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ANALÝZA NEOLOGISMŮ ZE SVĚTA POČÍTAČOVÝCH HER A JEJICH POUŽÍVÁNÍ V KAŽDODENNÍ ŘEČI
BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

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ANALYSIS OF GAMING NEOLOGISMS AND THEIR UTILIZATION IN EVERYDAY VOCABULARY
BACHELOR THESIS

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Statement

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracoval samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

V Plzni, ………………..

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vlastnoruční podpis

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Contents

ABSTRACT

The aim of the thesis is to showcase frequent neologism usage among the gaming community, explain why it is a frequent phenomenon and analyse the processes that produce them.

The theoretical part explains the most typical types of word formation, and furthermore describes the historical background that led to the increasing occurrence of neologisms in communication.

The practical part tackles a sample of 80 collected neologisms in a gaming community's online chat communication and dissects their specific processes of word formation, as well as their current meaning and possibly previous meaning, as well as the semantic shift the word underwent to obtain its current form. Consequently it maps the processes and the distribution among the sample, revealing multiple of the neologisms belong to more than one category. Finally, it points out that due to its highly-specific background of origin, they can be difficult to understand for other people, which is why further observation needs to be done.

Key words: English, neologism, gaming, communication, semantics, vocabulary

1 INTRODUCTION

It has become an increasingly striking phenomenon that children, adolescents and young adults alike have started utilising certain words and sentence structures in everyday language, which are clearly troublesome for older adults to understand. Interestingly enough, this whole issue originated when people started to communicate in written form. Take for example "XOXO": while nowadays universally understood across the globe as a substitute for informal valediction, its origins can be traced back hundreds of years, and it is inconceivable that anyone from the time before letters were invented, even speaking the same language, would have understood the meaning if this construction were verbalized. As society developed and sciences progressed, especially in more recent times, the amount of seemingly arbitrarily created words started growing exponentially. The first notable milestone was the invention of a cellular phone, which virtually enabled users to communicate via text messages in a matter of minutes from almost anywhere on the planet. However, the amount of text that could be sent in one go was minuscule compared to what people are used to now, and the price was egregious. This called for shortening words to save space, and so the first text abbreviations were born. The next milestone was the invention of the internet and its popularization, alongside technological progress, to an extent which nowadays in theory allows everyone to communicate simultaneously over extensive distances. Thus, firstly e-mails, and subsequently instant messaging platforms, such as chat rooms, came into existence.

All of the aforementioned media have one thing in common: the creation of new words unique to the particular means of communication. Nowadays, there are various online dictionaries and phenomena registers, such as Urban Dictionary, Know Your Meme etc., amassing tens of thousands of slang words submitted by internet users, and therefore providing a channel for everybody to learn the words, as well as contribute to the archives. Understandably enough, the internet community can be further divided into various subgroups, each one with an evermore specific set of vocabulary; in this respect, the gaming community is no exception.

Gaming jargon is usually based around a given game, starting from generally used internet neologisms, through gaming-specific vocabulary, all the way to words created purely on the basis of a certain aspect of the game. Sometimes, however, a game becomes so popular, that certain unique examples of the more specific neologisms break the imaginary boundary, which results in their normalization among a bigger group outside of just one game. As the number of people who use this new word grows, its reach is extended, and given how the popularity of gaming increases, as well as how quickly information spreads nowadays, the base of users becomes so large the new word effectively infiltrates into the regular vocabulary of given individuals, which leads to them starting using those newly invented words in regular speech as well. This work focuses on analysis of such words, researching their origin, formation and means of their spreading.

The first chapter explains neologisms as a phenomenon as well as its nuances, as it is important to grasp the meaning of the term in order to understand what follows in the work.

The second chapter will revolve around the background and development of communication. Properly understanding the history of the media of communication allows us generally to comprehend better the importance and incidence of neologisms as a whole.

The third chapter dissects the specifics of video games and communication, offering a better understanding of why certain types of neologisms occur more frequently, and furthermore revealing why neologisms are so frequent in gaming.

The fourth chapter provides a more detailed analysis of recently encountered neologisms in English, both outside and inside the gaming world, creating grounds for a closer observation of the phenomenon.

2   INTRODUCTION TO NEOLOGISMS

In order to enable understanding of the topic as a whole, it is essential to establish the meaning of "neologism". This term is used to denote a new word, expression or a newly coined usage for an already existing word (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). TermCoord (2016) describes neologism as a new term or utterance, whose meaning and usage has become common, but is yet to have been accepted as a mainstream part of language. Congost Maestre (1994) describes the term as a newly-created word or word that existed previously but has gained a new sense (Méndez Gonzáles, 2019, p. 79). The Routledge Linguistic Encyclopaedia (Malmkjær, 2010, p. 17, 491) gives the word perhaps less credit than the previous definitions, as it further fragments the aforementioned definitions into separate terms by implying a certain interchangeability between "neologism" and "non-word", describes "semantic shift" as an isolated unit, but also provides us with a new phenomenon – filling gaps, meaning neologisms can be a result of lexical procreation and human creativity in order to establish terms previously non-existent to enrich the lexical aspect of any given language. Ensslin (2017, p. 172) defines neologisms as newly formed words or phrases which at least a certain part of a community understanding a given language recognizes.

Neologisms are an epitome to continuous language development, as they highlight the endless process of vocabulary extension. As society develops, a need for new terminology arises in order to fill gaps created by various aspects, such as technological, social or culture development, as well as sciences, literature etc. Whenever a neologism becomes widely recognized, it no longer classifies as a neologism per se, and rather becomes an old-neologism instead. An exemplary case of this phenomenon is for example "spam", nowadays widely acknowledged to mean an annoying unsolicited message, while the origin of this meaning most likely stems from a scene from a Monty Python restaurant episode, where a group of Vikings started chanting "SPAM, SPAM, SPAM, lovely SPAM, wonderful SPAM!", effectively interrupting all other conversation due to loudness until told to stop, as the restaurant's entire menu consisted solely of Spam (a canned meat product. Old words reinvigorated via attribution of a different meaning are also accepted as a neologism. An example of this is "testicle", a funny question in an exam (Vappingo, 2012). A neologism can also be "under transition". Such words

are yet to become accepted by the mainstream, but are very likely to reach that level of recognition sooner or later, such as "troll" - originally a giant or monster in Old Norse, nowadays a person writing provocative remarks on the internet.

2.1 THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHMENT

There is a plethora of aspects to neologism creation, which consequently implies a significant number of processes that lead to new meaning or word procreation. However, unlike in the past, entering the public domain is now easier than ever, as the spread is rapidly accelerated by the accessibility of information via the internet of mass media. This represents a major contrast to past times where one would most likely need to own a theatre to have significant reach worthy of note for linguists, like Shakespeare. Behera (2013, p. 26) describes the life cycle of a neologism as follows:

1) **Unstable** – being primarily used by only a small subculture, those can also be referred to as protologisms. An example is "pulling a Wirtual".

2) **Diffused** – while having received more acceptance due to higher incidence, these still do not make notable impact yet. An example is "to int".

3) **Stable** – a neologism in the stage gained noteworthy wide recognition, possibly lasting in the language for a longer period of time. An example is "cookie cutter".

4) **Dated** – at this point a neologism no longer is a neologism per se, due to it being frequently and regularly used (in extreme cases, these can become cliché). "SWAG" could be considered a good example.

5) **Passé** – the usage of the neologism in question is being actively avoided, possibly for being outdated and no longer usable under cultural circumstances, or obnoxious, effectively ceasing its existence in the lexicon.

2.2 WORD-FORMATION

Neologisms are words just like any other, which means the same rules that apply to regular word formation can be used here as well. These are the types of word formation commonly found in the process of neologism creation:

1) **New forms/coinages** or **root-creations** – all these terms describe the process of creation of a whole new word altogether. It is a process where a neologism appears without the interference of any other word-formation types as a result of author creativity, be it intentional or incidental. Contrary to expectations, this process is not at all frequent. An exemplary case of this process are brand names, such as "Kleenex".

2) **Extending** – arguably the most common process, a word is formed by adding a prefix or suffix. The most frequent is the addition of verbal suffixes (e.g. -ing,-ed, -s). A typical example of this is "farming".

3) **Derivation** is a process that transfers an already pre-existing word and creates a separate meaning by adding a derivational affix (Behera, 2013, p. 28). An example of this process is "pitiful" (Glossary of Linguistic Terms, 2015).

4) **Conversion** creates a new word by shifting the original word class into the other, thus making a new meaning. An example would be a teleport → "to teleport" (Kalima, 2013, p. 13). The important aspect is that the form of the word does not change with the process.

5) **Semantic change**, similarly to conversion, also shifts its original meaning, but in this case the message the word carries changes altogether. There are three main types we can observe – broadening ("business" originally implied being busy, nowadays the meaning is referring to some aspect of jobs), narrowing ("meat" used to describe food, not flesh), and shifting ("nice" previously meant foolish, originating from latin *nescius* = not knowing).

6) **Compounding** – one of the most prolific process of word creation on its own, provides us with words created by putting 2 or more words together. Behera (2013, p. 29-30) goes to great lengths in describing this process and introduces three subdivisions, each with their own specifying categories:

- **Structural aspect**
  - neutral aspect – words put together without a linking element (groundbreaking)

- morphological aspect – words put together via a consonant or vowel (handiwork)
- syntactic aspect – words put together that are of different parts of speech (know-it-all)

- **Semantic aspect**
  - composite meaning – understandable from the final form of the word (protodrake)
  - changed meaning – one or more parts change meaning (lazybones)
  - lost meaning – no connection to current meaning whatsoever (ladybug)

- **Theoretical aspect** distinguishes word-combination from compounding. One of the main other reasons for this is that each process alters the meaning altogether, for example groundbreaking (meaning innovative) X ground breaking (meaning literally destroying the ground).

7) **Blending** – similar to compounding, except in this case a blend (also referred to as portmanteau) is a word which combines parts of existing words in order to produce a new one (Behera, 2013, p. 30). Such a word can be for example "Rygelords" (a combination of boss names "Rygelon" and "Lords of Dread" following one another in World of Warcraft) or "bubblehearth".

8) **Borrowing** (sometimes referred to as loanwords) is a process where a language assimilates a word previously nonexistent to their own lexicon. There are plenty of examples of borrowing, such as "cliché", "tofu", "lexicon" etc. Borrowing and extending put together make up a majority of Latin/Greek-based terminology used in sciences etc. Sayadi (2011) further dissects borrowing and describes direct and indirect subcategories, direct being explained above, and indirect describing a process where a literal translation from an original language creates a new word or phrase, such as "iron horse", which is a literal translation of a term from a Native American language used for a train. Behera (2013, p. 31) refers to this type of borrowing as *calque*.

9) **Back-formation** is the polar opposite to derivation. Sankaravelayuthan (n. d., p. 16) describes it as a subtraction of supposed or actual affixes from the original word. This is largely a result of overly generalising said affixes. An example is "a (base) camper" → "to (base)camp".

10) **Clipping** reduces the length of a word without changing the original meaning. This process usually occurs as a result of simplification tendencies. An example is "ad", a shortened version of advertisement. This process is very similar to **shortening**, which some authors classify as a separate category. Behera (2013, p. 30) describes two types of shortening, first creating words by keeping one or two syllables, such as "port" from portal, second being a result of initials preservation, however this one better applies for the abbreviations category.

11) **Abbreviations** – this category is likely the most frequent with video games in general alongside clipping, as the amount of specific phrases to any given game is substantial. Abbreviations reduce the original form of a word and produce a new word by stripping it of some of its attributes. This process can be distinguished into multiple categories:

- **abbreviations** on its own are words that stand for some other word and represent their shortened variant – example "abbrv."
- **acronyms** consist of initial letters and form an autonomous unit that has proprieties of a regular word – example "NATO", in games "WoW"
- **initialisms**, while barely different, tend to be mistaken for acronyms, however the key difference is that unlike acronyms initialisms cannot be pronounced as complete words – example USA
- **contractions** are simplifications of a given word or phrase, usually achieving this result by subtracting a letter with an apostrophe (The Free Dictionary, 2017) – example "can't"
- **compound abbreviations** are a specific category that often substitute a phrase, using the first letter(s) of the first word as the beginning and connecting the latter word – example "ID card" (Studopedia, 2014)
- **truncations** are shortened versions of a word that are represented by only the first part of said word (Behera 2013, p. 28) – example "diso roar" for disorientating roar

12) **Typo** – typing fast, which is only natural in videogames, as you are usually in a time shortage, inadvertedly renders some typological mistakes. Those mistakes over the years however managed to render out some new words, arguably mainly for their comedic value. Such a word can be for example "pwned", "zomg" or "covfefe".

13) **Emoticons**, and other visual depictions – the last category is rather specific. The concept is based around visual resemblance, upon which a new word was born. Theoretically, there is a very thin border between those and new coinages. Examples would be "xD" for laughter, "QQ" for crying, or "xbow" for crossbow.

3   INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

Having established what to understand under the term "neologism", it is desirable to define the specifics of the given field in which its manifestations can be encountered – communication. Communication is defined as a process of information sharing achieved via an assembled set of behaviour, sounds or symbols. (Merriam Webster, 2021) Contemporary means of communication are a result of centuries of human development. Nor does this apply only to humans; animals in general have a certain system of communication which is mandatory for survival, for example. reproduction, awareness of danger and suchlike. Humans just happen to be the furthest in terms of advancement.

The aforementioned stratification of means of communication also serves as a neat indicator of progression; in other words, the primary carrier of information was behaviour, or signs and signals, which also carried over to sounds in form of snarling, grunting and so on. More complex, systematized sounds and sound sequences inevitably led to the origin of language and, as the brain developed further, the vocabulary grew and opportunities widened, the necessity to record everything to a more permanent and reliable medium other than the forgetful human memory called for a revision of signs and scribblings into a consistent and stable compilation of shapes and strokes which could be uniformly understood by as many members of a certain group as possible. It also allowed humans to record thoughts effectively and efficiently,   enabling the transfer of contents anywhere without having to be physically present, as long as the language barrier did not pose a problem. And thus, the grounds for messaging were created.

3.1   THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

There are multiple rosters available in literature provided by their respective authors that tackle the very process of historical development. Very much uniformly, the categorization is either based on a dominant medium of communication, or type of communication. The most prominent authors of literature on this topic are two Toronto university professors Harold A. Innis and H. Marshall McLuhan, both fond of technological determinism, meaning they tend to organize society with regard to the prevailing medium of communication. Innis theorizes

that any given medium used influences the spatial and time aspect of the communication process. Here spatial aspect refers to the dimensions of the medium, such as paper, which is light and easy to transport, while time aspect implies possibly complicated transport, such as a stone or a wall. Reifová then quotes McLuhan's theoretical breakdown of the phenomenon based on the prevalent medium of communication as follows:

1) **"The world of ear"**, or the age before the alphabet – during this era the vast majority of information-sharing processes consisted of verbal communication. Hence, this era is sometimes being referred to as the age of acoustic space.

2) **"The world of eye"**, or the age of the alphabet – the acoustic aspect of communication is being replaced by the visual aspect - writing. The invention of the alphabet marks a cornerstone in civilized human development, replacing tribal communities.

3) **"Gutenberg's galaxy"** – as the name suggests, this era made information available to an ever-so wide public in the form of pressed and printed literature of all sorts. This allowed for further social development, e.g. massive increase in education efficacy.

4) **"Marconi's galaxy"** – virtually the age we find ourselves in now, the age defined by wired and wireless information transmission, named after the first telegraph inventor. (Reifová, 2004, p. 185-186)

McLuhan further refers to the means of communication as "extensions of man", symbolising that just like human body parts, each aspect of technological advancement plays a certain role in metaphorical physiological evolution, for example. the invention of wheel extends our feet, the phone extends our voice, the computer extends our brain and so on.

Other authors in the upcoming years later expanded on McLuhan's categorization, as it became increasingly clear that digitalized media would be way more influential and specific than just regular wirelessly transmitted media, for example:

Melvin DeFleur & Sandra Ball-Rokeach

1) **Epoch of signs and signals** – primitive communication in the form of animal sounds put together with nonverbal communication.

2) **Epoch of spoken word** – as humans evolved, their vocal apparatus improved, which in turn led to the origin of language. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach suggest that the first signs of language might have been noticeable from the age of the early Homo sapiens sapiens – the man of Cro-Magnon (40000-35000 b.c.). The fact that language was born partially led to the extinction of Homo sapiens neanderthalensis, as unlike their successors, they seemed not to be able to communicate verbally.

3) **Epoch of letters** – letters are a collection of graphical signs, which humans agreed be used in order to record thoughts more effectively. Unlike cave paintings, which can be considered predecessors to letters because they served to record certain happenings or situations, the main difference was the goal to consolidate certain meanings to specific signs.

4) **Epoch of press** – the revolutionary invention of printing press, as mentioned above, rapidly increasing the amounts of literature widely available to society.

5) **Epoch of mass communication** – communication broadcast via electronic appliances. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach hypothesize that humanity might be entering a new age, the epoch of computers, and that nobody really knows what this upswing might mean for communication; however given this source's release date, it is undoubtedly possible to claim the prediction was correct. (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1996, p. 22-23)

Werner Faulstich's take

1) **Phase A** – primary medium = people, the information transmission in form of small group communication (up to 15th century)

2) **Phase B** – secondary medium = press, defined by amounts of mechanically written literature of all sorts; originally individual media, later became mass media (15th century – 19th century)

3) **Phase C** – tertiary medium = electronic devices, such as television or radio, photographies, prevalently mass media (19th century – end of 20th century)

4) **Phase D** – quarternary medium = digital multimedia, such as online literature, podcasts, videos (since the end of 20th century) (Jirák & Köpplová, 2009, p. 46)

3.2 TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

What initially started as an experiment with a military background to create a network that would allow interconnected communication and database among several USA universities eventually developed into something nobody could have expected. This was the result of rivalry reacting to the USSR's technological success in 1957 when the Soviets successfully managed to launch their first satellite into space during the Cold War. The American efforts to topple their opponents climaxed in 1968 when they successfully launched the network referred to as ARPANET since 1969. The principle of this marvel is based around data transmission in form of "data packets", which means the data transferred is divided into small packages spread across the site; these are delivered individually, then reassembled at the receiving end. At the beginning, this site consisted of the universities of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Stanford and Utah; however over the course of the following year it managed to connect a vast majority of the east coast facilities. The idea was to create a web of "nodes" which effectively share the same level of importance; in other words there was no central node that would result in the whole system's failure should it be destroyed. In 1971, a first message was successfully sent and delivered. Two years later, 40 more computers were connected and the way to deliver whole files was invented.

Although first used over a decade earlier, in 1984 the word "internet" (a neologism, back then) was born as a result of extending and clipping of the word "internetworking". It referred to a now functional, publicly accessible network that connected computers to one site, since the functionality that was originally restricted to universities only found its way among the people at the end of the 1980s when the first providers started emerging and the World Wide Web (referred to as Web 1.0), an application that enabled everybody to access the internet, was invented in 1989 by Tim Berners-Lee.

By the beginning of the 1990s started, the internet had become very popular, and its glory only increased through the following decades, so much so that it was estimated that by 2012 around 2.5 billion people had access to the internet (Chatfield, 2011, p. 4-6), suggesting it had become a prominent shaper of human culture. As its popularity grew, an interesting phenomenon occurred: business subjects started utilising the internet for profit. Investors worldwide believed that investing into stock belonging to companies having virtually anything to do with the internet would in the upcoming years multiply their value. In fact, this wave of immense investment started a short time span referred to as "dot-com bubble", since everybody would put their money into pretty much any company even with ".com" in it, not even considering the fact that the companies in question had neither a product nor even a business plan. On the other hand, the companies started stockpiling investor money and the prices of all stock skyrocketed multiplicatively. The companies, in turn, opted to put notable portions of all the "easy money" into advertising, rather than working on the products. All this was caused mainly because of the rapid technological advancements humanity has made in those years. As the companies expended all their earnings, the companies' stocks started dropping again and as a result, the market came crashing down alongside between 2001-2002. This caused a wide wave of skepticism towards any internet-related trade; however, this was a much needed milestone that allowed the upcoming shaping to happen (Ryan, 2010, ch. 9).

The original Web 1.0 basically served as a service for data storage. People would put something "out there" and no changes would be made to it. However, as internet prices decreased and more people started using it, suddenly the idea was to orientate the direction of development on regular users. This is where the Web 2.0 era began, the era in which we find ourselves now. The emphasis on users means the internet users are able to update information available on the internet. This is both a plus and a minus, as shown by the case of Wikipedia: on the one hand, an overwhelming majority of all entries has been created by users, or updated by users, not large companies or owners; on the other hand, the fact everybody now has this "power" increases the potential malleability of all information available, thus creating the grounds for fake news, information from unverified sources and so on (Ryan, 2010, ch. 10). A similar thing happened

with SMS messages, which were originally intended to be used as a medium to contact users by the phone companies, not for inter-user contact (Tagg, 2012, p. 10). With that, the amount of online communication grew exponentially, and as the internet grew in popularity and first social sites started appearing, everything was ready for this variant of communication to expand to such an extent which it is no longer possible to ignore or overlook because of its supposed idiosyncrasy.

3.3 THE LANGUAGE OF THE INTERNET

"Having a lovelytime here in Wales. Came Sat last. Scenery delightful.such a wealth oftrees. Weather glorious. Been out all the time.

(Postcard, 1909. Collected and distributed on Twitter by the Edwardian Postcard Project (http://www.lancs.ac.uk /fass/projects/EVIIpc/))

My dearest Eliza, i just received your welcome letter and was very pleased to Receive it i was rather Disappointed as i hurried home for you but i know it cant be helped at all times . . .

(Opening of letter to a 'fallen woman' at the London Foundling Hospital, 19th century; Kesseler and Bergs, 2003, p. 79)

LEAVING TONITE STOPPING OVER KC ARRIVE HOME SUNDAY MORNING SEVEN THIRTY DON'T WORRY EVERYTHING OK WILL GIVE DETAILS WHEN ARRIVE WALT.

(Telegram from Walt Disney to his brother and business partner, Roy, on the night that Mickey Mouse was born, 13 March, 1928)" (Tagg, 2012, p. 19).

All the above messages have something in common, namely the simplification of language. As is obvious from the dates, this phenomenon is by no means new, nor was it brought about by the invention of the internet. In fact, contracted forms for example, have been around in the English language for hundreds of years and this is just another stepping stone, except that, unlike in the past, the reason was not just human creativity and perhaps also laziness: since the 20th century it has been conditioned by price too. Telegraph messages and SMS messages alike were nothing short of expensive whenever they first appeared, and therefore it was mandatory, or desirable to say the least, to "keep it short" so as to send

as much information as possible while fitting the volume of that information into the given format and keeping it as comprehensible as possible. It is not a distant history when SMS texts had a maximum of 160 characters and anything beyond that limit had to be sent separately. In fact, even now SMS texts are sent this way, and smartphones will remind the user of this: if a message is longer, it will start calculating the number of SMS texts it will be counted as. And whenever a limit of five messages is surpassed, it automatically converts into an MMS format instead. Shortening the content of a message has become a habit which the internet adopted very quickly and from then on, the language was never the same again.

4 COMMUNICATION IN VIRTUAL WORLDS

Nowadays online communication is very distinctive from regular, standardized version of spoken and written English alike, most prominently by significantly simplifying various features of a given language in which said discourse should be held in. There were allegations that this would expectedly lead to gradual degradation of all forms of the language, however studies have shown that this is not necessarily the case by any means. In fact, a study mentioned in Crystal's Internet Linguistics (2011, ch. 7) has shown that people intentionally simplifying language features in written form tend to be more competent in it, which is actually further demonstrated by their capability to effectively distort the language while maintaining relative comfort reading it to such an extent that does not make it unintelligible or hard to understand, unless intentionally taken to an extreme.

4.1 THE RISE OF THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

Naturally, as the internet developed as a result of technological advancement, it was only a matter of time when first games appear first. In fact it was by no means far away – the officially first game Pong was released in 1970. Back then, it was merely 2 moving sticks that block the trajectory of a pixel ball, bouncing it off to the other side of the screen between one another. But soon after, first consoles appeared and the progress from then on was immense. Soon after, games like Contra, Mike Tyson's Punch Out!!, Mario etc. were born, later on genuine 3D games started appearing, mainly shooters, like GoldenEye 007, Quake, Doom, Playstation games like Spyro, Crash Bandicoot, Silent Hill, Medal of Honor, Gran Turismo and so on. The computers naturally experienced a boom soon after, and eventually prevailed in popularity due to the versatility of the use, as computers are not just made for gaming; it is possible to do almost anything else on them. Thus, some of the most incredible PC gems were set up to go travel around the world. In a sense, games have become a form of art. And the current state is nothing short of an epitome to that. Games are a very intricate culmination of visual art, sound design, music, and in some cases even storytelling and acting. For example, Planescape: Torment takes place

in a world of Dungeons & Dragons, a very famous real-life role playing and sometimes board game, and brings the world to life with its very own digital depiction of the world, dozens of characters with their own "stories" to interact with, music that conveys the intended atmosphere incredibly effectively, and all this is encompassed by an incredibly rich and thought-out storyline. In fact, just the game dialogue script alone allegedly has 800 000 words (some sources claim around 950 000). People have attempted to write the story in book form, and the most famous version of such an attempt has almost 1200 pages. It is rightfully so called an interactive book, rather than a video game. Its spiritual successor Torment: Tides of Numenera has 1 200 000 words, according to the studio's post on Steam platform (Steam, 2017). This was however a matter of 1999. Nowadays, some games are quite literally interactive movies where you decide the course of the game's storyline through your decision-making, such as Life is Strange, and some even hire real actors and import their appearance into the games, such as Until Dawn, Detroit: Become Human, Beyond: Two Souls, Heavy Rain, The Quarry, The Dark Pictures or even Full-Motion Video games, which use recorded footage tied together by game mechanics. Some of these story-based games can even stretch out to 20+ hours of intense, unique gameplay.

Unsurprisingly, the form of communication and entertainment changed too. Firstly multiplayer games appeared, where people would play on one machine, then this restriction was removed by successfully inventing online multiplayer games, which was an inevitable result of first online communication services and the advancement in this field, such as TeamSpeak, ICQ, Skype or Facebook. Nowadays, gaming communities have a plethora of means to communicate, however Discord is arguably the newest and most famous one. Specially developed for gamers, it is a platform that enables its users to not only chat in real time as a chatroom would, but not only you can chat with individuals, you can also chat with the entire communities as long as you join them, and you can also voice call, video call, or stream your screen. It also allows for interconnectivity with other social media platforms, such as Spotify for music or Twitch.tv for your streaming services – users can even use their unlocked Twitch emotes on Discord. It is a platform nowadays gamers generally use for any sort of both community and in-game communication.

Twitch.tv is a separate topic on its own. It is a streaming service which allows users to watch their favourite streamers – people who stream their video live on the internet, and they can interact with them via live chat and send them money, buy subscription to support them and so on. While running since 2011, this site, along virtually any online form of entertainment, enjoyed the boom during the coronavirus pandemic. During that time, the viewership virtually more than doubled. For example, in June 2019, the average concurrent viewership was a little over 1 300 000 on average, with over 3 600 000 viewers maximum, while on January 2021, the average concurrent viewership was over 2 900 000 people, and the maximum was 6 500 000 maximum at one time. With that, both online entertainment and gaming grew exponentially (Twitch Tracker, 2021).

4.2 MMORPG

As mentioned before, games branched into many genres, such as racing games, FPS (First Person Shooter), MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena), RTS (Real Time Strategy), platformers, puzzles, Point and Click games, RPG (Role-Playing Game) and plenty more. However the MMORPG genre provides something extra which the rest of games usually does not – and that is vast interactivity with other players. The games itself are based on the RPG concept, however it is possible to interact with other players, pursue quests, and ultimately crate a personalized story. MMORPGs – Massively-Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games combine the aspect of hero-like gameplay and player communication. They usually have vast storylines with relatively monotonous, but not too monotonous, gameplay, and the main selling point is the amount of communication and cooperation you can engage in with other players. The most famous MMORPG game to this day is World of Warcraft, based on the story of previously released strategy games and adaptively updated story progression every few months according to books which are released alongside as lore guide. The game has been just short of 6 000 000 players this month, and usually there can be up to over 500 000 concurrent players daily. The next chapter tackles the basic gameplay possibilities more closely, as the World of Warcraft community is where the samples in the practical part come from, it is therefore mandatory to explain the basics.

4.3 WORLD OF WARCRAFT

World of Warcraft provides you with a basic chat window, which shows messages of various in-game channels, such as *"say", "yell", "emote", party", "raid", "instance", "general", "trade", "world"* and so on. Some of the channels are accessible for everybody, some for players in a certain zone, certain group, certain vicinity, certain faction – the two baseline playable factions have arbitrarily separated "languages", meaning if you say something as Horde to an Alliance player, a certain in-game script will encrypt the message to make it illegible. This led to the origin of neologisms "kek" and "bur", which are encrypted variations of "lol" visible to the opposing faction from Horde to Alliance and Alliance to Horde respectively. There is also a channel that connects messages straight to the WoW app that lets you message your friends from your friendlist without accessing the interface. Should all this not be enough however, there also is a live channel for speaking and listening at your disposal, so while a notable amount of communication takes place through the in-game live chat, an overwhelming majority of communication – especially for competitive content – takes place in the verbal sphere of things, either through the in-game interface, or third-party (not belonging to the game) applications, such as Discord, TeamSpeak or even Facebook Messenger.

4.3.1 OPEN-WORLD CONTENT

The whole game consists of multiple gamemodes. The very baseline acts as a virtual representation of a fictional world with various continents, fauna, flora, inhabitants and allows you to interact with various aspects of the world, such as killing animals for resources, picking up herbs for resources, filling quests for computer characters, that may or may not contribute to a reputation with a faction which then can provide you with useful items or more quests, then gaining experience in order to increase your character's proficiency (level) to learn new abilities (spells), access new zones, unlock new features, progress the general story based around the game's fictional history and so on. The game has continually been in active development while available to play since 2004 and allows you to collect so-called "achievement points", which consist of finished challenges, each awarding very minor numbers, but adding up to thousands to determine the completeness of your character. There is also a so-

called "collection", which is principally your dressing room which saves your unlocked clothing (gear) designs that come from various forms of the content available. This encapsulates the very first and most basic – although also the most complex – gamemode of WoW, which is completionism. The point is to collect as many achievement points, as many gear pieces, as many ridable vehicles/animals either ground or flying types (mounts), finish all storylines or learn about the game's lore which is several books' worth – the game's story develops as new books are coming out. This gamemode encapsulates all forms of content *to an extent*. It contains some aspects of completionism, Player vs. Environment (PvE) and Player vs. Player (PvP). During this mode, you can but do not have to team up with other players and play together. It is **uninstanced**, "open-world" content, meaning you can meet lots of people at random, they do not have to be members of your groups nor picked by the computer to appear specifically against you, and the location is directly interconnected with the rest of the world.

4.3.2 INSTANCED CONTENT

Instanced content on the other hand covers a wide variety of locations that are not connected to the open world, you enter them either via the in-game client's features, or you have to enter through a "portal". Those locations are limited to smaller amounts of players competing together or against each other, usually 4-20, however there are exceptions that are for 1, or up to 80 players. The vast majority of these zones are made specifically for **PvE** and **PvP** content. This content usually requires fast thinking, some form of strategy mechanization, and mainly rapid preemptive and reactive communication among the participants.

4.3.2.1 PvE content

PvE content is the dominant variant of instanced activities. It consists of **Challenges**, **Dungeons** and **Raids**. Those then divide into non-endgame and endgame content (available for maximum-levelled players). Generally, Challenges are for 1 player, Dungeons are for 5 players and Raids are for 10-40 players, depending on size or difficulty setting. If the instance is not outdated (meaning it's scaled to maximum levels of a given expansion, or "endgame"), all three variants have specific "mechanics" players are required to adhere to in order to finish a given instance.

Outdated instances are generally accessible from a lower level threshold, and the main purpose is to play them alone ("solo" them) for collectibles and achievements, especially with a charcter whose level is higher than originally intended, unless an event is underway that intentionally "scales" the instance to a relevant level, returning it to its moreless original difficulty. Instanced PvE content usually has regular enemies that precede a stronger, unique enemy ("boss"). Each boss has its specific strategies ("mechanics").

Challenges are pretty self-explanatory, there is a goal you need to achieve alone on your character, usually testing your in-game proficiency, logic, and in some cases luck.

Dungeons are the most casual form of endgame content, people usually do dungeons in order to hasten their levelling process. The exception are bolstered dungeons ("mythic+", or "m+") which increasingly gain on difficulty depending on what previous level you managed to clear as a group. These increasingly require setup and precise communication, because at very high levels, these cannot be cleared successfully without it. This form of high-end content is usually cleared with the assistance of voice chat. Dungeons usually take around 20-60 minutes to clear.

Raids are principially longer dungeons with more extensive mechanics which more people need to stick to. Since they require large group organization and cooperation, the group leader expects you to come prepared to the instance knowing the strategy to prevent slowing down progress and robbing people of their time, and in easier difficulties still require at the very least some form of written strategy to achieve basic organization. The higher difficulties then pretty much uniformly again require verbal proactive and adaptive communication throughout the raid. Raids usually take 2-4 hours to clear from start to end, and are usually organized on multiple days a week to assure consistent participants presence, mainly because the difficulty by no means assure a successful clear or bosses on first attempt (pull). In fact, depending on the group's various aspects, clearing one boss can take hundreds of hours before successfully defeating him for the first time. For demonstration, the first group to ever clear the most recent raid on the highest difficulty took 16 hours a day for 18 days in a row to successfully finish it whole (GameSpot, 2022).

4.3.2.2 PvP content

PvP content is based around competitive fighting versus other players. Its instanced categories are **Arenas** and **Battlegrounds**. Unlike the vs. computer counterpart, this category tends to be on average much shorter, and incomparably more intense. For that reason alone, some prefer it and find it more fun, others despise it because it takes immense real life dedication and practice to gain any reasonable experience playing the game mode. Arenas exist in 2v2 and 3v3 variants and on average usually take around 2-7 and 5-10 minutes per match respectively to finish. Battlegrounds can be either 10v10 or 40v40 and typically take around 10 and 30 minutes respectively.

Arenas are the most frequently played form of PvP content, typically because it is not as time-consuming, but very fast-paced. They take place in small instances. The fast pace sprouts from the fact that every in-game occupation (class) has its specializations, and each specialization has its unique spells. Combined with the fact that the game has been around for over 17 years, there is very little undiscovered about it and the player competency ceiling is very high. In order to successfully participate in arenas, the least amount of communication that has to be done is to at least establish a basic strategy in general before entering, and once you see what enemies you are facing, you have to polish that strategy concretely for that set of opponents. More often than not however, it provides an immense advantage to just communicate on voice chat in order to be able to instantly react to the process and agree on a strategy at any one moment throughout the arena to establish your next move. This is the most complicated part, simply because of the aforementioned fast pace – in order effectively to convey the information to one's teammate, both players need to know their own and their teammate's spells, and your opponent's spells, and the information needs to be conveyed in a very brief but intelligible manner to maximize efficiency. The goal of an arena is to defeat one's opponents.

Battlegrounds on the other hand on top of arena knowledge require larger strategy knowledge on top, because these are based on fulfilling an objective, which is usually capturing enemy flag and returning back with it to one's base, depleting enemy resources, capturing more territory than the enemy within a time frame and such. They take place in larger instances, typically where one cannot

see the whole fighting area. In order to effectively communicate in a battleground, everybody needs to be on voice chat to facilitate reactive gameplay. On the other hand, battleground communication generally requires much less fight-specific communication, prevalently the communication is about greater strategy to successfully achieve a goal of any one battleground.

5 ANALYSIS OF COLLECTED RECENTLY ENCOUNTERED NEOLOGISMS

The following section presents 24 separate chat conversation snippets with neologisms that have been analysed from a creation standpoint. 16 excerpts come from a Discord server Trueshot Lodge, which is a World of Warcraft-related server with over 117 000 users, and over 40 000 active users every day. The remaining 8 come from World of Warcraft directly, either from in-game interface, or retrospectively displayed through a Battle.net application, which serves also as a World of Warcraft launcher.

5.1 EXCERPTS CONTAINING NEOLOGISMS

Chat 1
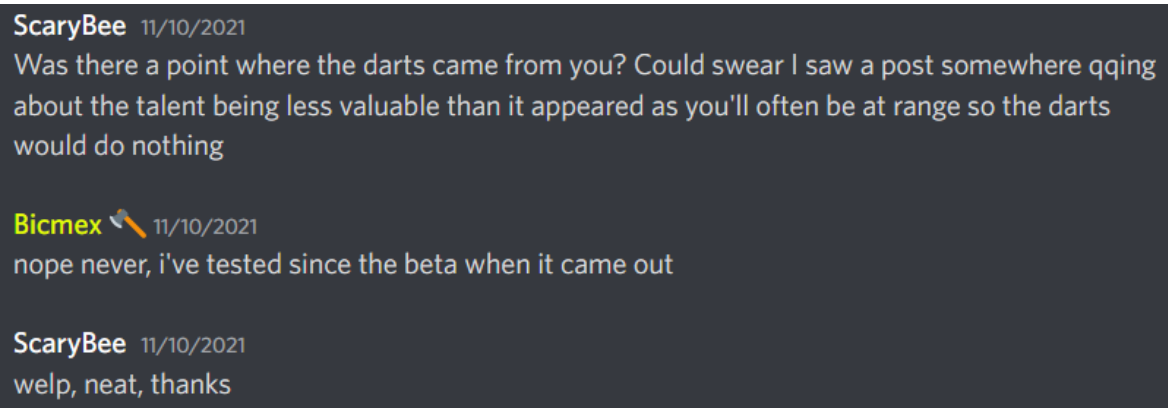
      The first neologism in this excerpt is "qqing". It has been created by **extending** the original *QQ*, which is an **emoticon** resembling crying eyes, with an -ing suffix. Hence, qqing means crying, and in this case, it has been used in a mocking manner.

      The next one is "welp", which is a mixture of creativity and **typo**. The letter *p* is nearby to letter *l* on the keyboard, and people have widely accepted it as a nowadays rejuvenated version of *well* similarly to *yep*, *nope* and so on.

Chat 2
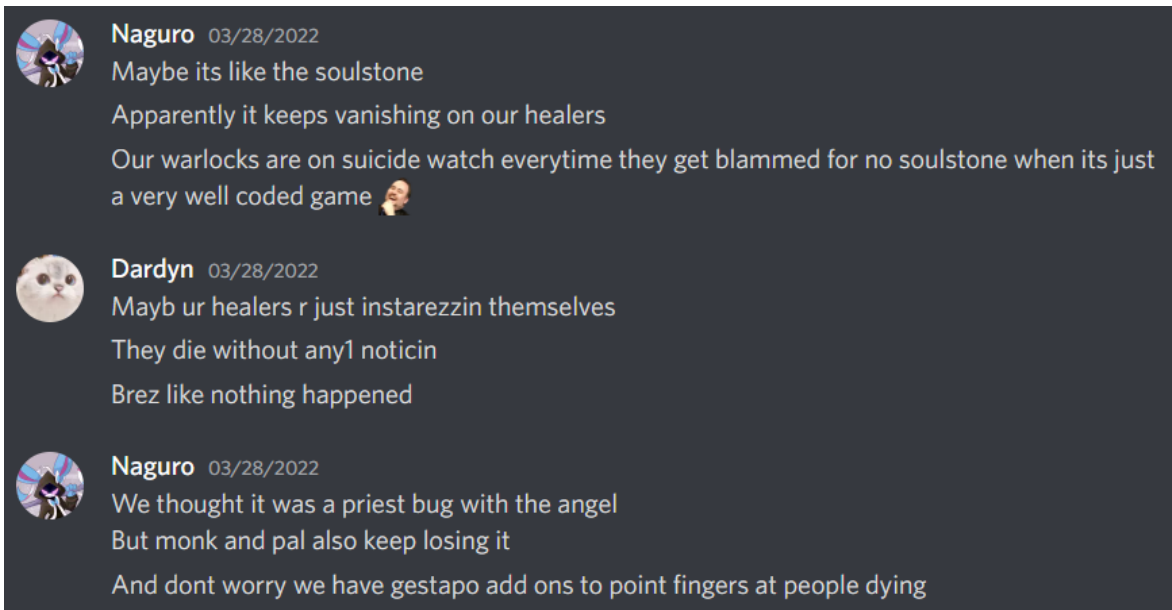
"Instarezzin" is a first complex neologism. It consists of a prefix *insta-*, root *rez*, and suffix *-ing*. The prefix is a **shortened** version of *instantly*, the root is supposedly a **truncation** of *resurrection* with an added substitution of *s* for *z*, which is very typical for English language in general, and the suffix is a result of **extending** the original form *instarez*. In this scenario, it describes a process, where a player would supposedly instantly resurrect themselves upon death without waiting for a call from their raid leader, doing so without their permission or order, potentially wasting a valuable resource.

"Brez" helps us elaborate on the definition above. It is a combination of **initialism**, **compounding** and **truncation**. The word consists of two roots put together, *b* and *rez*. The meaning is *battle resurrection*, which is a time-gated process during combat, meaning you can only use it once every period of time, not all the time on everybody.

"Bug" is an unintended mistake in programming, and it is a widely recognized example of **semantic shift**.

"Angel" is a metaphor and **semantic shift**. Holy Priests upon death transform into Guardian Spirits for a short period of time, which inherently resemble an angel with a cape over their head.

Chat 3
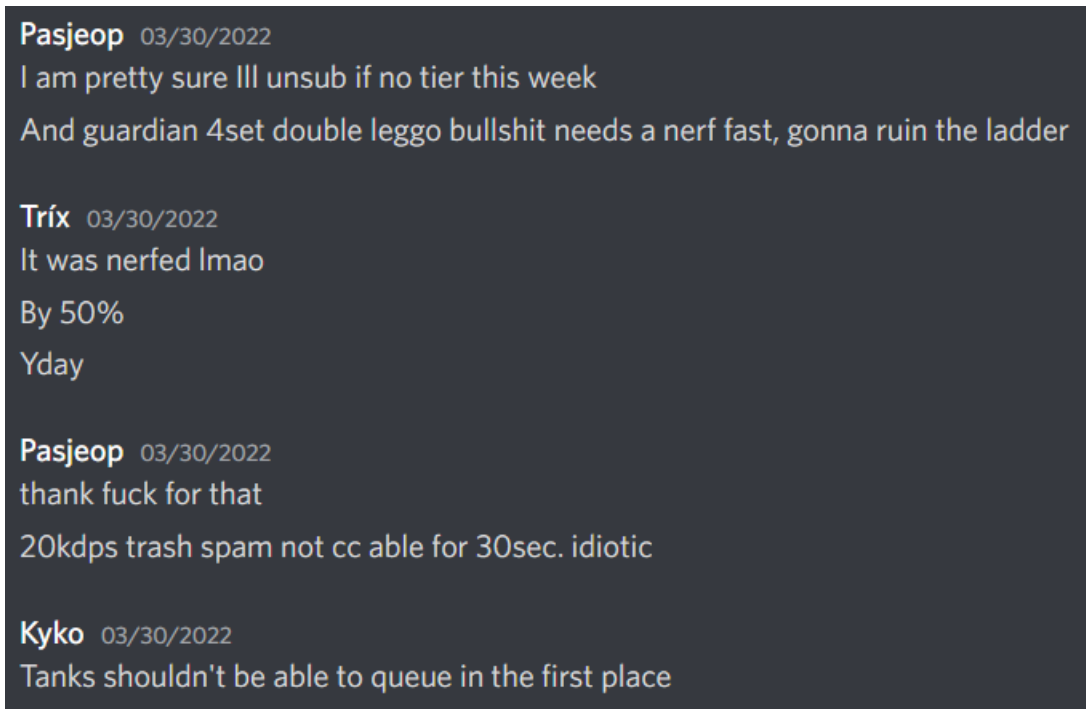
"Unsub" is a result of **extending** and **truncation**. It comes from the prefix *un-*, and truncation of *subscription*. It means to cancel subscription.

"Tier" is supposedly a combination of **semantic shift**, **conversion** and omission. The original is *tier set*, which is a set of equipment pieces that give you special abilities if worn simultaneously. This has shortly become *tierset*, and since it was a significant phenomenon of the given season, users figured that everybody would understand what was meant by simply saying *tier,* omitting the noun altogether, and changing the adjective into a noun, hence conversion. The semantic shift transfers the meaning from *category* to *specific piece of equipment*.

"4set" is a **compound** that points out to having owned 4 pieces of tier set gear, maximising the benefit.

"Leggo" is a result of **shortening** from *legendary item.* The legendary items have specific powers and furthermore carry a specific meaning depending on the audience. Therefore it does not just mean *item with legendary properties*, but depending on context, it automatically implies a *concrete feature* instead of a specific piece of equipment.

"Nerf" is arguably the most widely known neologism in this work with a very rich history. Ironically enough, it is complicated to find its roots. The earliest mentions of the word come from 1950s, where a *nerf bar* served as a sland term

for a custom bumper for hot-rod race cars, and the meaning of *nerf* was *to hit something with a bumper to change course*. (www.etymonline.com, 2000). Later in late 1960s, a toy brand borrowed the term for their *world's first indoors ball*, which was made out of foam to prevent indoors damage while children play (Hasbro, n. d.). The last step was in 1997 when a game Ultima Online was released. The game was *broken* (gaming term for a game mechanic not being properly balanced, usually to player's disadvantage) because the internet was barely just getting started with its glory and therefore there was not enough people to properly test the game. The players quickly discovered that swords were stronger than the rest of weaponry, so the game developers reduced their effectiveness. A result, the players started complaining that it feels as though they were fighting with *nerf* swords, and thus, the word started gaining its newly-gained popularity (Koster, 1998). Because of its hazy past I dare argue the original word was **new coinage**, which later underwent **semantic shift** to mean *to reduce effectiveness of something*.

"Cc-able" is an **extension** of an **initialism**. *CC* stands for *crowd control*. The suffix makes it an adjective, meaning *possible to be crowd controlled*.

Chat 4

deadhard - toxic survival 01/31/2022
cross faction means i can finally be the void elf i've always wanted to be 🐸

@B Mock 9.2.5 coming 2023
HermitOser 01/31/2022
more like summer 2022

Kivlov 01/31/2022
Rerolling human for PvP racial
Letsgobois

HermitOser 01/31/2022
kul tiran for that big tankiness

Foe™ 01/31/2022
9.2.5 horde players "wtf is light's judgement???" O.o

HermitOser 01/31/2022
no more kek and bur🐸

"Crossfaction" is a new feature that allows players from opposing factions to play together in one team. It is a **compound**.

"Rerolling" originally comes from Dungeons & Dragons, where a significant portion of the game is based around the player rolling the dice. This was later adapted through **semantic shift** in MMORPG games as *switching to a new character of different class/specialization/faction*. For that reason, one does not reroll *to something*, but instead reroll *something*.

"Kek" and "bur" are respective faction-specific variants of *lol* (lots of laughter/laughing out loud), visible to the opposing faction. If an Alliance player types *lol*, a Horde player sees *bur*, if a Horde player types *lol*, an Alliance player sees *kek*. Unlike its progenitor, which is an acronym, these are **new coinages**, or hypothetically **borrowed** words, should the in-game scripts that consistently produce the same results be considered language.

Chat 5

okejha 04/05/2022
Pretty sure i will peace it long before glad
As i keep facing r1 tryhards at 1900 mmr
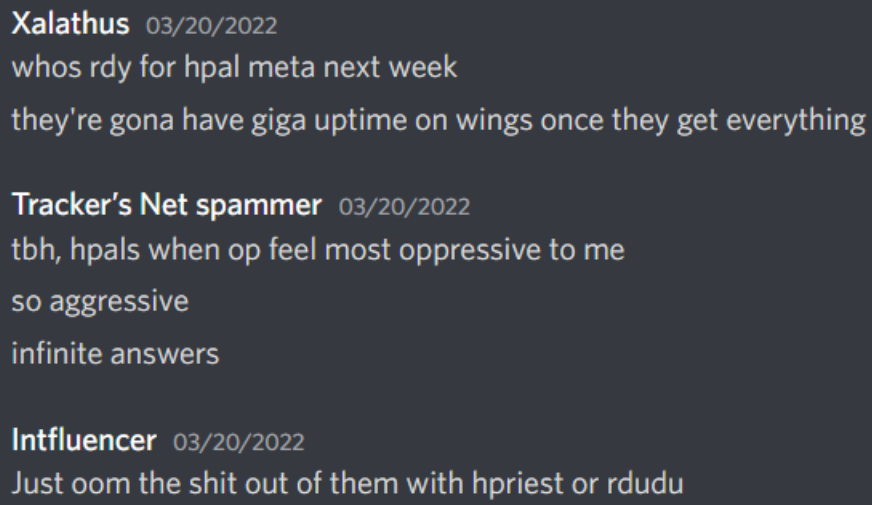
"(To) peace it" is a phrase similar to *calling it*, which signifies one will stop doing an activity they have been doing. It is a **conversion** from noun to verb.

"Glad" is a **truncation** of the word *gladiator*.

"R1" is a **semantically shifted compound abbreviation**, signifying *rank one*, which is an encompassing term referring to a top 0.1 % highest-rated players in a given category at the end of the season. In earlier stages of the game, it used to refer to the highest-rated team among a group of servers, hence the meaning change from a team to a percentage of teams. The "1" comes in as a substitution of the original word to shorten the result.

"MMR" means *match-making ratio*, which suggests it is an **initialism**.

Chat 6

"Rdy" is pretty self-explanatory, being a **contraction** of *ready*. This is another recurring phenomenon in internet speech, as you essentially omit a part of a word, but do not use an apostrophe, assumedly to save time.

"Hpal", "hpriest" and "rdudu" are all **compound abbreviations**, occasionally further **truncated**, as perspicuous, standing for *holy paladin, holy priest* and *restoration druid*, respectively.

In the plainest of meanings, the suffix *meta-*, which comes from Greek *among, with, after*, started its nowadays widely known use due to New Latin, which became a language of sciences. Anything *meta-* reflects on itself in science, it is *above the original subject* (Merriam-Webster, 2019). As a parallel to this, "meta" has become a noun or adjective through **conversion**, and it describes *something superior to the rest*, as if there is *a game above the game itself*.

"Wings" is yet another metaphor, referring to a Paladin ability *Avenging Wrath*, which makes them grow a pair of wings while active. It is a product of **semantic shift**.

"OP" stands for *overpowered*, it is an **acronym**.

"(To) oom", typically stylized in lowercase, is an **acronym**, signalising a healer-specialized player has gone *out of mana*. It is pronounced as a regular word.

Chat 7
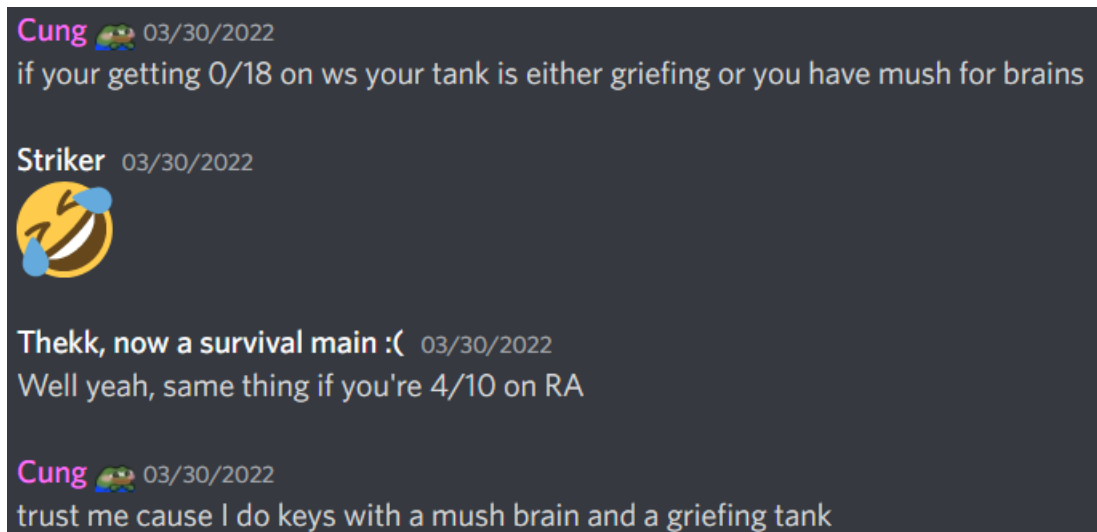
"Ws" and "ra" respectively are **initialisms** of hunter abilities *Wild Spirits* and *Resonating Arrow*.

"Griefing" dates as far as the end of 20th century, being a product of online gaming. It is a **derivation**, supposedly based on *causing grief*, which is what it essentially means, in a sense that one *intentionally ruins a game*. A person that partakes in such an action is a *griefer*. Not to be mixed up with *trolling* or *throwing,* as those have separate meanings (Inverse, n. d.).

Chat 8
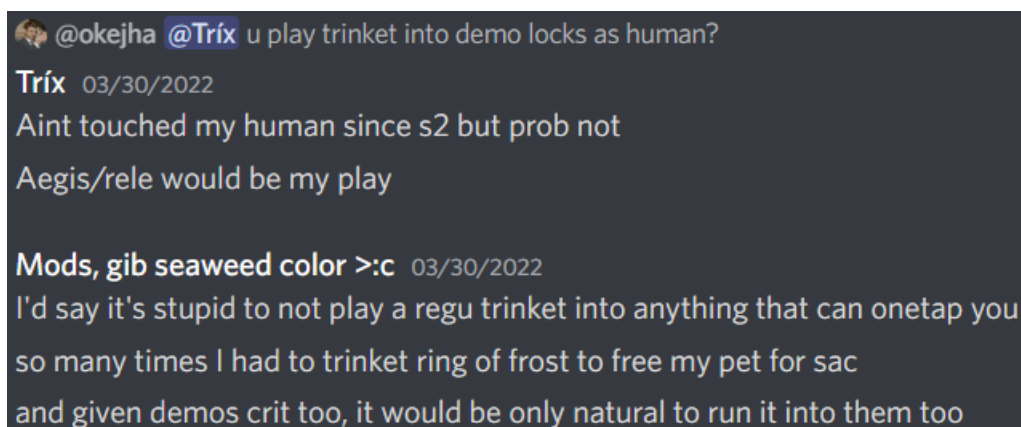
"Rele", "regu" and "demo" are **truncations** of words *regular, relentless* and *demonology*.

"(To) crit" is also a **truncation**, originally, however in this case it has additionally been **converted** to verb. The origin of the word comes from a *critical strike*, or a *crit.* It refers to an in-game feature which doubles the amount of damage certain attacks do.

"S2" is a **compound abbreviation**, meaning *season two*.

"(To) onetap" - means *to kill from full health to no health within a short period of time*, usually with one ability, or a set of abilities in a certain order. Originates from FPS games (first-person shooter, where certain weapons could kill an enemy with one round. A *tap* in this scenario refers to a single click on a computer mouse. As such, it is a result of **compounding** and **converting** the original *one tap* into a verb.

"Sac" in itself is a **truncation** which omits parts of a whole name of an in-game ability *Roar of Sacrifice* or *Blessing of Sacrifice*. Some more creative players would however argue it could possibly be considered a metonymy too, since the ability protects an ally from certain hostile effects, as a sac would protect a young offspring of an animal, possibly not yet born, which would make it semantic shift.

It is up to debate whether consider "(to) run (something)" a neologism or not. It has been stated that the word *run* is a word with the most meanings, allegedly at least 645, according to Oxford English Dictionary (National Public Radio, 2011), therefore it ultimately is no surprise it has found its way into the gaming community, in a sense to *use a certain specific piece of equipment.* In that case, it would be another example of **semantic shift**.

Chat 9
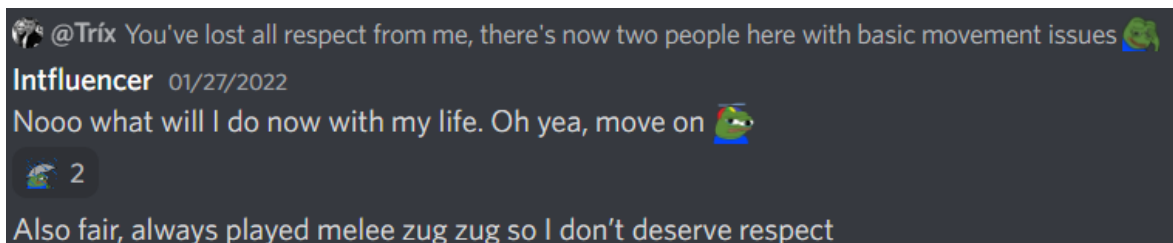
Yet another portrayal of **new coinage**, "zug zug" originates from WoW in-game language of the race of Orcs, standing for *greetings*. However, Orcs are known from the game's lore as warriors, and they happen to have the most universally

versatile race-specific abilities for PvP on top. For that reason, it has eventually become a word for *simplistic overpowered gameplay*, through **semantic shift**.

Chat 10
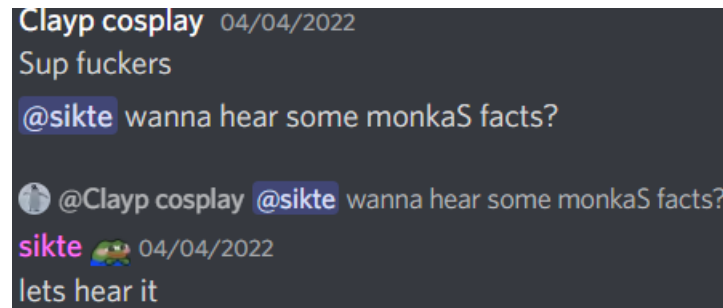
Although rather atypical, this has become a recurring theme in the recent years. Twitch.tv is a streaming service, where creators can broadcast whatever they are doing, while interacting with their audience via chat, which consists, among others, of emotes. Emotes are pictures that show up after typing the name. "MonkaS" is one of them, originating from a website 4chan where a user *MonkaSenpai* posted a picture of Pepe the Frog with added nervously sweating features (Know Your Meme, 2016). In the upcoming years, it had become a frequently used emote on Twitch, meaning *nervousness*, for example in tight situations in gaming. Eventually, the community started using it as a substitute for *surprising* and *cool,* or *unexpected*. As such, the word itself is a **new coinage** which underwent **semantic shift**.

Chat 11
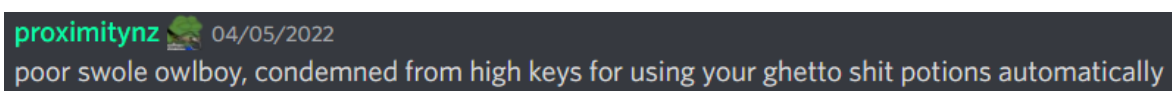
"Swole" is one of the words which have appeared apparently out of the blue. The origin is the past tense of *swell*, except in an assumed irregular form instead of typical regular *swelled*. It has become a synonym to being *very muscular*, as if the person was swollen. It is a product of **semantic shift**.

Chat 12
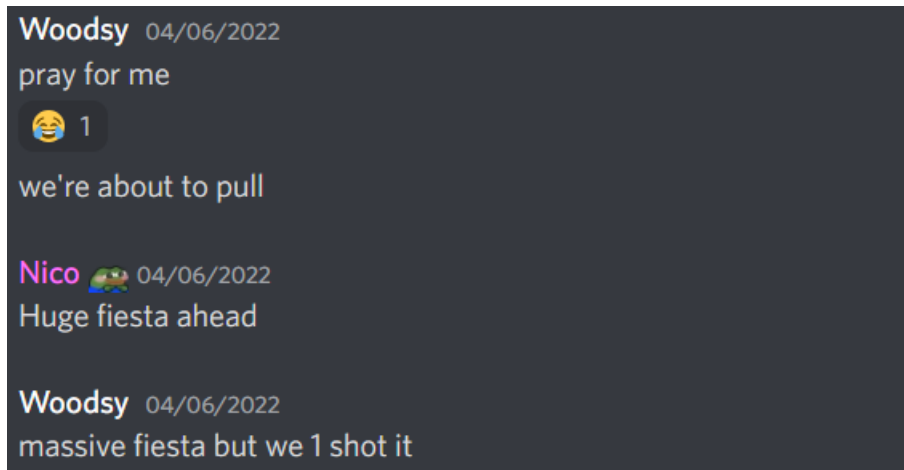
"To pull" is a typically English slang manifesting itself through a different medium. While in real life it means *to seduce somebody*, in WoW jargon it allegorically signifies *to commence fight* with an enemy, typically simultaneously, as a group. For that reason, it is a word that had undergone several **semantic shifts**.

"Fiesta" is one of the less typical neologisms, as not only it is a **borrowed** word from Spanish, but it has also underwent a **semantic shift**. In the original language it translates to *party*, however among the gaming community this has become a sarcastic remark describing any situation that can be considered *messy, disorganized* or even *failed*.

"(To) oneshot" is a synonym to previously analysed *to onetap*, however this neologism universally utilizes the past tense of the original verb in all forms, hence a *oneshot (noun)* or *to oneshot* (verb), instead of *to oneshoot*, omitting the doubled letter. It is a **compound**.

Chat 13

"Vibing" is a very popular neologism among teens. It stems from *to vibe to music*, however the original meaning transcended to a broader definition, now meaning *to chill, relax*, or it can even be used synonymously to *to be alright*, suggesting **semantic shift** from the original. In this case, *g* is omitted.

Chat 14

> **ishotblanks** 03/24/2022
> Haven't gotten weapon for BM/SV via vault, which spec doesn't suffer from Weapon dps?
> Planning to buy it normally
>
> **Kyko** 03/24/2022
> Both suffer
>
> **ishotblanks** 03/24/2022
> F in the chats
>
> **Turtle, now 4 set gamer!!** 03/24/2022
> F
>
> **RibsRulesDood** 03/24/2022
> F
>
> **loik** 03/24/2022
> F
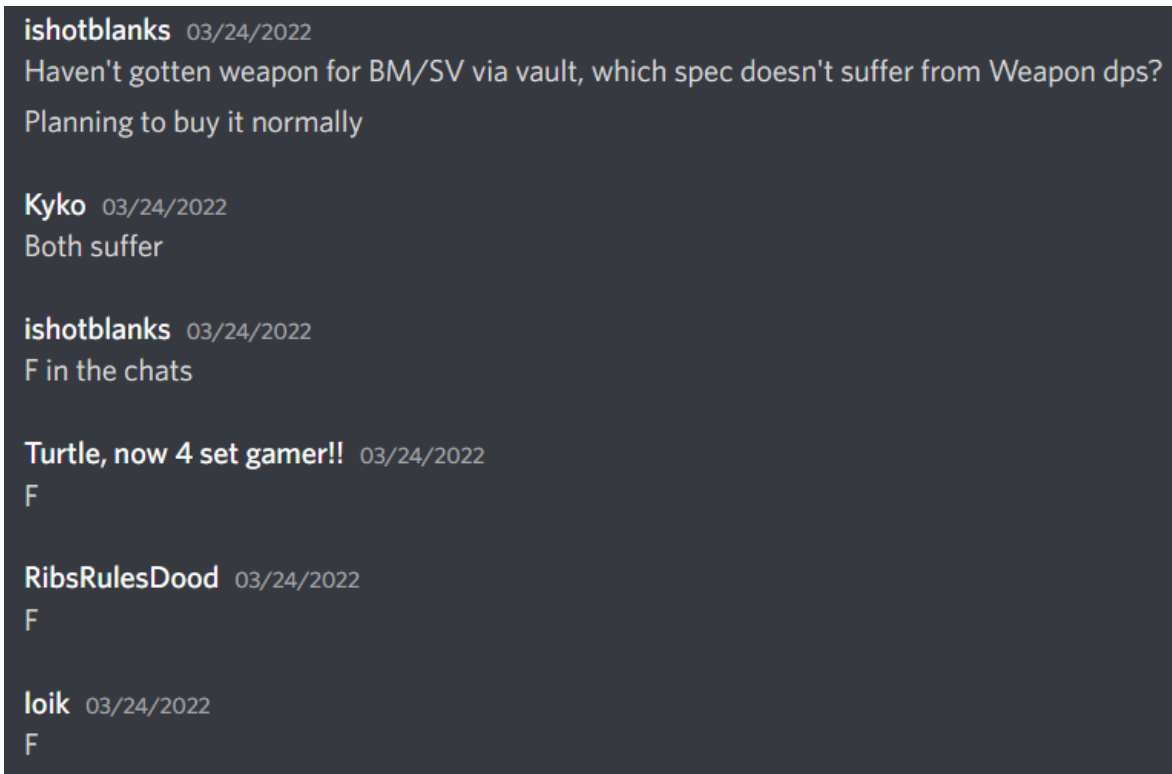
"BM" is an **initialism**, standing for *Beast Mastery*, a Hunter class specialization.

"SV" on the other hand is an **abbreviation**, standing for *Survival*, another Hunter class specialization.

"F", contrary to all expectations, is a **new coinage** which underwent **semantic shift.** It is arguably one of the most recent neologisms that were born solely because of a computer game and its internet spread. This neologism originated in 2014 when another sequel of the Call of Duty franchise was released. A part of the story is a scene where the player is prompted to *press F to pay respects* to a fallen marine, which quickly became a meme depicting the scene. Nowadays, it is casually used as an expression of *sadness*.
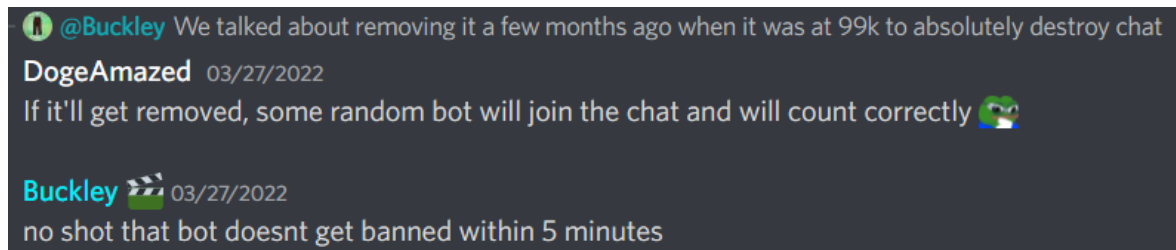
Chat 15
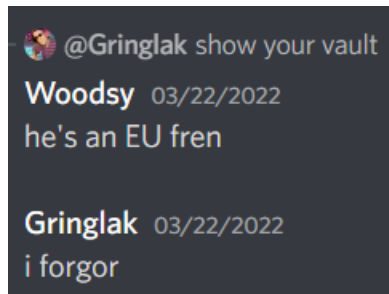
"Fren" is an intended **typo**, popularized by a specific subgenre of memes that attempts to make the speaker look cute by distorting certain properties of language. This is a recurring theme especially in animals-related memes. It means *friend*.

"I forgor" is a **typo** that somehow managed to popularize itself through Twitch. Oftentimes it is used in a jocular and mocking manner when a streamer *forgets* something, to which their chat starts spamming *I forgor* with a skull emote following.

Chat 16

"No shot" is an intentional **typo**, which finds its roots in spoken language, as people started using it as an ameliorated, non-vulgar variant of *no shit* to avoid penalty.

Chat 17
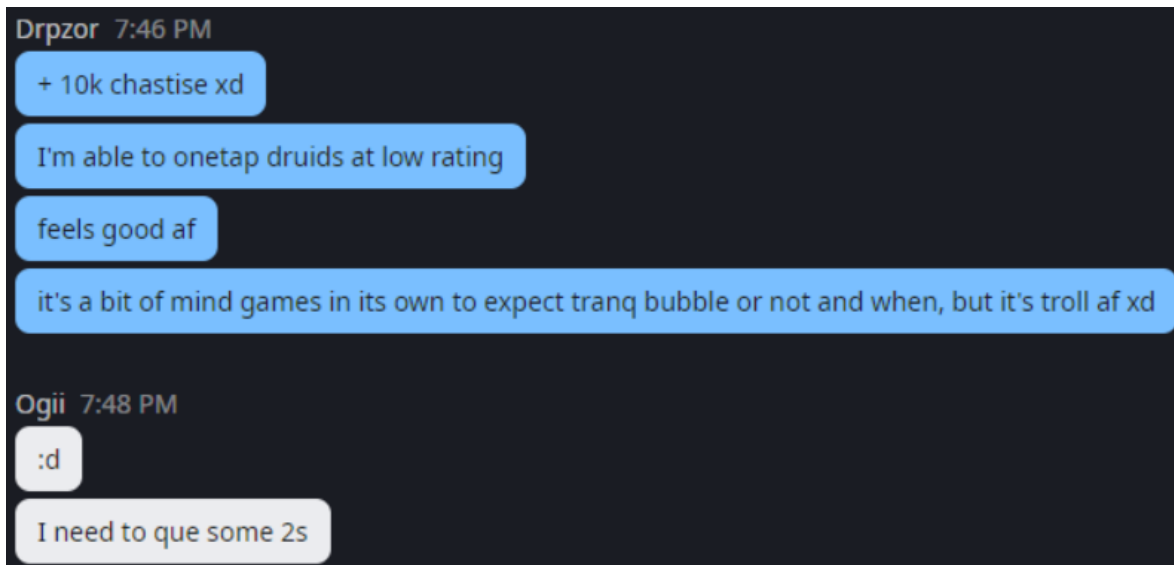
"Af" is an **initialism** standing for *as fuck*.

"Tranq bubble" is a combination of metaphor and **truncation,** originally standing for *Divine Shield*, a Paladin class ability which prevents all damage received and creates a golden shield around you resembling a *bubble*, while *tranq* stands for *Tranquility*, a Restoration Druid specialization ability, which can be enhanced with an ability *Keeper of the Grove*, which makes the caster immune to all damage received as well. Hence, a part has undergone a **semantic shift** on top.

"Que", sometimes further shortened to *q* because of the same pronunciation, stands for *queue*. It is a result of **truncation**.

"2s" is supposedly a result of **semantic shift** and **clipping**. It is a plural of *2*, standing for *2 versus 2 arena*, however it is almost uniformly used in plural, therefore it is a plurale tantum, in other words, should one use it in a singular, they have to achieve that with the use of a partitive, e.g. *a game of 2s*.

"To troll" is a neologism that has arguably went the longest way in terms of meaning among the sample provided. This neologism can find its origins as far as 1970s, where its original meaning was *attempting to bait a fish in order to catch it* (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n. d.). This over time became a phenomenon online as people started *provoking others in order to evoke a reaction*, suggesting this was originally a metaphor. As people started using it, it grew into a meme and thus, Troll Face was born, which skyrocketed its popularity. Eventually, in gaming

environment the meaning **semantically shifted** into *intentionally playing a game in an atypical manner*, for example doing things wrong on purpose, however *not griefing* the game to such an extent that would lead to a loss, as it is more of a jocular and provocative type of gameplay rather than intentionally ruining the game for others. Eventually, the meaning shifted all the way to *playing badly*, for example when your teammate tells you to *stop trolling*, he urges you to *stop playing badly*, suggesting pejoration compared to its original meaning.

Chat 18
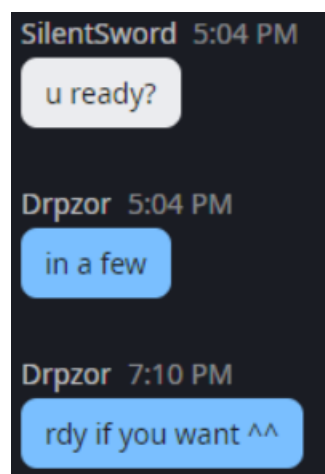
"U" is one of the very typical, first digital communication neologisms, which are based around the same pronunciation of a letter as well as the word they stand for, in this case *you*. Supposedly it's a product of **clipping** and metonymy.

"Rdy" is an **abbreviation** which stands for *ready.*

Chat 19
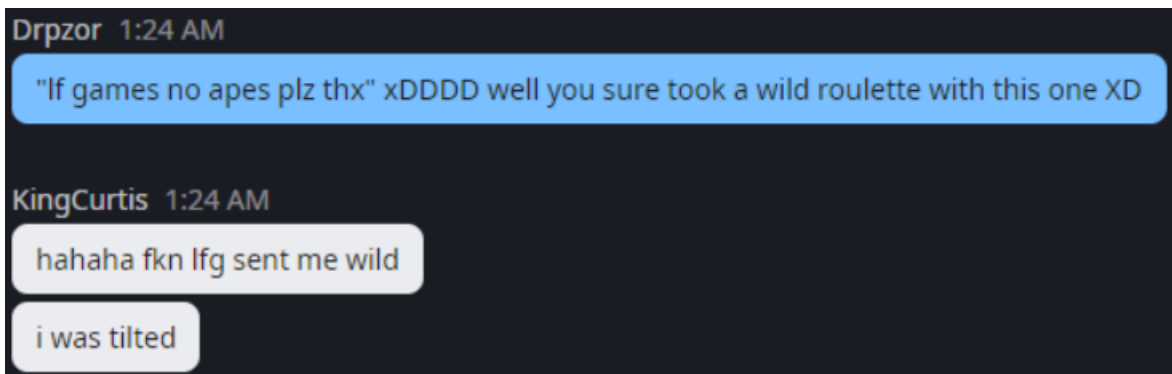
"LF" is an **initialism** standing for *Looking For*. It is frequently encountered as a misnomer *If* in the LFG tool, where especially newer players type it not knowing the origin, due to uppercase *i* and lowercase *l* being similar.

"LFG" tool, also **initialism**, standing for *Looking For Group*, underwent **semantic shift** on top of that, since it no longer refers to *tool used for looking for group*, but rather *people found through the tool in general*. For example, people tend to get angry over LFG, because one does not know what kind of performance they get from a random person which they do not know, and they usually get upset over underwhelming performance of the player, rather than the tool's performance helping find the teammate.

"Plz", "thx" and "fkn" are other representants of the original texting neologisms group. All these are **abbreviations** of *please, thanks* and *fucking*, respectively.

"Ape" as a product of metonymy, has become a pejorative term for *a person that is bad at something*, therefore it is a **semantic shift**, originally meaning *a primate.*

"(To) tilt" or "(to be) tilted" comes from Pinball. It is a game where the player attempts to prevent a ball from falling down a hole using a pair of flippers. Players would frequently *tilt* the table to manipulate the ball direction, and to combat that, a system which prevents that was developed. Sensors were added, and if those detected an unusual tilt, a flash message TILT would show and the game would be forfeited, freezing the flippers. Poker players later adopted the word as a term for *becoming angry, usually due to losing,* suggesting a **semantic shift** (Duncan, 2015, p. 49). As a result, gamers started using this meaning as well.

Chat 20
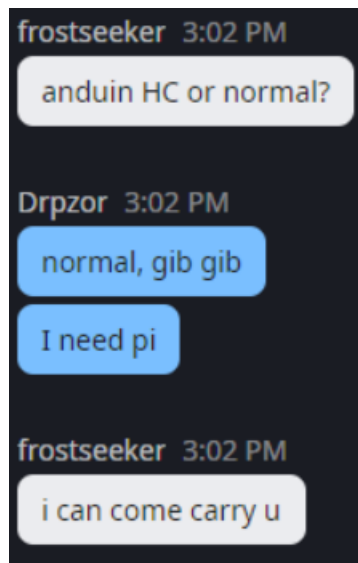
"HC" stands for *Heroic*, it is an **abbreviation** signifying a specific difficulty of a standard PvE instance.

"Gib" is another representation of an intentional **typo** from the animal memes category. It stands for *give*. This specific one seems to be only used as an imperative, however.

"PI" is an **initialism** for *Power Infusion*, a Holy Priest-only ability that can be given to other players to temporarily increase their attack or healing speed.
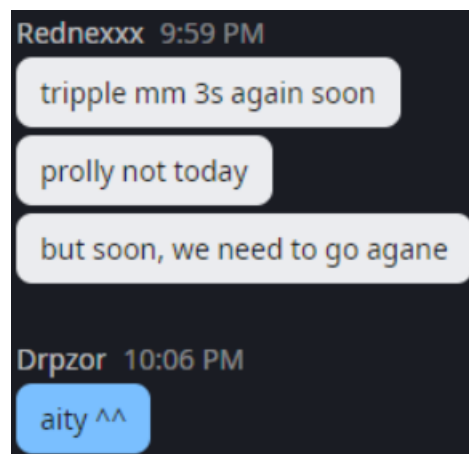
"(To) carry (someone)" is a synonym to previously mentioned *to boost someone*. While the **semantic shift** is glaring here, some would add it is also a metonymy, since the idea is to *help the person reach a goal*.

Chat 21
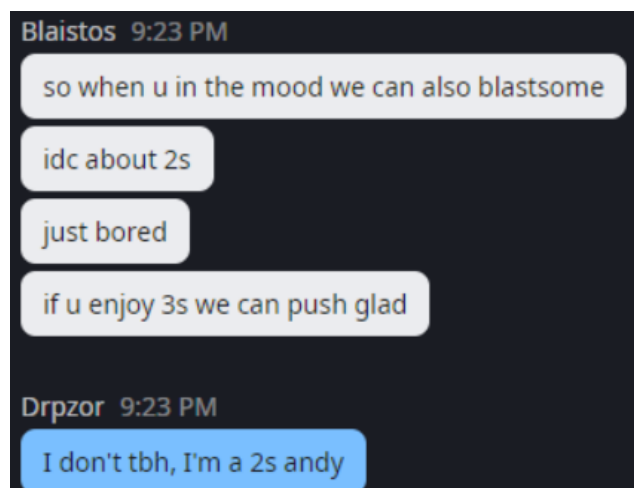
"Andy" is probably the youngest neologism that has gathered noticable recognition within the gaming community in the latest years. It comes from Twitch where a comedian Andrew Milonakis appeared during a real life stream on user Ice Poseidon's channel in 2017, and throughout the year multiple other people named *Andy* appeared there after. Following the spree, the audience started universally referring to the guests as *andy* (Know Your Meme, 2017). As such, it grew popular in the gaming community due to the platform it originated on, and gamers started using it as a reference to a *person specifically only playing a certain aspect, specialization or class in a* game, suggesting it is a result of **semantic shift**.

Chat 22

Rednexxx 9:59 PM
tripple mm 3s again soon
prolly not today
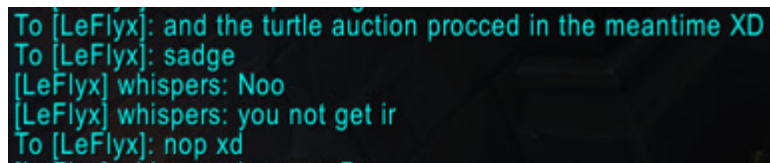but soon, we need to go agane

Drpzor 10:06 PM
aity ^^

"Prolly" is a **simplification** of *probably*. The principle of the process is a similarity to fast speech, where speaker tends to omit the plosives.

"Agane" is a **typo**, this type of typo is typical for foreign internet users whose native language is not English. Due to English's irregular, ambiguous pronunciation, they tend to misspell words, such as *again*.

Similarly to prolly mentioned above, "aity" underwent the same process of **simplification**, with an added diminutive -y suffix to *alright* to signalize playful manner.
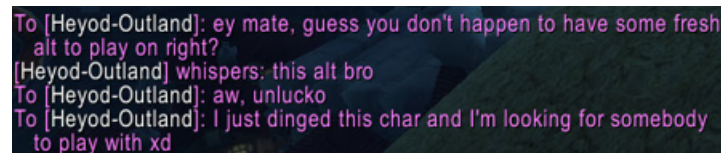
Chat 23

"(To) proc" originates from a widely known phenomenon among programmers, as it is an **acronym** for *Program Random Occurrence.* In gaming, it is either used to comment about abilities *generating random effects*, or even when *something happens successfully*, for example a player wins an auction. This suggests a **semantic shift** as well.

"Sadge" is neologism with an unclear origin. It is only one of many similar emote-based neologisms. This concrete one consists of two roots – *sad* and *ge,* which makes it a **compound**, preceded with supposed **new coinage**. *Ge* being the unclear part, as it happens to refer to yet another version of Pepe the Frog, similarly to *ga*, which seems to be a part of its supposed progenitor emote, *pepega,* except with differing baseline Pepe art. As such, it is an emote of a *sad pepe*.

Chat 24

"Alt" is a **truncation** for *alternative character*. Players of MMORPG games oftentimes have more than one character to play on, be it for completionism, practice or diversity purposes.

"Unlucko" can be classified as a **typo**, albeit intentional. It means *unlucky*. Oftentimes this happens as some sort of wordplay. This specific one was popularized as a part of a rhyme *unluko maluco*, where *maluco* stands for *crazy person* in Spanish.

"(To) ding" is a **new coinage** that has become an umbrella term across MMORPGs for gaining a *level up*. It comes from a 1999 MMORPG game EverQuest, where a sound upon reaching a new level was literally a bell ding (WoWWiki, 2004).

5.2 STATISTICS

Within 24 excerpts of varying lengths 80 neologisms have been found. Some neologisms have undergone multiple changes between their origin and their nowaday form, therefore among the 80 neologisms, 97 formation processes in 18 different categories could be traced. 54 are directly tied to gaming culture in general, out of which 31 are concretely tied to World of Warcraft.

Formation Process Representation
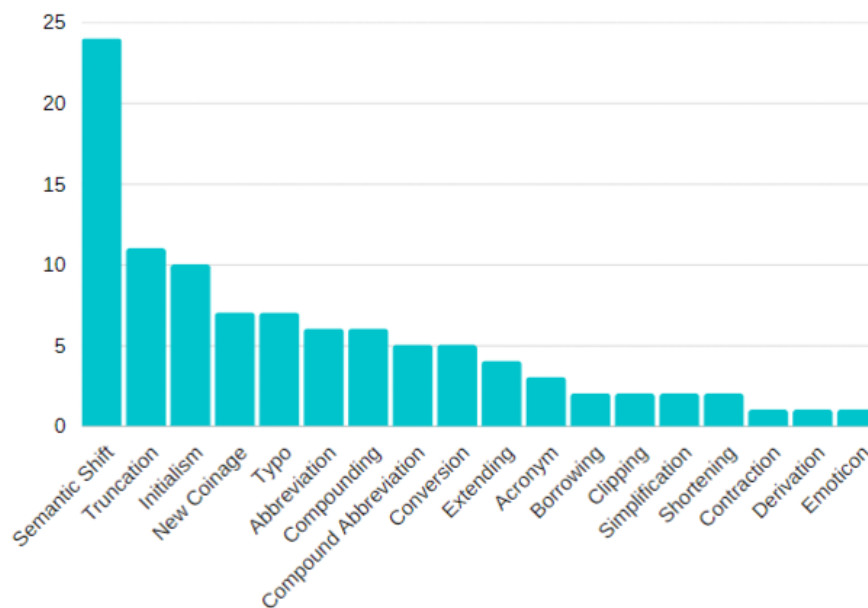
Formation Process Representation
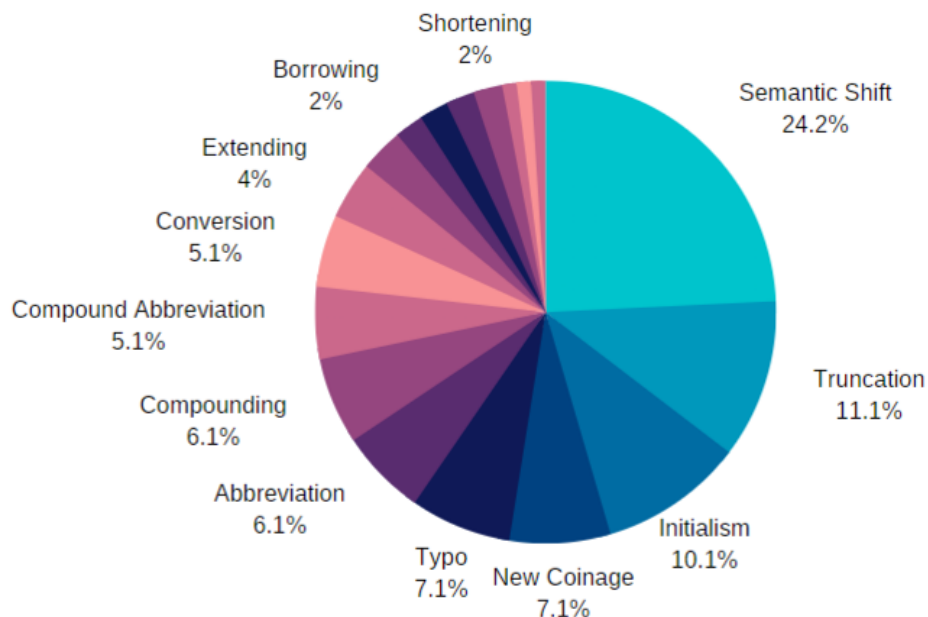
After having input all the found neologisms into an online corpus https://www.english-corpora.org, a problem occurred where most were either not recognized, or were way to complicated to tell apart. For example to the query *cc-able*, one result specifically tied to World of Warcraft-related page appeared, however after having tried to search for its variants *ccd*, *cc'd* and *cc*, the results were marginally different, since most of the results were not connected to the game, for example *Adobe Photoshop CC* results. Other neologisms, even the more general ones and older ones, such as *nerf* did not even appear due to not frequent enough occurrence.

However, after having input the neologisms to a search bar of the Trueshot Lodge Discord server, which is directly related to World of Warcraft, I was left with a total of 8 753 results for *cc, cc-able, cc'd* and *ccd*, out of which an overwhelming majority was connected directly to the game. The most frequently used neologism recognized among the messages was *nerf*, which appeared 62 950 times in messages. This suggests that some of the neologisms are highly audience-specific jargon which can be hardly measured using regular corpuses.
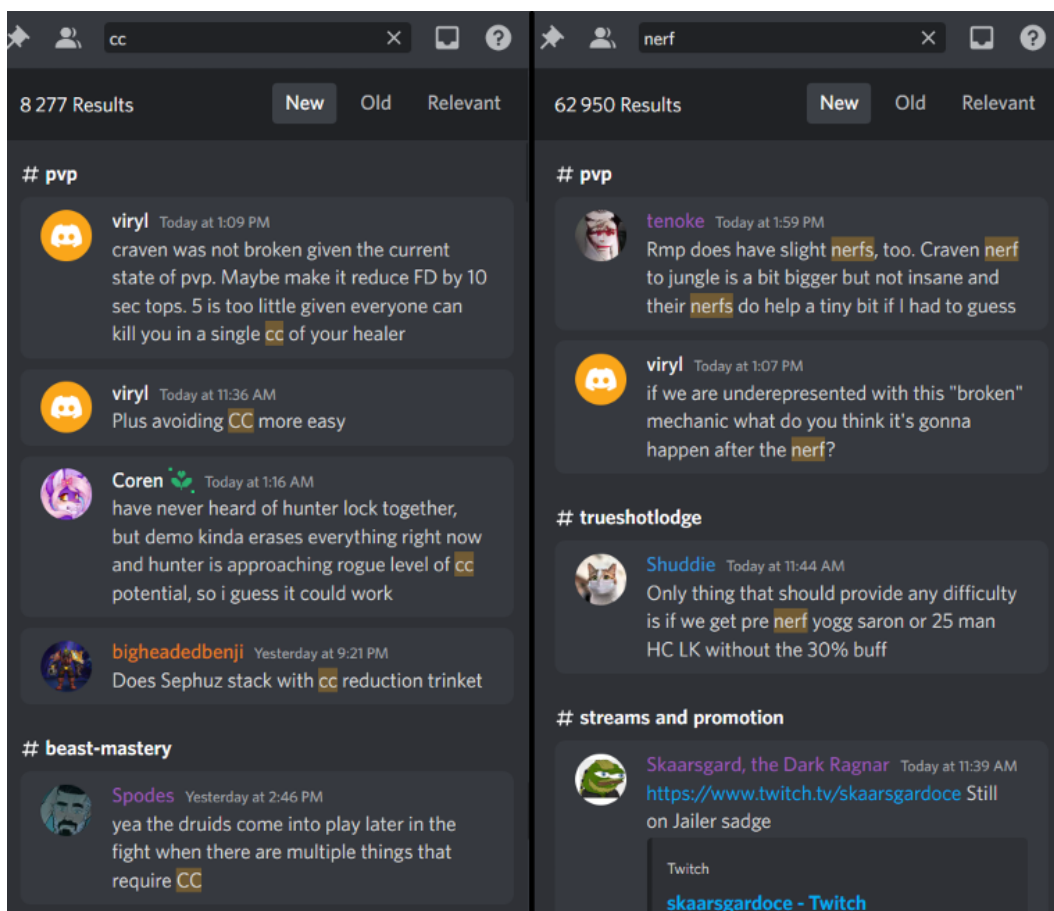
6 CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis was to acknowledge the existence of non-standard English words in the internet and gaming environment, track them to prove their existence in everyday communication of specific communities, and analyze the process of creation. A sample of 24 screenshots has been procured, amassing 80 neologisms with separate meanings. The sample was limited to an extent, due to the fact that no transcripts of spoken variants were provided, and the group consisted of people with a common hobby closely related to the topic. Even though the sample was not large, it ultimately managed to prove the existence of studied phenomena.

As the results proved, the sample contained words that originated via an assortion of processes, rather than just one. There was a noticable prevalence of *semantic shift*, however it was not marginal enough to make the sample suggest the results may be too specific only for a certain group of individuals, which would uniformly only use a specific process for all words that could be marked as neologisms (24.2 % of the words underwent semantic shift at a point in their formation). A total of 18 processes were distinguishable in a total of 97 instances of formation, meaning some neologisms went through multiple layers.

It has also been shown that while the group the sample comes from consists of individuals from a specific common game environment – World of Warcraft, the neologisms recorded in general were not uniformly gaming-related (32.5 % were not related to gaming specifically), and the sample did not consist of a majority of neologisms related to World of Warcraft (61.25 % were unrelated to World of Warcraft).

Furthermore there have been instances where the origin spanned years into the 20th century, which enforces the idea that neologisms are not just related to gaming, but have in fact been a part of vocabulary for prolonged periods of time, and that the internet merely caused the spread and the range of meanings to proliferate.

That said, gaming in general is at its all-time high. Online entertainment skyrocketed in the past three years because of the coronavirus crisis, which caused an influx of new viewers and players alike. Twitch.tv, the leading streaming platform for live online entertainment, mainly for gaming, has been watched for over 1.5 billion hours last month, with an average of roughly 2.5 million concurrent

watchers everyday. World of Warcraft alone is being played monthly by roughly 6 million players, up to over 500 000 players at one time in a day. For that reason, gaming and language should be closely monitored, as very soon there will be noticable differences in English vocabulary which the new generation of people will bring.

SUMMARY IN CZECH

Tato práce je zaměřena na poukázání na časté používání neologismů v rámci komunity počítačových her, vysvětluje, proč je výskyt neologismů častým jevem právě v takové komunitě, a analyzuje proces, kterým neologismy vznikají.

V teoretické části se je vysvětleno základní dělení slovotvorby, dále pak historie vývoje komunikace jako takové, aby bylo zřetelné, proč se neologismy začaly vyskytovat.

V praktické části se zabývá rozborem sebraných 80 neologismů z online chatovací komunikace gamingové komunity, dále pak rozebírá momentální význam daných neologismů, popřípadě pak význam minulý, a jak k nynějšímu významu dospěly. Následovně pak mapuje nalezené prostředky slovotvorby a jejich rozdělení v rámci dostupného vzorku, čímž poukazuje na občasnou zřetelnou rozeznatelnost více než jednoho procesu slovotvorby. Nakonec zdůrazňuje, že vzhledem k značné specificitě skupiny lidí, ze které vzorek pochází, může být problematické neologismům porozumět ze strany lidí nezaujatých, čímž naznačuje potřebu dalšího průzkumu a pozorování.

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