

The Place of Gaming-Related Terminology on a Cultural Map – Social and Lexicographic Implications of the Gaming Phenomenon

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Abstract

The starting point for the present paper is the emergence of an apparently new way of conceiving game communities. The author aims at exploring a profound impact of the field of gaming on an everyday life, particularly on culture, general lexis and specialized terminology. At a cultural level, an attempt is being made to classify gaming as a human-manufactured artefact, with a particular emphasis placed on the linguistic and lexicographic peculiarities of a gaming lingo. Viewed lexicographically, the paper provides an in-depth analysis of gamer-speak via an extensive elaboration of the major features of gaming sociolect and specialised lexis pertaining to the development of games. At the subsequent stage the reader is familiarized with two very important terms in lexicography, onomasiology and semasiology, which form the baseline for approaching the process of organizing terminology in the form of dictionaries. The vast terminological gaming lexicon is discussed through the prism of lexicography, with a sample microstructure of a gaming term constituting the basic unit of a duly selected quantum of gaming knowledge.

Keywords: gaming, culture, acronymization, slang, neologisms, lexicography, onomasiology

Abstrakt

Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie zjawiska gamingu jako przedmiotu analiz a) kulturowych, b) lingwistycznych oraz c) leksykograficznych. Nosząc znamiona artefaktu kulturowego o społecznie określonej formie oraz przeznaczeniu, *gaming* zostaje zdefiniowany jako nasycone treścią medium, którego rozwój w ostatnich latach przyczynił się do generowania nowych jednostek leksykalnych. Na skutek ekspansji terminologicznej pojawiła się konieczność szeroko zakrojonych badań leksykograficznych, których rezultatem są liczne słowniki branżowe o określonej mikro- i makrostrukturze, odzwierciedlające architekturę wiedzy specjalistycznej z zakresu gamingu.

Słowa kluczowe: gaming, kultura, akronimizacja, slang, neologizmy, leksykografia, onomazjologia

In light of the ongoing technological development gaming has become an inevitable sphere of human lives. Although it was stigmatized in the past, there has slowly been an ideological switch to what one may consider the positive and advantageous sides of playing games. Therefore, the present author will attempt: 1) to introduce gaming as the “player” equal to other types of artistic media on the culture market; 2) to guide the reader through the multifacetedness and peculiarities of the specialist language of gaming; and

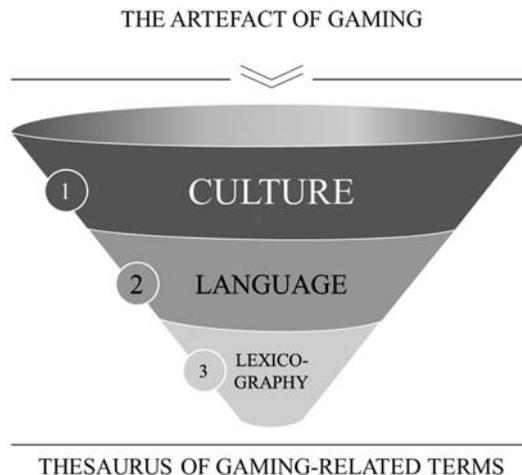


Figure 1. Gaming as a funnel structure.

3) to elaborate on lexicographic implications arising from the terminological architectonics of gaming knowledge. For the sake of marking the progression of reasoning, the paper will take the form of a logical funnel, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The broad 1) cultural background will gradually lead the reader to 2) the linguistic aspects inevitably entangled with the information society, and consequently, to 3) the lexicographic methods of effective introduction of new gaming-related terminological units into the professional discourse.

In the postmodern era of industrialism and capitalism, responsive to new modes of information and thus urging the rapid adjustment to various forms of “e-societies,” gaming has become a well-prospering sector of an economy over the last years. With the influx of commercials and posters advertising new products on every corner, games are becoming increasingly accessible to people who would never define themselves as “gamers”. A phenomenon occurring within the gaming communities may be accurately synopsisized with the following quotation:

Deprived of her/his formative identity, the postmodern subject neurotically looks for a new unique avatar, which consumer capitalism hastens to cater. The proliferation of subcultures and lifestyles marks capitalism’s to-have-the-cake-and-eat-it manoeuver in that it does not only embrace transgressive characters, it *constructs* them for purely economic purposes (Wojtas 2015, 31).

With the above citation in mind, there appears to be a social dilemma whether games can be considered a part of culture or only a piece of consumerist entertainment that serves no other purpose than idling away time. In order to untie this Gordian knot, one should delve into the very notion of culture and try to provide its definition as well as to place gaming somewhere within its reach.

Culture is a term of comprehensive scope, covering explicit and implicit patterns of behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, embodied in a wide array of artefacts.

On the one hand, culture systems are deemed as products of prior actions, on the other, as conditioning determinants of future activities (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952, 181). The foregoing may foster “the awareness that an interpretation of the world cannot exist without a degree of received collective knowledge or dialogic exchange with others” (Wojtas 2014, 150).

The contrast between the artificial and the natural is generally interpreted in terms of the contribution which man does or does not make to the origin or character of a thing.

Works of art, encompassing games of various kinds, are man-made, and thus easily classifiable as the prominent markers of artificiality that are somehow humanly caused or contrived. By the same token, the distinction between nature and culture can be partially compared to the contrast between the constant and the variable, as well as to the difference between the instinct and volition.

Although the definition of culture seems to be relatively straightforward at first glance, its thorough investigation may unveil that the term in question is, in fact, much more complicated and multifaceted than expected (cf. Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952, Holloway 1969, Tylor 1974). Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952, 181), for instance, determined that the word culture might refer to more than 160 meanings. Tylor claims that:

Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (1974, 1).

The diverse conceptions of what culture actually is raise many issues. *Culture* can be defined in a multitude of ways, e.g. (1) as a manner of life, with a special emphasis placed upon the general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time, (2) as human performance, comprising music, art, theatre, literature, etc. and (3) as a verb describing the activity of breeding and keeping particular living things in order to get the substances they produce (cf. Katan 1999, 16–17).

In light of the aforementioned explications and for the purposes of this paper, the very first and second definitions should be considered as the points of reference for further considerations. However, since the topic of this work refers particularly to video games, the term *cyberculture* shall not escape the author's attention. It is determined by the social environment brought about by the extensive use of computer networks for communication, entertainment, and business. Cyberculture arises out of the enthusiasm for technologically driven modifications and relies heavily on the 'information super-highway' which constitutes the core of cybersociety brought about by information and communications technologies (Webster 2006, 3).

When talking about culture, and cyberculture in a sense, one should also mention the concept of *culture industry*, a term coined by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (2002). They claimed that popular culture produced by media, that is television, radio and all kinds of "information transmitters", is not *real culture*, but a set of more simplistic, down-to-earth pleasures whose main goal is to manipulate societies and turn

individuality and activity into conformity and passivity. Culture industry produces ideas which deceive consumers into a false feeling of a real demand to obtain the goods. Consumers, being overwhelmed with a variety of product assortments, believe in their discretionary power, whereas in reality, the system is only set up in such a fashion to make the consumer feel that way. The perception of culture can be easily reframed by shining light on what is considered to be *real culture*. While for some the idea of manipulation through media may seem somewhat controversial and taboo, it is still a concept that should be subject to more social awareness and open discourse.

A notion very closely connected to culture is *art*. Similarly to the term discussed above, the semantic field of *art* is relatively vague. However, Oxford Dictionary Online provides a simple, yet accurate, definition of the word under study: “the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power” (2017).

In consideration of the abovementioned excerpt, the reader’s mind may be challenged by a thought-provoking question: what exactly should be seen as falling into the scope of *art*? Painted pictures, drawn sketches, music composed by talented individuals, a theatre play? An overarching majority of people would probably maintain that all the items enumerated above do belong to the widely understood framework of art. At the same time it is very likely that the exact same majority would exclude games from the circle of art. For the sake of discussing the idea more thoroughly, one should notice the diverse types of video games; however, irrespectively of the type, each game requires a human idea and entails a separate act of creation. Games are not comparable to a painting by Van Gogh, nor are they entirely tangible, but just like other artists, programmers want to conceive their own masterpiece, i.e. they have a vision which, subsequently, modifies the perception of the world and strongly impacts millions of people who appreciate hard work, intellectual productivity and craft. Game art development is a dynamic medium to showcase creative ability and design unique entertainment experiences by means of cutting-edge game technology.

Another reason why games can be considered as a piece of culture is that many universally recognized elements of games, for instance songs and music pieces, are subsequently being applied in other areas of life. As an example, many game soundtracks, such as the one extracted from the game Guild Wars, were recreated by the orchestra which performed the same tracks live. The game environment reflects human imagination, resourcefulness and willingness to invent.

Assuming that a pencil drawing of Batman can be perceived as a piece of art, a manual depiction of a computer Batman model may, analogically, be classified as an artistic artefact. Both of these works require a talented person who creates them either on paper or digitally. In games of this type the said characters can shape their own story by their decisiveness on whether to kill the Joker and become the hands of justice themselves, or help the police imprison him. They can explore the world the way they want. Just as Van Gogh's pictures evoke certain feelings among various viewers, gamers can experience completely different sets of emotions and will engage with the game individually. People are utterly absorbed in gaming for many reasons, one of them being the ability to notice the components of artistic masterpiece in which they can also participate actively, not only to contemplate it passively.

There are also games which do not give the highest priority to the visuals, but rather operate on a metaphorical level as carriers of a deeper, existential meaning, via plotting cultural issues or addressing mental problems. They become a very strong medium, commonly underestimated, not only viewed as a product that would alleviate temporary boredom. For the sake of exemplification, the game *The Cat Lady* developed by Harvester Games, puts the player in control of a lonely middle-aged woman who is highly depressed and considers committing suicide. She is given an opportunity to change her life provided she eliminates a few particularly dangerous individuals who are presented as the incarnations of pure evil – cannibals, rapists, etc. While opting for the shades of black and white except for one color, i.e. red in the instant case, the graphic design has a specific and unique style. Given the fact that *The Cat Lady* tackles very important and substantial psychological issues, it is surely not considered a game for everyone, especially not for children. This type of game could be compared to a book which may raise controversial and complex topics. Writing a good book, especially one touching upon such sensitive issues, engrossing and meaningful, requires linguistic dexterity and vast knowledge which can then be fully appreciated by the readers. By the same token, one should not ignore a computer-assisted conversion of such a work into a video game, which shall be construed as an interactive representation placing the player in the position of a decisive protagonist going through all the dread.

The influence of games can in no way be analyzed without a very important, yet underestimated, notion of “gamification”, a process which transfers an extensive array of in-game techniques and mechanisms into other areas of life (cf. Reeves and Read 2009; Burke 2014). It stands to reason that games are created as to be absorbing. One of the most effective methods to engage players in completing the game is rewarding him/her for his/her efforts and encouraging him/her to try harder. Already at this point it may

sound similar to a very common saying: “no pain, no gain.” What mechanisms do lie, however, behind games occupying a lot of time which instead could be devoted to other activities? Why do more and more people resort to games in their free time?

The “game reward system”, as one should call it for the purposes of further analysis, is designed in such a way as to keep the players engaged by providing them with pursuits that will constantly challenge their skills. Without rewards for performing specific activities, games would fail to achieve their purpose. That, however, will never happen since there does not necessarily have to be a specific, *tangible*, incentive present in a game. The player may be certainly rewarded with a new weapon, a chest of gold or a new car but more often than not the rewards are hidden, thus inspiring intrinsic motivation. The reward, in such a case, is defined as a pleasure of performing specific activities. If a game is well-designed, it will make the player feel powerful, intelligent and skillful. It is the satisfaction that a player may feel after completing a 6-hour scenario in which s/he has finally conquered a different nation after several hours of horrendously losing battles. It may take the form of the player being the last one standing among a hundred of other players in a fight-to-death scenario. Players may also receive the so-called *achievements* for completing specific objectives which then become a testimony to the player’s skill.

Additionally, games have proven to exert positive effects on the players. Not only are there games which require a physical activity such as dancing or playing sports, but also games which develop parts of human brain, increase reflexes, observation and many others. Daphne Bavelier, a neuroscience professor at the University of Geneva, conducted a wide spectrum of scientific tests and found a number of positive sides of gaming (2012). Among such findings one could discover that gamers who play action games regularly have actually a better and more precise sight than the control group (i.e. ‘non-gamers’); gamers tend to be more attentive and responsive to sudden changes and can solve conflicts faster. Generally, some parts of the gamer’s brain are much more efficient than those of the non-gamer. She also claimed that games increase brain plasticity, attention and vigilance. Furthermore, “[a]ction video game play benefits performance in an array of sensory, perceptual, and attentional tasks that go well beyond the specifics of game play (...)” (Green, Pouget, Bavelier 2010). Apart from that there are numerous studies claiming that certain games improve eye-hand coordination and teamwork.

Following the above thread of reasoning, games are, in fact, not only means of artistic expression, but also a highly engrossing and absorbing form of interactive art, constituting a dialogue between the artwork and the participants themselves, who act upon a responsive gaming environment. Games exert enormous influence on human lives, as

more and more individuals resort to some form of interactive entertainment as a way of spending their free time. Games have been stigmatized as the root cause of many social problems such as children's low grades or indolence, but in reality they represent interactive and often valuable forms of spending time which may oftentimes carry more good than it seems in the first place. During her TED talk, Bavelier compared playing video games to consuming wine by stating that "there are some very bad uses of wine, there are some very bad uses of video games, but when consumed in reasonable doses and at the right age, wine can be very good for health" (2012).

The Language of Gaming from a Discourse Analytical Perspective

As it was mentioned above, the popularity of gaming has increased over time, which is an important contributory factor in the enormous growth of the gamers' community. The expansion of a gaming circle may sometimes be slightly problematic, however, mostly in terms of communication. As with each group, gamers have their own variety of language, a slang, so to speak, which they have spontaneously accommodated to their real life.

When putting the language of gaming under the microscope, sociologists make clear that inter-player communication can never be taken for granted, but always involves collaboration, collusion and negotiation. Therefore the exchange of information within a gaming community should be explained through the lens of interactional sociolinguistics (Jaspers 2012, 136–138; cf. Gumperz 1982, Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz 1982, Gumperz 2001). Due to the incompleteness of communication, all gamers must rely on extracommunicative knowledge to infer, or make hypotheses about how what is said contributes to the situation at hand and what a speaker possibly intends to convey. If communication proves incomplete, interactants have to find out what unstated context a certain word flags or indicates. Consequently, words can be deemed to have indexical meaning. Introducing context into linguistic analyses is a prerequisite for precision and accurateness (Chilton 2004, 154; Rampton 2001, 84).

The spontaneous and natural interactions, constantly vulnerable to innovation and alterations within a gaming community, are to a certain degree restricted by longer-standing linguistic habits and limitations of a well-established typical gamer-speak. The first thing one may notice is the ever-increasing use of foreign units, especially English, such as *aimbot*, *boss*, *mob*, *wallhack*, etc. That may be due to various reasons including globalization, more emphasis on teaching English, music, and many more (Carstairs-McCarthy

2002, 100). The beginning of video games in Poland resulted in the following: a) non-localized video games, or b) poorly localized video games, mostly done by inexperienced novices, and just for the sake of being able to understand the game, even if the localization was terrible. While deliberating on miserable and haphazard localization, very often eventuating in doubly exoticized obscure texts, it is worth mentioning that:

(...) an event of curtsy towards foreignization stands for this impassable moment of choice wherein the translator plays devil's advocate by giving preference to one linguistic item at the cost of another. The moment of choice is then patently the moment of error or irreparable loss (Wojtas 2014, 129).

Since some people do not want to use second-hand, poorly localized copies, they resort to the original, non-localized versions. As time has passed, the number of games has been growing exponentially and that growth has seen no end. Gamers are slowly getting used to learning the original language of the game, effectively gaining knowledge of a foreign language. This is a very simple and natural process which continues until this day, to an even bigger extent.

The second most commonly heard feature of a gamer-speak is acronymization (Carstairs-McCarthy 2002, 65). That is the process of forming shorter compounds out of entire words or phrases, usually using the first letters of each component, the rationale for that being time pressure. With the arrival of more challenging games, especially multi-player titles which based strongly on interaction between players and, more often than not, reflexes, gamers had to communicate fast. With the passing of time this phenomenon has become so much related to games that it is now relatively hard to see someone use a regular and full-fledged sentence in order to say that a particular situation in game has made him/her laugh a lot. Instead, s/he would just use an acronym *lol*. Acronyms take up a significant part of gamer-speak, classical examples being PvE (*Player versus Environment*), MMO (*Massive[ly] Multiplayer Online*) or AP (*Ability Power*). It is much more efficient to use a few condensed acronyms and shortened words to send an understandable message, since in games actions tend to be taken really quickly or else, the player may suffer consequences of various kinds. That has led the acronyms to quickly spill out of the computer box and onto the people not necessarily willing to change their language.

The use of acronyms is dictated by the specificity of slang which just like any other linguistic variety has created its own gigantic collection of highly peculiar terms. Not only do games stand behind those changes in language, but there is no denying that since

language fluctuates constantly, as do modern times which still accelerate human lives more and more, most of people have at least once heard someone use a gamer-speak and thought to themselves: *What on earth did this man just say?*

In order to show how the language really changes in relation to the field of gaming, a typical utterance, albeit for the purpose of this analysis slightly exaggerated, made by a gamer talking to his colleague will be analyzed:

I've been **grinding levels** for three days now and was waiting for a **drop from the last boss**. Can you imagine that suddenly two **PKers** appeared and **fragged** on me? Just like that! They had a **build** with the most powerful **elite** and the **highest DPS** I've ever seen and **pwned** my **char** while **mobs were aggroed** to me. **ZOMG**. No more **farming** in the **multicombat PvP** areas. I've lost all the **phat lewtz** and **exp**, not to mention the time I spent doing that. **Devs** should definitely **nerf that Dragon eq**.

For a non-gamer the above example may reinforce the sense of otherness and incomprehensibility. It is basically a vigorous statement from an angry player who complains about a few mechanisms of the game. The above statement abounds with acronyms and slang terms which, to a non-gamer, may either have opposite connotations to the ones he knows or have no connotations at all. Having converted the utterance down into a *more digestible* format, one can obtain:

I've been **killing all the enemies in this location, completing numerous tasks and walking around the entire map in order to develop my character** for three days now and was waiting for a **very expensive and rare prize from the last and strongest enemy**. Can you imagine that suddenly two **guys who run around and find pleasure in killing other players in the area** appeared and **decided to kill** me? Just like that! They created a **combination of very good abilities** with the most powerful **skill found in the game which only a few players can obtain**. They were also **able to deal the highest damage per second** I've ever seen and **fought me giving my character no chance to survive** while **passive creatures running around the area were all aggressive towards me because I was fighting them in the first place**. **Oh my God**. No more **repeating the same actions for a long period of time in the area where not only players can attack you, but they can do so 2 vs 1**. I've lost all the **great rewards and unique items** as well as **experience points used to unlock new abilities**, not to mention the time I spent doing that. The **developers of the game** should definitely **reduce the strength of that equipment that is only obtainable after killing the Great Black Dragon**.

Table 1. A sample of gaming terminology.

	Explanation
grinding levels	killing all the enemies in this location, completing numerous tasks and walking around the entire map in order to develop my character
drop from the last boss	very expensive and rare prize from the last and strongest enemy
PKers	guys who run around and find pleasure in killing other players in the area
fragged	decided to kill
build	combination of very good abilities
elite	skill found in the game which only a few players can obtain
highest DPS	able to deal the highest damage per second
pwned	fought me giving my character no chance to survive
mobs were aggroed	passive creatures running around the area were all aggressive towards me because I was fighting them in the first place
ZOMG	Oh my God
farming	repeating the same actions for a long period of time
multicombat PvP	area where not only players can attack you, but they can do so 2 vs 1
phat lewtz	great rewards and unique items
exp	experience points used to unlock new abilities
Devs	developers of the game
nerf that Dragon eq	reduce the strength of that equipment that is only obtainable after killing the Great Black Dragon

Upon close inspection of the terms listed above one can see that a selected set of terms sounds familiar. For example, the gaming-focused meaning of the word *farming* in fact is related to the activity most people know – in the end farming pertains to repeating similar actions for an extended period of time. But is this second format really more digestible? The utterance of an angry player converted to a regular language has grown in size by more than 100%. While the variety of language used in the second example is more familiar to non-gamers, it takes much more space and time to convey the message, as some gaming terms simply refer to the concepts or actions which would need much more effort to describe.

Implementing the component of novelty, neologisms (e.g. *to gamify*, *gamertag* or *Gamez*) tend to make the gaming discourse more dynamic and interactive: some of them name new concepts and inventions while others form a verbal coating for more advanced

ideas which act at a higher level of complexity (Carstairs-McCarthy 2002, 95). This is a natural process in the evolution of language (compare further deliberations on language evolution in Garner 2009 and Greiffenstern 2010). It shall be remembered that the more text there is to describe a situation, the less reader-friendly it is. That leads to a semi-conclusion that language may need to be optimized in favor of being easier and quicker to use. We keep living faster and faster nowadays, struggling to keep up with our lives. Many people rarely have time to sit and talk and that tendency does not seem to be changing any time soon. This may prompt a specific change in language and it would be wise to learn from gamers who have not been told to change the way they speak – they decided to do so since otherwise they would not *keep up with their game*.

All the above linguistic peculiarities, including slang expressions, acronyms and neologisms, make the gaming speak more compressed and condensed in terms of terminological saturation, thus confirming the concept of economy in language.

A proposal for a lexicographic description of gaming-related terms

The previous section determined that gaming as a whole should be considered part of the widely understood culture given its strong influence on language, and many other fields of life. Therefore, below are discussed two methods of semantic research, with special reference to creating, ordering and systematizing gaming-related terminology, i.e. 1) semasiology and 2) onomasiology (cf. Grinev-Griniewicz and Dubieniec 2002, 62–67).

It would be an unpardonable oversight not to underline the relevance of Apresyan, a linguist who coined two key notions in lexicography, namely 1) the *naïve picture of the world* as well as 2) the *scientific picture of the world* (1974), which will lay foundations for further considerations.

The first term may be described as a view of the surrounding reality from the perspective of a certain individual, speaking a certain language and being influenced by a never-ending process of the evolution of language and culture within a given nation (Burkhanov 2010, 159). Most linguists would probably agree that each word, despite having a similar meaning in different languages, may have various connotations which are strongly influenced by the culture of a certain group. Furthermore, some terms may not even be present in other languages which renders them completely incomprehensible. The naïve picture of the world describes the whole complex net of relations which are exclusive to certain cultures and those cultures only.

When adhering to the first idea, one could easily believe in the biblical origins of the universe and humanity, with Adam and Eve as the first humans in the Garden of Eden. This common view takes into account some cultural, and in this example also religious, presumptions, which, due to obvious reasons, may not necessarily be valid for other ethnicities. On a more scientific note, i.e. while being inclined towards the second approach, one will rather subscribe to Darwin's theory of evolution, with all life (from mammals to single celled organisms) related through descent from from the last common ancestor. That said, one could describe the scientific picture of the world as standing in direct opposition to the naïve vision of reality. While remaining standardized across various languages and cultures, scientific concepts usually refer to more unified and comprehensible knowledge which does not necessarily have any ethnical connotations (Burkhanov 2010, 206). On a micro-level they are often exemplified as technical terms which are universal across various languages. Burkhanov also argues that although a scientific image of the world ought to be standardized and complete by now, it is certainly not and warrants his allegation by giving the example of fields of science, such as biology, which, with time and growth, have introduced new ideas and new subfields of science to the existing pool. It is also worth mentioning Burkhanov's assertion that as long as the civilization develops, the scientific picture of the world will fluctuate and remain open to newly created units (Burkhanov 2010, 208). That claim is justifiable in view of the ongoing human development, which constantly introduces new ideas and new terms to the culture and language, will most probably never cease (cf. Grinev-Griniewicz et al. 2015).

The examination of the said approaches through the prism of humanity's beginnings seems to be a highly abstract, yet vivid, example demonstrating the idea behind the two terms in question. Some argue that the world should be perceived in a theoretical way, others believe that it should be observed scientifically, and another group claims that it should be categorized on the basis of both views combined together. This correlates to the fact that there is no dictionary compiling various types of lexis and it can never be tailored to the needs and expectations of every recipient. Thus, the lexicographer ought to treat the end-user group as a starting point and create the dictionary in such a way as to present either view. But first he should ask the question "should the data be arranged semasiologically or onomasiologically?"

Semasiology deals with what words mean and how they are represented. For instance, nouns *stone*, *soil* or *water*, are first established as lexical items and then their correlations to the concepts are settled. Onomasiology, on the other hand, primarily addresses the occurrence of a concept and then tries to name it (Burkhanov 2010, 212–215; cf. Marouzeau

1931, Koch 2002). Thus, the first approach usually dictates an alphabetical order, as the concepts may be completely unrelated, whereas the second approach prefers an ideographic arrangement of data. Having said that, one could assume that if the lexicographer decides to create a dictionary of terms relating to energy and power, he would opt for ideographic arrangement of entries, whereas an English-Polish dictionary of general language, while reflecting the naïve vision of the world, would most probably be arranged alphabetically. Onomasiological dictionaries usually encompass thesauri or scientific references.

The field of gaming tends to prefer the onomasiological order for arranging data mainly for one reason. Since the area in question is strictly connected with computer technologies, the concept is usually the first thing that comes to mind. This means that, for example, the term “Fog of War”, which stands for a greyed out, invisible area surrounding the player, was first thought of, created and then named. This mechanism finds application in various technology fields on a daily basis, since first comes the need for something, then the performance or execution of it, followed by the necessity to name the new concept. Similarly, slang terms or abbreviations, which constitute a large percentage of gamer-speak, are usually created if need be. Abbreviations such as PK (*Player Kill*), DPS (*Damage per Second*), or slang terms such as *grind*, were invented in order to name the natural mechanisms and processes occurring in games. Many of those terms cannot be fully deciphered without knowing the meaning of their predecessors, which highlights the natural tendency of languages, mostly their technical variants, to create faster and easier opportunities for people to communicate under the influx of new terminology (cf. Grinev-Griniewicz 2010, 16–17; Grinev Griniewicz 2011, 27–30). Thus, the features of gamer-speak seem to naturally guide the language user towards the onomasiological order of terms when it comes to organizing the data in a form of, say, dictionary or thesaurus.

Despite the obvious distinction, semasiological order appears to be the usually preferred option, irrespectively of the character of the dictionary, which indicates that the idea of separating lexical meanings into *naïve* or *scientific* proves either unnecessary or not widespread enough to reach most lexicographers. Possibly the alphabetical arrangement of data is so prevalent that it transpires to be a natural choice. Onomasiology, on the other hand, appears to be used mostly when new phenomena occur and need to be named so as to create a new linguistic item that would be later incorporated into a dictionary. With the above deliberations in mind, for the proper representation of gaming-related knowledge, one should design a microstructure of a dictionary entry which would accurately reflect the semantic complexity of gaming terminology. The lexicographic data would comprise the name of the item in question, its definition accompanied by the translation, additional explanation, a contextual use and finally, an exemplary image.

Table 2. A key to understanding a dictionary microstructure.

	Definition		Additional explanation
	Visual representation		Contextual use

Table 3. An exemplary microstructure extracted from a gaming-related dictionary.

Term 1.	 Fog of War	 Mgła Wojny
	The unseen battlefield/world of the game which implies realism as a character or unit cannot see a certain place without being in it at that time.	Niewidoczna część mapy bądź pola bitwy dodająca element realizmu uzasadniony tym, że postać nie może zobaczyć jakiegoś miejsca nie będąc w nim w danym momencie.
		
	Fog of War is a crucial part of strategy games as it allows for tactical maneuvers and actions without being spotted by the enemy. This adds an extra layer of complexity and uncertainty to the game and forces the players to actually think what to do to best prepare for the enemy or ambush him or her.	
	<i>I will try to use fog of war to surprise the enemy and flank his army. If he hasn't discovered this area yet, he should not expect me there.</i>	

Conclusions

To establish a sense of closure the following conclusions can be drawn from the aforementioned deliberations:

- Gaming can, and should, be perceived as a separate branch of the widely-understood culture due to its aesthetic, pragmatic and productive properties.
- The influence of gaming on an everyday language is not to be ignored as its widespread use is constantly growing even outside of the gaming field.
- Acronymization, despite not being invented exclusively for the purposes of gaming, is heavily practiced within the gaming circle and highlights the potentially necessary change in the way one perceives and uses the language.
- Slang expressions and neologisms, coined deliberately for the purpose of linguistic economy which causes the language to dismiss what is superfluous, should be deemed the most prominent art of human figurative and productive abilities. Taking into consideration a secretive character of acronyms and slang terminology, gaming-related lexis can be effectively spread in netspeak, where in order to avoid the overuse of keystrokes one may seek to cut short their efforts and apply abbreviated forms of speech elements.
- The semantic network of gaming knowledge imposes on a lexicographer the obligation of an onomasiological arrangement of terminological data, which directs a given semantic research from categorization and/or cognitive structures to the symbolic units of language that express the said phenomena of cognition.

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