main part is a chapter on slang, which is essential for the work together with word-forming processes, such as abbreviations and acronyms. It then focuses on the phenomenon of in groups and out groups and their comparison. It ends with an explanation of the principle of League of Legends and communication in the game. In the practical part, the work is devoted to analyzing whether the language used is exclusive to League of Legends players, exclusive to online game players or whether the given term is considered common knowledge These terms were processed using #Lancsbox software, from which a corpus was made for subsequent analysis. I then created a list of the 25 most used words from the corpus. This research proved that the most used terms are mostly those that are exclusive to LoL players, followed by terms that are generally known, and lastly, terms known to players across online games.

6 Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá lexikální exkluzivitou v online hře League of Legend. Práce začíná v teoretické části úvodem do sémantiky, porovnáním se stylistikou a stylistickou analýzou. Hlavní částí je kapitola o slangu, který je pro práci stěžejní společně se slovotvornými procesy, jako abreviace či akronyma. Dále se pak zaměřuje na fenomén in groups a out groups a jejich porovnání. Zakončená je vysvětlením principu League of Legends a komunikace ve hře. V praktické části se práce věnuje rozboru, zda je používaný jazyk exkluzivní pro hráče League of Legends, exkluzivní pro hráče online her či zda je daný termín považován obecně známý. Tyto termíny byly zpracovány pomocí softwaru #Lancsbox, ze kterého byl udělán korpus pro následnou analýzu. Z korpusu jsem poté vytvořil seznam 25 nejpoužívanějších slov. Tento výzkum dokázal, že z nejpoužívanějších termínů mají většinou ty, které jsou exkluzivní pro hráče LoL, dále pak termíny, které jsou obecně známé, a jako poslední termíny známé hráči napříč online hrami.

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