

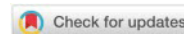
ENGLISH WORD FORMATION ON THE INTERNET

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Abstract: This paper examines the processes of word-formation in English on the Internet. More specifically, the present paper provides an overview of newly formed words in the context of Internet communication, their categorisation, coupled with analysis and discussion with a view to determining which (if any) word formation processes have been employed in the process of their creation. The paper attempts to capture the current trends of the English language used in popular areas of Internet interactions. The theoretical preliminaries have been divided into two distinct parts - the first half which presents general notions related to internet communication while in the second one the theory behind word-formation processes is presented in order to enable its application to the corpus originating from Internet data used in this study. As for the corpus and methodology in the study, the selected terms and expressions were extracted from various online sources (forum posts, chat logs or game screenshots) and analysed in order to determine which word-formation process they belong to. Hence the sections on abbreviations and acronyms, clips, conversions, compounds and blends, as the most productive word formation processes observed in the study. The study also looks at the popular notions of blog and tweet, as well as a particular focus on leetspeak which deals with words falling into this category but are formed via many different processes. The final section of the paper provides a summary of the findings and a conclusion to the inquiry into the nature of word-formation on the internet.

Keywords: Internet communication, word-formation, blending, conversion, compounds, leetspeak

Field: humanities

1. INTRODUCTION

"If the Internet is a revolution, therefore, it is likely to be a linguistic revolution" (Crystal, 2006). The authors believe that this quote is a fairly appropriate statement for the beginning of this paper. However, the question is – why? Making a safe assumption that the Internet, as a new medium of communication, has come to a point where it almost completely dominates our lives in terms of either information enquiry or leisure activity, the key word here being 'communication', it would be hard to ignore the linguistic perspective while engaged in any sort of discussion about the Internet (Crystal, 2006).

A very general way to think about this would perhaps be to say that a tool is produced with respect to the needs of a given trade, however, if a tool gets to a point where its use is sufficiently widespread, the very trade it was invented to serve may continue to develop in a direction which best suits the application of this tool. The Internet is, in a very literal sense, this tool and communication, therefore language itself, is the trade which has begun to be influenced by it.

As for the language used on the Internet, there is no consensus about which language is to be considered as the official language of the Internet, however, the 2020 statistics (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm>) show the English language as having the most users (1.1 billion) followed by the Chinese language (888 million) and Spanish (363 million). This paper will focus strictly on the impact of Internet on the English language.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. WORD-FORMATION PROCESSES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

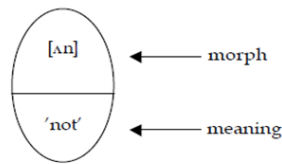
Starting with the very notion of word-formation, it should be highlighted that it belongs to a sub-branch of linguistics called morphology which is generally defined as the study of the internal structure of word-forms (Bauer, 1983; Štekauer & Lieber, 2006). In a discussion concerning words, these parts, or building blocks in question are called morphemes (ibid.), and when properly combined, they form morphologically complex words (Plag, 2018). Morphemes can also be considered as units of form and meaning. The form of a morpheme is expressed as sound (in speech) or in letters (in writing). The term

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used for this form is morph. This is illustrated in an example taken from Plag (2018: 26):

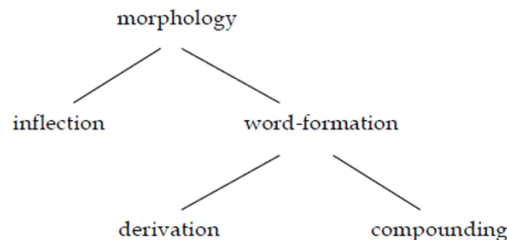
(1) The morpheme *un-*



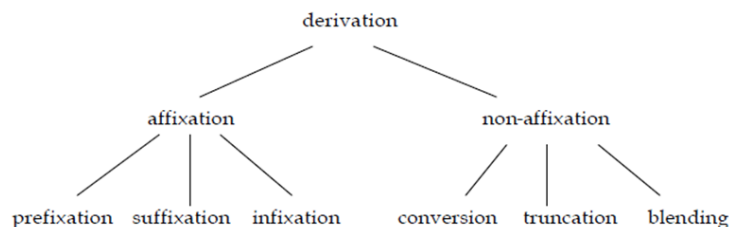
The morpheme in (1) can be combined with another one, happy for example, and make the word unhappy. This new word, termed the derivative (Plag, 2018), now has a meaning which is a result of combining the meanings of its parts (unhappy - not happy). Such linguistic expressions are termed compositional, as opposed to expressions that do not have such an easily discernible meaning (kick the bucket -> die; interview-> inter + view = ?) (ibid.).

Morphemes come in two variations, namely, as free morphemes and bound morphemes (ibid.). Plag (2018) further explains that the former can occur on its own while the latter must be attached to a meaningful central part of the word, the so-called root, stem or base. A general term for bound morphemes that attach to roots is affix (there are also such things as bound roots), which is further divided into three categories according to placement: prefix (before the root; i.e. un-), suffix (after the root; i.e. -ness) and the rare infix (inside the morpheme; i.e. -bloody- in abso-bloody-lutely). Furthermore, the term 'base' is used to represent the part of a word that an affix attaches to, while the term 'root' is used to refer to a base that cannot be analysed further into morphemes. The term 'stem' will be avoided since it refers to a base for a process called inflection. This is a process in which affixes are attached to bases in a way that they encode the grammatical categories of words such as plural (workers), person (works), tense (picked), or case (John's), and so the words that it produces are not to be considered 'new' in the same sense as words born of processes that produce new lexemes (i.e. kicker). This is the reason both Plag (2018) and Bauer (1983) dismiss inflection as irrelevant to word-formation.

Plag (2018) introduces the following distinction between inflection and word formation as shown in Plag:



With the issue of inflection aside, it can be seen that word-formation is divided into two major processes, namely, derivation and compounding. The former of the two is further divided into separate processes according to the usage (or lack of) affixes. This is also shown in Plag (2018):



Hadžiahmetović Jurida (2018) introduces derivation and compounding as rather productive available means for production of new meanings in established forms of words in the English language, particularly in the context of the Internet and English as a global language.

2.2. PRODUCTIVITY IN THE CONTEXT OF MORPHOLOGY AND WORD FORMATION PROCESSES

By discussing productivity in a morphological context, reference is made to the productivity of word-formation processes. To clarify, "any process is said to be productive if it can be used synchronically in the production of new forms" (Bauer 1983). For example, a given affix's productivity can be measured by finding out how many new words can be derived using this affix.

However, to count all words that were derived by using a certain affix would not be a very accurate way of measuring its productivity simply because an affix may have been used to coin many new words in, let's say, the 18th century but has seen very little used today. It is because of this that we take count of merely those newly derived words, namely neologisms (Plag, 2018).

In their study concerning neologisms in various word formation processes, Hadžiahmetović Jurida and Rahmanović (2020) conclude that social media have a great impact on the formation of new words.

The distinction between actual and possible words should also be noted. Actual words can be described as those words that are actually in use; that people are aware of them and use them to a certain degree, while possible words are those "whose semantic, morphological or phonological structure is in accordance with the rules and regularities of the language" (Plag, 2018). For example, affordable is an actual word (afford + -able), however, attaching the same suffix to a verb like cannibalize would yield cannibalizable, a word (an adjective in this case) that is in accordance with morphological rules but is not likely to be used, and is therefore merely a possible word.

3. METHODOLOGY

The following sections provide an overview of the words extracted from various sources and analysed in order to determine which word-formation process they belong to, in fact, and to examine whether they can be termed actual or possible words. Sections 4.1 through 4.6, therefore, provide the results of the analysis focusing on the type of word formation used, including examples and explanations.

Note that the words are pre-extracted and will be listed in their respective word-formation sections. An exception to this are the words blog and tweet which are addressed in isolation as well as the section on leetspeak that deals with words which fall into this category but are formed via many different processes.

The forum posts, chat logs or game screenshots from which data have been obtained will not be provided in full. Instead, links to the relevant websites have been provided.

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the paper takes a look at some of the numerous examples of Internet-related coinages and Netspeak jargon. As for the importance of Netspeak, Wahid & Farooq (2022) claim that today's digital world, it has become an exigent that educators and net-speakers cannot ignore.

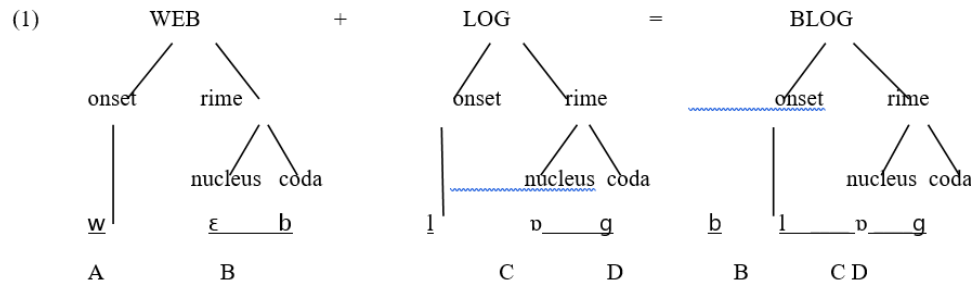
In this overview, the authors also analyse these seemingly new word-formations in order to gain knowledge regarding the word-formation processes behind the emergence of these words as well as the very reasons these words are coined in the first place.

Having said that, it must be noted that some conclusions may very well be considered as generalisations as the examples used are limited to a very small list of frequent, popular or just, to a certain degree, well known terms. Taking into account the different types of words, processes and contexts in which they appear, this section will be divided into corresponding sub-sections. The analysis and discussion sections starts by taking a look at a few popular words of Internet origin and moves on to the words that have emerged mostly in the context of online gaming. What follows then is the examination of words according to the processes through which they came to existence. Finally, concluding remarks in this section are provided with a general overview of the impact of these word-formation trends on the English language in general.

4.1. THE POPULAR NOTIONS OF 'BLOG' AND 'TWEET'

To begin with, the word blog is a pure Internet coinage, an actual word, in the sense of our definition of what an actual word is, that had in the year 2004 become so popular that it was declared 'word of the year' by the dictionary publishers Merriam-Webster. The word itself is an abbreviation of the words web and log. Now, having termed this word an abbreviation we may ask the question 'why an abbreviation and not a blend?'

The answer lies in the prosodic and semantic makeup of the word blog. First off, the resulting word of web +log (blog) does not contain the combined meanings of the two constituent words. Namely, it is not both a web and a log (as is the case with the blend smog which could be said to be both smoke and fog), and is therefore not a proper blend but rather a shortened version of an existing compound (web-log). Secondly, it does not follow the AB + CD = AD rule which can be applied to most monosyllabic blends. This can be seen in the following illustration:



Speaking of blends, the term blog could be compared to a similar term - vlog (video log) that has emerged on the basis of analogy from the former term. Blending as a word-formation process in the social media language is thoroughly studied by Hadžiahmetović Jurida et al (2023), concluding that is vastly present in online use of English on major social networks such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, while Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2008) claim that blending remains among the most poorly understood and elusive word formation processes.

The word vlog would, perhaps, prove to be a proper blend on a semantic basis, seeing as it is both a video and a log. However, it still does not comply with the AD + CD = AD rule, and furthermore, the very pronunciation of the word is problematic given the consonant cluster combination of sounds [vl], hence the separate pronunciation of the first sound (/vi:/ - /l v g/). Moving on, the word blog is also interesting in respect to the entire family of words which have been derived from it. For example, a blog is a personalized website in which one posts content. This act of posting content is then called blogging (to blog. - a case of conversion), those who blog are in turn called bloggers, those who are wise in the ways of blogging are called blogoise or blogerati. It is very productive in processes like compounding and blending as well (i.e. blogosphere, blogorrhoea, blogstorm, etc.). In summary, this word appears to be a prime example of linguistic creativity found on the Internet.

The second example of a popular word on the Internet is the word tweet. According to the online dictionary Merriam-Webster, this word stands both for a noun (a tweet) and an intransitive verb (to tweet). The noun represents a post made on the social networking site Twitter, while the verb refers to the very act of posting. While not as productive in the same sense as the previous example of the word blog, it is still somewhat interesting in that it is accepted as an actual word simply because of the number of people actively using Twitter. Furthermore, concerning directionality of formation, we find that that the word tweet is a conversion of the word twitter. This is evident from the chronology of appearance, namely, only after the emergence of the very site, and the trademark of the term Twitter did people start using the term tweet (which was, by the way, never trademarked). Another characteristic of this word is that it is not a newly coined word in the same respect as blog perhaps is. Obviously, this is because the word tweet originally has a different, onomatopoeic meaning (tweet. noun - a chirping note; to tweet. verb - to make a chirping sound). The word tweet, as used in the context of the social site Twitter, is a semantic shift of the original word (a metaphor, perhaps, in the sense that the short posts made by Twitter users are compared to the chirping sounds of birds).

4.2. LEETSPEAK

The very term leetspeak refers to a type of online jargon in which people use non-standard orthography to form, mostly, standard phonetic realizations of words (<http://www.netlingo.com/word/leetspeak.php>). Though it was initially a symbolic way for those above average proficiency in computer usage (i.e. hackers) to distinguish themselves from other, more casual Internet users, the jargon of leetspeak has slowly grown beyond these somewhat small groups and into the mainstream. This could perhaps be attributed to the popularisation of online gaming, which in turn took up leetspeak as a way to distinguish the so-called hard-core players from the more casual ones.

The word leetspeak itself is a compound word, the combination of leet and speak, while the unusual word leet is a vernacular form of the word elite (leet could, perhaps be considered a clipping since it displays a form of familiarity with the word elite, however, this would be no standard clipping since the surviving part of the word also undergoes a change). Leet retains the meaning of its base word elite (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/elite>), although it carries a distinct flavour, so to speak, as it is used almost exclusively in an Internet-related context. Furthermore, the word leet appears to behave differently compared to its source word elite concerning the part of speech it can take up.

(1a) That right there is one leet player.
That right there is one elite player.

(1b) *That right there is a leet.
That right there is an elite.

What can be seen here is that in (1a) both italicised words are acceptable adjectives, while in (1b), only the word elite appears as a proper noun while leet just seems awkward in such a position.

With this in mind, a conclusion might be drawn that the word leet can be used either as an adjective, predicative (i.e. He is leet) or nominal (i.e. He is one of the leet.), or as a noun phrase premodifier (i.e. A leet play). However, it would not be surprising to find an example of its use as a noun, given the nature of Netspeak, even if such has yet to appear in use.

Further on the notion of leetspeak, below is a look at some examples that fall into this category (<http://www.netlingo.com/word/leetspeak.php>):

| (2) | LEETSPEAK | MEANING |
|-----|-----------------------------|--|
| | <i>-dood, d00d</i> | -dude |
| | <i>-newb, noob</i> | -newcomer (usually carries a negative meaning) |
| | <i>-woot, w00t</i> | -a celebratory cheer similar to <i>yay</i> or <i>woo-hoo</i> |
| | <i>-m4d</i> | -mad (often used for emphasis; i.e. <i>mad skills</i>) |
| | <i>-warez, w4r3z</i> | -wares (pirated software available for download) |
| | <i>-pwn, pwnage, ownage</i> | -similar expressions, all referring to wining/superiority |

From these several examples it can be seen that words which appear in the jargon of leetspeak do so in various ways. They range from affixation (own + -age = ownage), simple clips such as newb (a clipped form of newbie), words such as dood, written in a way to reflect the pronunciation of the original word, words in which letters are replaced by similar-looking numbers (ranging from examples like m4d, to entire words being spelled out in numbers, i.e. 1337 - leet), to instances of parts of words (or the whole word) being replaced by numbers based on phonology (i.e. w8 - meaning wait). The reasons for such alterations most definitely include practicality (in synchronous communication, especially in games where time is of the essence, it is much easier to type w8 than the wait) and condensation of information (i.e. ownage) but the driving force of it all appears to be stylistic in nature, providing a way for people to distinguish themselves from non-leet folk (non-users) and, at times, express some sort of attitude (i.e. newbie is a rather friendly term to describe someone new to a game, while newb/noob, although having the same meaning, carries a negative connotation).

One particular word stands out because of its popularity within the world of online gaming. The word ownage is a slang word that seems to have originated among the 1990s hackers, and it referred to gaining control over someone else's computer (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owned>). The verb to own to which the nominal suffix -age was attached could be said to have had a similar meaning of the traditional verb to own, however, a slight difference exists. Consider the following examples of to own in the past tense:

(3a) He owned the network of that company. (the network was his possession)

(3b) He owned the network of that company. (assumed control of the network by bypassing its security)

In (3a) the verb to own is in its traditional use, while (3b) is an example of its Internet-related use where a shift of meaning occurs. Respectively, the noun ownage refers to a situation in which one party dominates the other.

(4) Player1 taunts, "I just owned you Player2!"
Player3 comments, "Yeah, that was ownage." (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define>).

php?term=ownage)

Again, this meaning of the word is present mostly in video games but it can also be found in other contexts such as pulling off a successful prank.

4.3. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviations have a very close link to text messaging in general and seeing as Netspeak is a text-based affair, it is no surprise that they are the most numerous type of word-formation out there. These abbreviations range from the well known LOL (laughing out loud) over entire sentences or more like YRYOCC (You're Running on Your Own Cookoo Clock) to the absolutely nonsensical OMGWTFBBQ (Oh my god, what the fu*k, barbeque). The sheer number of these abbreviations can easily be a source of confusion even for someone who has spent the better part of their life browsing the net. Fortunately, a great many of these are present only in specific contexts, discussions, games and such. Those most commonly used are usually those that appear in conversations or posts made in chats or interactions on social networks and their meaning is fairly well known. Some of these abbreviations are as follows (<http://www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php>):

- (1) afk - away from keyboard (can be pronounced as an initialism or as the whole phrase)
- afaik - as far as i know (pronounced as the whole phrase)
- brb - be right back (pronounced as an initialism or as the whole phrase)
- btw - by the way (pronounced as an initialism or as the whole phrase)
- cya - see you (pronounced as the whole phrase)
- fyi - for your information (pronounced as an initialism or as the whole phrase)
- gtg - got to go (pronounced as the whole phrase)
- lol - laughing out loud (pronounced as an initialism or regularly, as a word)
- omg - oh my god (pronounced as an initialism or as the whole phrase)
- omw - on my way (pronounced as the whole phrase)
- tyvm - thank you very much (pronounced as the whole phrase)

For the most part, abbreviations are unremarkable and the only point worth mentioning is that they are, perhaps, a reflection of the need for condensed information in such an information rich age. A somewhat, interesting behaviour is exhibited by a few abbreviations, which may be considered acronyms in the sense that regular reading rules may be applied to them. LoL is one such example since it can be pronounced as either an initialism or an actual word. Furthermore, this abbreviation seems to behave as any other possible word in terms adopting affixes, both inflectional or derivational (all one has to do is search for lol, lalable, loler or any other form, in Google and find people using almost any imaginable form of this word). Even the very meaning of the abbreviation is questionable at times since people tend to use lol to express laughter, surprise and even as an adjective referring to something, perhaps, best described as silly, thus making the following utterances possible:

- (2) You see the way he looked at me? That was just lol. (used as an adjective to mean something silly, inappropriate or strange)
- You're so lolable. (adjective meaning funny or silly)
- We shared many lols that night. (plural of the noun lol)
- I loled so much! (past tense of the verb to lol)
- He's such a loler. (a person who is funny or silly)

Out of these five examples, perhaps the most unusual one would be loler, however it could be explained through a similar example of the word liver (one who performs the action of living). In Plag (2018: 79) it is noted that "deverbal derivatives (in -er,) are chiefly agent substantives ... denoting the performer of an action, occasional or habitual". With this in mind, the word liver seems even stranger than loler since to lol can be treated as a habitual or occasional action while to live, well, not so much. Therefore, the only strange thing about loler would be that it is derived from an abbreviation.

The above mentioned example is, of course, not the only one. There are many other abbreviations that display similar characteristics, although, in a more or less restricted fashion since most of them are reserved for specialized areas, as gaming or a specific game. To name a few from a popular MMORPG, namely, World of Warcraft (WoW), there are examples as follows (www.worldofwarcraft.com):

- (3) NS - Nature's Swiftness
CS - Counterspell
DI - Divine Intervention
AoE - Area of Effect (referring to an in-game ability)

All four of these are pronounced as initialisms. However, players often treat these as regular words and inflect them for number and tense (i.e. 'I was being constantly CS'd!'; 'Control your AoE's!') (<http://www.arenajunkies.com/>). It is a bit unusual to see initialisms (i.e. FBI - 'You just got FBI'd!') used in this way, but then again, this is all about practicality.

4.4. CLIPS

Although a precise number of words which appeared through the process of clipping is practically impossible to determine, it could probably be said that they are second only to abbreviations, in terms of their number. This is, most likely, due to the nature of Netspeak in the sense that it shares a characteristic most commonly found in spoken language, the tendency to shorten words.

As people become more familiar with the terminology of a certain Internet-using situation, they usually tend to shorten those terms not only for practicality, but to indicate their familiarity as well. Some clips become widespread, eventually even replacing their base word. App (application) is, perhaps, such an example where frequency of use is on the side of the clip. However, most clips are very much attached to their specific contexts or environments. For example, the MMORPG referred to in the previous section above is abundant in clips. Some of them are:

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------|---|--|
| (1) | <u>warr</u> | → | warrior |
| | <u>shamm</u> | → | <u>shamman</u> |
| | comp | → | composition |
| | poly | → | polymorph |
| | evo | → | evocate |
| | demo | → | demonology (a category of abilities) |
| | <u>destro</u> | → | <u>destruction</u> (a category of abilities) |
| | lock | → | warlock |

Obviously, some of these clips, like demo for example, would take on a completely different meaning if taken out of context (demo would most likely be taken to mean demonstration) since that is the very thing that makes them unique.

4.5. CONVERSIONS

As a quite handy form of syntactic recategorisation (Plag, 2018), conversion is found in many instances of Internet situations. Apart from the ones we already mentioned in previous sections (to tweet, to lol, to blog, etc.), popular examples include words such as to google (verb derived from the noun google), to flame (verb derived from the noun flame) and a troll (noun derived from the verb to troll). What these conversions have in common is, for the most part, the condensation of information, however there is slight difference in the way they are formed.

For example, to google something means to use the search engine Google in order to find additional information on something. The relation between the two words is pretty clear and most speakers would have no trouble understanding the derived word if they are familiar with the base word.

However, words such as to troll (meaning, to send messages with the intention of causing irritation to others) (Crystal, 2006) or to flame (meaning to aggressively criticize others) are different in the sense that their relation to the base words is metaphorical one, thus their meaning is somewhat harder to understand. Furthermore, the troll example is somewhat problematic since the directionality of conversion is unclear. However, it may be assumed that the noun troll is the word derived from the verb. This is because the verb appears to be a semantic shift from the verb to troll which has the original meaning of fishing by trailing a lure or baited hook from a moving boat (it has other meanings as well) (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/troll>). A troll would then be a conversion (apparently having nothing to do with the earlier notion of the troll as a mythical creature).

While on the subject of conversions, it should be noted that online gaming appears to be a particularly productive field when it comes to this word-formation process. Examples from this context

include to game (in this context referring to the act of playing video-games), a carry (a noun referring to a category of characters within a game) and to tank (verb referring to the act of enduring or tanking damage in a game). Typical of these words is the fact that every one of them is an actual word that has received additional meaning in the context of gaming, effectively making them new words. Firstly, to game (which traditionally means to play for a stake), in an Internet-related context means to play video games and from it we can derive the noun gamer (a person who plays video-games). Secondly, A carry refers to a category of characters in the online game League of Legends (LoL) (<http://eune.leagueoflegends.com/>). This word draws on the traditional meanings of the lexeme carry to effectively represent a in-game character that has the ability to carry a game, hence the conversion a carry. And lastly, a tank is a category, or a role so to speak, which applies to many online games (notably both LoL and WoW), and it refers to the character that can endure the most damage. The meaning of this word also appears to draw on traditional meanings of the lexeme tank. From this new word we may then derive the verb to tank.

The frequency of use is the basis on which all of the above mentioned words can be seen as actual words. Even though a word like to google is most likely the most frequent given the popularity of the related search engine, words like to carry and to tank should not be dismissed considering their frequency amongst the users.

4.6. COMPOUNDS AND BLENDS

The feature which compounds and blends have in common is that they combine two or more words to make a new one (two for blends, two or more for compounds). This is hardly unimportant in an Internet environment where many non-Internet related notions can be used to give name to completely new items. Some well known words of this kind are mouseclick, mouseover, website, gameworld, chatroom and firewall, to name just a few. What these words have in common is the fact that they consists of two elements, each of which is an actual word present in traditional language. For example, mouseover consists of the noun mouse and the preposition over. When combined into a compound, they acquire a completely new meaning which is something like 'to move one's mouse pointer over a certain part of the screen'. Furthermore, the resulting word mouseover is of a different syntactic category, namely, a verb. The other examples are simpler. Taking a look at the compounds gameworld or chatroom, their meaning is simply a combination of the meanings of their constituent parts (a world of a certain game and a virtual room for chat). However, these words have to be used in an Internet context to have these meanings, otherwise they just as well might stand for real world notions such as 'gameworld - a themepark' or 'chatroom - a room, where you chat'.

Furthermore, what makes these words compounds is that they all comply with the compound stress rule (the stress is on the first element).

As far as blends are concerned, these words appear to be significantly less frequent when compared to other types, which is somewhat peculiar given that blending is a rather practical way of coming up with nice, short words that stand for longer phrases. Having said that, in the present research, words such as anticpointment were identified (slang for the feeling you get when a product or event does not live up to its own hype) (<http://www.netlingo.com/word/anticpointment.php>), idiot (someone who has spent so long in a city they have lost the ability to perform tasks the rural population sees as outrageous common sense) (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2013/mar/11/why-we-need-invent-new-words>), blursing (when an event, gift, or circumstance presents qualities and consequences that are simultaneously positive and negative), oprahcide (to acquiesce to the theories of an expert, instead of trusting your own thoughts, opinions and personal experience), diggipear (to use computer technology as a technique to avoid unwanted or feared issues and conversations), geektavist (a person who sends e-mail messages to gather names on an activist petition), etc.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In summary, the authors have looked into key notions concerning Internet-mediated communication and assessed the ways in which they affect the language used. Secondly, introduction to contemporary theories on the subject of word-formation in the English language was provided. What we found is that the nature of the Internet as a means for communication is such that it has had quite adverse effects on English that vary depending on the Internet-using situation it appears in. These effects range from slightly modifying an existing word, over semantic shifts and orthographical changes which make the traditional word almost unrecognizable in the new one, to the coining of completely new words.

The analysis and discussion showed that some processes are significantly more productive than

others, that is to say, some word-formation processes turned out to be much more frequent than others. Abbreviations, conversions, clippings and compounds seem to be much more numerous than blends. With that in mind, the authors believe it safe to be said that that abbreviations (including acronyms) are indeed, not just the most numerous, but they are also the form with which online users seem to take the most freedom in way they use them.

Examples from various Internet-using situations (IUSs) have been presented in this paper. However, the focus was primarily on the English language used in online game-related contexts. This may be because this IUS was the most readily accessible or because it simply does produce a greater number of new words.

Some formations may follow rules, some may be exceptions and other may just seem purely random, however, what most of these have in common is the need, a need for a new word to express a new notion, a new thought. A finer wording can be found in the following article excerpt (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2013/mar/11/why-we-need-invent-new-words>):

Do not be afraid to make up your own words. English teachers, dictionary publishers and that uptight guy two cubicles over who always complains about the microwave being dirty, they will all tell you that you can't. They will bring out the dictionary and show you that the word isn't there – therefore it doesn't exist. Don't fall for this. The people who love dictionaries like to present these massive tomes as an unquestionable authority, just slightly less than holy. But they're not. A dictionary is just a book, a product, no different from *Fifty Shades of Grey* and only slightly better written. But you must be careful. Every new word must be crafted. It has to have a purpose, a need.

Inconsistency is to be welcomed. All that is left to say, again, is that "If the Internet is a revolution, therefore, it is likely to be a linguistic revolution" (Crystal 2006).

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