

WORD FORMATION PROCESSES OF FILIPINO SHOUTCASTERS' REGISTERS IN MOBILE LEGENDS: BANG BANG ESPORTS

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ABSTRAK. Penelitian ini menganalisis proses pembentukan kata dalam register yang digunakan oleh komentator Filipina dalam siaran bahasa Inggris MPL Filipina Musim 16 Playoffs. Studi ini menerapkan kerangka teoritis pembentukan kata Mattiello (2008, 2013) untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana proses morfologis, seperti kasus gramatikal, ekstra-gramatikal, dan kasus batas, berkontribusi pada pembentukan register khusus dalam komentar esports. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, menganalisis 392 register data dari sembilan komentator Filipina yang dikumpulkan melalui teknik dokumentasi dari siaran ulang YouTube dalam bahasa Inggris. Temuan menunjukkan sembilan proses pembentukan kata yang berbeda: penggabungan (252 data), penambahan sufiks (33), penambahan prefiks (5), konversi (35), singkatan (41), variasi (5), pembentukan hibrida (19), penciptaan kata baru (1), dan slang rima elips (1). Pembentukan kata majemuk menjadi proses yang paling dominan, menunjukkan bahwa bahasa deskriptif diutamakan dalam konteks komentar langsung. Proses ekstra-gramatikal seperti singkatan memfasilitasi komunikasi yang efisien sambil sekaligus menandakan status komunitas dalam kelompok. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman morfologi dalam diskursus profesional yang dimediasi secara digital dan memperluas penerapan kerangka kerja Mattiello ke konteks media baru.

Kata kunci: pembentukan kata; register; shoutcaster; Mobile Legends; Mattiello

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ABSTRACT. This research analyzes the word formation processes in the registers employed by Filipino shoutcasters in the MPL Philippines Season 16 Playoffs English Broadcast. The study applies Mattiello's (2008, 2013) theoretical framework of word formation to examine how morphological processes, such as grammatical, extra-grammatical, and borderline cases, contribute to the creation of specialized registers in esports commentary. The study employs a qualitative case study approach, analyzing 392 data registers from nine Filipino shoutcasters collected through documentation techniques from YouTube replay English broadcasts. The findings reveal nine distinct word formation processes: compounding (252 data), suffixation (33), prefixation (5), conversion (35), abbreviations (41), variation (5), hybrid formations (19), coinage (1), and elliptic rhyming slang (1). Compounding stands as the most dominant process, demonstrating that descriptive language is prioritized in live commentary contexts. Extra-grammatical processes such as abbreviations enable efficient communication while simultaneously marking in-group community status. This research contributes to the understanding of morphology in digitally mediated professional discourse and extends the application of Mattiello's framework to new media contexts.

Keywords: word formation; register; shoutcaster; Mobile Legends; Mattiello

INTRODUCTION

The language used in professional broadcasting has transformed in response to the dynamics of digital media, particularly in esports commentary, also known as shoutcasting. As Manne (2018) explains, shoutcasting involves producing commentary during a game or competition to audiences of the flow in game dynamics in real time. Similarly, Chaloner (2015) notes that the term "shoutcaster" itself originates from the "SHOUTcast" software created at Winamp.com, which popularized internet radio and provided the foundation for what would become esports commentary. In a shoutcast, some skills are required to develop effective comments to the audience. The shoutcaster needs a deep game knowledge, efficient

language choices, and a comprehensive analysis of the tournament matches. In this process, Sell (2012) found that shoutcasters create new terminology through language innovation that is reshaping traditional sportcasting practices for new digital platforms such as live streaming.

The language innovation that is chosen by shoutcasters relates to Halliday's (1978) definition of registers as a variety of language systematically patterned according to specific social situations and communicative purposes. Ure and Ellis (1977) further elaborate that register is a "situational variety," a conventional set of linguistic patterns that reflects the speaker's awareness of the surrounding environment. These registers help shoutcaster to develop effective comments to the audience within the esports

shoutcasting, which requires efficient language choices and comprehensive analysis. As Holmes (2013) proposes, register signifies the specialized vocabulary that is morphologically associated with professional or interest groups, shaped by the unique functional demands of context. Some previous studies have validated that registers are demands on context, which Saputra and Damanhuri (2021) identified closed and more open register in League of Legends commentary, while Pratama (2022) found Indonesia-English registers in international Mobile Legends: Bang Bang shoutcasting, which were classified by the lingual unit and communicative function. However, these previous studies focused on register classification and language function rather than the morphological process behind the register formation, which this recent study wants to address.

In the Mobile Legends: Bang Bang esports, specifically the MPL Philippines Season 16 Playoffs, Filipino shoutcasters offer a unique phenomenon for this language choice in the field of morphological analysis. Filipino shoutcasters operate in a unique linguistic environment, where English serves as the main broadcast language for international audiences, while their Filipino culture influences their lexical choices. This unique linguistic context can be delve analysis through morphological processes in register construction in shoutcasting. Word formation is a major subfield of morphology that investigates the principles, processes, and rules by which speakers of a language create new words. Zapata (2007) emphasizes that word formation encompasses the systematic processes that expand the lexicon, while Yule (2010) distinguishes between the basic processes by which new words are created. Bauer (1983) further clarifies that word formation concerns the creation of entirely new lexemes rather than the different grammatical forms of the same lexeme, and Plag (2018) adds that this field studies the regular and productive rules that speakers unconsciously use to build new complex words. Previous studies applying Yule's (1996) framework to esports commentary, which Herson et al. (2022) analyze in PUBG Mobile esports and Kamagi et al. (2023) in film dialogue, confirmed that compounding, acronyms, and derivation are common processes in digital media. However, their framework tends to ignore extra-grammatical and borderline formations in registers.

Mattiello (2008, 2013) argues that a comprehensive framework must cover the full processes of lexical creativity, including formations that fall outside standard grammatical rules. As Mattiello (2008) divides the word formation process

into three categories: Grammatical morphology, which follows standard and predictable rules (compounding, affixation, conversion); extra-grammatical morphology, which involves expressive or abbreviatory processes often violating standard rules (abbreviations, blending, clipping); and borderline cases, which combine between these categories (hybrid formations, final combining forms). This framework is relevant for analyzing esports registers, which employ irregular and creative formations. Furthermore, Sawe's (2025) study of Filipino TikTok slang established that Filipino digital language users are morphologically creative, applying abbreviation, phonetic play, and inversion, a pattern that suggests Filipino shoutcasters may utilize similar linguistic creativity in professional broadcasting contexts. This bilingual context creates opportunities for morphological formations that blend linguistic resources from both languages, making it an ideal case study for examining how word formation operates in professional digital discourse.

Grammatical Morphology

Grammatical word formation refers to processes that follow the systematic and productive morphological rules of a language. The productive formation in English, compounding is a the process of joining two or more independent words to create a new lexical unit. Yule (2010) explains that compounding combines free morphemes to form new words, while Bauer (1983) notes that compounds are combinations of new lexemes with their own distinct meaning. Plag (2018) adds that the resulting compound functions as a single item, with the independent morpheme typically serving as the "head" that determines word class and core meaning. Another formation is affixation, which is divided into prefixation and suffixation involve adding bound morphemes to the beginning or end of existing words. As Zapata (2007) describes, prefixes modify the meaning of the base but rarely change word class, while suffixes, according to Bauer (1983) and Plag (2018), often change the grammatical category of the base. The last formation of grammatical formation is conversion, or zero-derivation, which creates new words by changing word class without adding an affix. Yule (2010) notes that conversion is common in English, allowing words to shift between noun and verb categories based on syntactic context, while Mattiello (2008) classifies this as grammatical because it follows the standard patterns of English word formation.

Extra-Grammatical Morphology

On the other hand, extra-grammatical word formation involves creation through irregular morphological rules, using shortening, mixing, or playful modifications of word forms. According to Mattiello (2013), processes like blending (merging parts of two words), clipping (shortening a word), and acronyms are characteristic of extra-grammatical morphology. These formations are described as "anomalous," "irregular," and "unpredictable" (Mattiello, 2008), resulting from conscious, playful, or phonologically motivated creative processes. Yule (2010) and Bauer (1983) categorize these as "minor" or "unconventional" processes, aligning with Mattiello's view that they are separate from standard grammatical word formation. Because of their irregular nature, these formations have often been excluded from traditional linguistic studies. However, as Mattiello (2013) emphasizes, they are important for understanding vocabulary in many registers, especially slang, social media, and specialized jargon like esports shoutcasting.

Borderline Cases

The third category is borderline cases that consist of "partially regular" phenomena and cannot be classified as either fully grammatical or fully extra-grammatical. Mattiello (2013) refers to this category using Dressler's (2000) term "marginal morphology," defining it as phenomena that lie at the boundaries between regular and irregular processes. These formations may become a bridge between two morphological types or mix processes from the other two categories. As Mattiello (2013) explains, a formation can be borderline if it applies a regular, grammatical process to an irregular, extra-grammatical base. Hybrid formations, for instance, combine grammatical and extra-grammatical processes, such as applying a regular suffix to an irregular clipped base, or combining elements from two different languages, a phenomenon particularly relevant in bilingual contexts like the Philippines. As this relevance, this research applies Mattiello's (2008; 2013) word formation process theory through breaking down the word formation type behind the register used by Filipino Mobile Legends: Bang Bang shoutcasters.

METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative research approach, particularly a case study, following the approach for understanding the meaning that individuals ascribe to social phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach is appropriate for a bounded context like the specific linguistic environment of the MPL Philippines Season 16 Playoffs, as Vásquez (2022) notes that qualitative methods are suited for analyzing the situated nature of online language use in digital discourse. The objects of this study are the specific spoken registers uttered by nine (9) professional Filipino shoutcasters who delivered English broadcasts during the pre-match analysis, draft pick phases, in-game match, and post-match of MPL Philippines Season 16 Playoffs stage from October 22-26, 2025. The data collection technique used in this study is documentation, following the principles of screen-based data collection for digital discourse (Kreis, 2022), which involved systematically capturing the spoken text from the public YouTube broadcast.

The data collection procedure followed the qualitative data collection phases outlined by Creswell and Poth (2018), adapted for digital audiovisual materials (Vásquez, 2022). The researcher searched for replayed live streaming in the "MLBB esports" YouTube channel, spoken text was identified, all targeted spoken text was logged with a timestamp and speaker, and the immediate surrounding context (a maximum of 10 seconds of speech) was noted (Paulus, 2022), then registers were identified using coding techniques to ensure consistent identification and classification based on their relevance to the research question, and categorized by their word formation processes (Kreis, 2022). The data analysis followed Miles et al. (2014)'s three-step framework: Condensing the data by selecting, simplifying, and categorizing relevant linguistic data from the replayed livestream, then organizing the findings systematically, presenting registers with their word formation processes, contextual meanings, and the full sentence context, also interpreting the data through Mattiello's (2008, 2013) theoretical framework. The researcher served as the primary analytical instrument, applying the theoretical framework throughout the analysis process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Throughout the analysis, interpretive decisions were grounded in linguistic evidence and theoretical frameworks, with careful attention to the contextual meaning and function of each register within its broadcast context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result indicates that not all of the word-formation processes discussed in Mattiello's (2008,

2013) framework are present in the Filipino shoutcasters' registers. The word-formation processes found are compounding, abbreviation, conversion, suffixation, hybrid formation, prefixation, variation, coinage, and elliptic rhyming slang.

The types of word-formation processes found in Filipino shoutcasters' registers in the MPL Philippines Season 16 Playoffs English Broadcast are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Data organization of the word formation process

No	Word Formation Category	Word Formation Process	Total
1.	Grammatical	Compounding	252
2.		Prefixation	5
3.		Suffixation	33
4.		Conversion	35
5.	Extra-Grammatical	Abbreviation	41
6.		Elliptic Rhyming Slang	1
7.		Coingae	1
8.	Borderline Cases	Variation	5
9.		Hybrid Formations	19
TOTAL			392

1. Compounding

Compounding is found in 252 occurrences according to the process. Several compound types appear in the data, including noun-noun compounds, adjective-noun compounds, verb-noun exocentric compounds, preposition-noun compounds, numerical-noun compounds, three-member compounds, and phrasal compounds.

For example, datum (20) "gold lead" in the utterance "It's just too much that Liquid is throwing at Aurora without even considering that gold lead." (Day 3, 01:11:14). The compound combines noun "gold" (in-game currency) with another noun "lead" (advantage) as a head to describe economic advantage, making it classified as an endocentric compound. This compound is used to describe the gap in the economy (gold) in the match between two teams (in this case, Aurora over Liquid PH) that impacts the overall situation.

For verb-noun exocentric compounds, datum (25) "split push" in "he could just go for a back door split push here onto Aurora's base." (Day 3, 01:32:17).

"Split push" is a verb + noun exocentric compound, which is a headless formation that describes a strategy where a team pressures multiple lanes simultaneously by having one player push a lane alone while the rest apply pressure elsewhere.

For adjective-noun compounds, datum (23) "close game" in "as we saw close game." (Day 3, 00:51:15). This compound combines the adjective "close" with the noun "game" to describe a match with a small gap between competing teams.

For preposition-noun compounds, datum (27) "backdoor" in "a backdoor win by Liquid the possibility." (Day 3, 01:32:17). This compound combines the preposition "back" and the noun "door" to describe a strategy where a team attacks enemy structures from behind or without directly engaging in a team fight.

For numerical-noun compounds, datum (29) "tier one" in "They're underneath tier one." (Day 1, 03:53:11). This compound combines the numeral "one" with the noun "tier" to indicate the first level of outer turrets, the outermost defensive structures in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang. Another example is datum (30) "double elimination" in "You're looking at a double elimination situation for both these two teams." (Day 3, 07:24:45), which combines the quantifying numeral "double" with the noun "elimination" to refer to a tournament format where teams must lose twice before being eliminated.

For three-member compounds, datum (31) "gold lane fighters" in "There are gold lane fighters now." (Day 1, 05:35:25). This compound has the structure [[gold lane] fighters], combining the compound "gold lane" (itself a noun-noun compound) with "fighters" as a left-bracing three-member compounds to describe an unconventional strategic choice where melee combat heroes are positioned in the gold lane.

For phrasal compounds, datum (32) "window-of-opportunity" in "the small window-of-opportunity." (Day 1, 02:26:13). This compound combines the noun "window," the preposition "of," and the noun "opportunity" to form a lexical unit that marked the hyphenated word that refers to a critical moment during a match when a team can capitalize on an enemy mistake.

2. Prefixation

Prefixation is found in 5 occurrences according to the process. Several prefixes appear in the data: "re-," "dis-," "over-," and "post-."

For example, datum (35) "post-lord" in "in post-lord about 4 minutes ago." (Day 3, 07:09:04) adds prefix "post-" (after) to "lord," describing the game phase after Lord objective acquisition. Another example is datum (32) "reposition" in "trying to reposition." (Day 3, 07:02:24) adds prefix "re-" (again) to "position," describing the strategic movement of a hero to a more advantageous location. Datum (33) "disengage" in "they're going to go ahead and disengage from that." (Day 1, 02:33:01) adds prefix "dis-" (apart) to "engage," describing a team strategy for avoiding teamfights. Datum (34) "overextend" in "I don't think they should overextend." (Day 3, 06:49:50) adds prefix "over-" (excessively) to "extend," describing the tactical error of advancing too far into enemy territory.

3. Suffixation

Suffixation is found in 33 occurrences according to the process. Both agentive suffixes and nominalizing suffixes appear in the data.

Agentive suffixes include datum (38) "initiators" in "evade a lot of the initiators coming in from Twisted Minds." (Day 3, 06:48:51) from "initiate + -or + -s," that indicate a hero starting team fights or a specific role that engages combat for the team. Another example is datum (37) "fighters" in "such as the fighters." (Day 1, 01:03:24) from "fight + -er + -s," describing melee combat heroes. Datum (36) "analyst" in "here's Wolf with another solo analyst." (Day 1, 05:49:46) from "analyze + -ist," describing a professional role in commentary.

Nominalizing suffixes also appear. Datum (40) "rotation" in "it allows for certain rotation to happen easier." (Day 1, 01:28:13) from "rotate + -ion," referring to the action of players moving from one lane to another. Datum (41) "toxicity" in "if you want more damage, a toxicity" (Day 1, 02:17:00) from "toxic + -ity," describing overwhelming damage output that becomes "lethal" to opponents. Datum (42) "tankiness" in "that durability, that tankiness" (Day 3, 07:36:37) from "tank + -y + -ness," denoting a hero's ability to absorb damage. Datum (39) "positioning" in "he's really got to watch out for his positioning here." (Day 1, 00:58:38) from "position + -ing," referring to strategic placement. Datum (44) "snowballed" in "it quickly snowballed out of control." (Day 2, 01:51:19) from "snowball + -ed," describing a team's advantage that has grown exponentially.

4. Conversion

Conversion is found in 35 occurrences according to the process. Several types of conversion appear in the data: verb to noun, noun to adjective, phrasal verb to noun, and common noun to proper noun.

For verb to noun conversion, datum (45) "carry" in "If they want another carry alongside that." (Day 3, 05:29:05) converts the verb "to carry" to the noun "a carry," which refers to the role of a hero that becomes powerful late game or a scaling hero who can dominate in later stages. Another example is datum (46) "draft" in "Sanji and Pheww are going to be a big focus on the draft." (Day 1, 00:58:51), converting the verb "to draft" to the noun referring to the pre-game hero selection and banning process.

For noun to adjective conversion, datum (47) "aura" in "an aura capitalization on it." (Day 1, 06:40:38) converts the noun "aura" to an adjective describing the quality of being marked by exceptional confidence and dominance, modifying "capitalization."

For phrasal verb to noun conversion, datum (48) "clean up" in "they want a clean up more than anything." (Day 1, 03:27:15) converts the phrasal verb "to clean up" to a noun describing the action of securing kills after a team fight has already been decided.

For common noun to proper noun conversion, datum (49) "Turtle" in "the Turtle not being taken by Team Liquid Philippines." (Day 1, 01:58:24) converts a common noun to a proper noun for a specific neutral in-game objective in the early to mid-phase.

5. Abbreviations

Abbreviations are found in 41 occurrences according to the process. Three subtypes that appear are initialisms, clippings, and acronyms.

For initialisms, datum (51) "ADC" in "They removed Domeng's best gold lane ADC." (Day 3, 00:53:34). "ADC" is an initialism from "Attack Damage Carry," which labels the hero that has a role focused on dealing physical damage. Another example is datum (50) "OP" in "considering that OP is Super Marco." (Day 1, 03:33:50), formed from "Over Powered" and pronounced as individual letters.

For clippings, datum (52) "def" in "A little bit of def with that winter crown." (Day 1, 08:26:32) is a clipping from "defense," which means the ability to survive with the purchase of a specific item (Winter Crown). Another example is datum (2) "aggro" in "he went forward and went aggro at the right time." (Day 1, 02:38:45), clipped from "aggression," originating in

early multiplayer online games to describe the mechanic where enemies prioritize attacking the player with the highest threat.

For acronyms, datum (53) "META" in "this kind of META" (Day 1, 02:15:17) is an acronym from "Most Effective Tactic Available," which refers to current optimal strategies and hero picks.

6. Variation

Variation is found in 5 occurrences according to the process. For example, datum (56) "chef cook" in "Sanji the chef cook" (Day 1, 03:55:10) involves semantic shift where "cook" evolves to mean skillful performance through internet slang conventions, then compounded with "chef" for intensification. Datum (64) "explaner" in "Aurora's explaner" (Day 3, 00:48:28) is phonetic respelling of "EXP laner," influenced by local dialect and the Philippine esports community's playful linguistic practices. Datum (69) "We Bare Bros" in "Here comes the We Bare Bros." (Day 5, 00:46:55) is a playful adaptation of the animated series title "We Bare Bears," creating a nickname for the Filipino caster trio Naisou, Leo, and Renmar.

7. Coinage

Coinage is found in 1 occurrence according to the process. For example, datum (55) "Pac-Man" in "playing their own little sadistic version of Pac-Man." (Day 1, 02:32:15) uses the video game character to describe chasing gameplay, where one team chases the other around the map while the fleeing team desperately gathers resources.

8. Elliptic Rhyming Slang

Elliptic rhyming slang is found in 1 occurrence according to the process. For example, datum (54) "gloves up" in "You've got to gloves up." (Day 1, 01:52:20) shortens "put your gloves up," using a boxing metaphor for combat readiness that creates excitement and frames the upcoming engagement as combat.

9. Hybrid Formations

Hybrid formations are found in 19 occurrences according to the process. These formations combine multiple morphological processes to create efficient terminology.

For example, datum (110) "flex pick" in "might be a flex pick" (Day 2, 01:07:05) combines clipping

from "flexibility" with compounding: clipped morpheme "flex" (versatile) and "pick" (action of hero selection in a draft phase) that refers to a situation of a hero that is playable in multiple roles or a versatile hero that can adapt to different lanes.

Datum (93) "execution diff" in "it's an execution diff" (Day 4, 02:44:04) combines compounding with clipping from "difference," which means difference in the execution of mechanics or gap in skill implementation between teams.

Datum (100) "fast blitz" in "it's not fast blitz for Team Liquid Philippines." (Day 1, 02:13:30) combines clipping (from "blitzkrieg" to "blitz") with compounding (adjective "fast" + noun "blitz"), describing a specific rapid-attack strategy.

Datum (247) "prioban" in "have always been prioban ever since." (Day 5, 01:13:37) combines clipping (from "priority" to "prio") with compounding (adjective "prio" + verb "ban"), referring to a hero that is a top-priority target for banning.

Several word formation processes identified in Mattiello's (2008, 2013) framework are absent from this dataset, such as blending, reduplicatives, back formation, infixation, reversed forms, final combining forms, and formations with irregular order. Mattiello (2013) notes that processes like blending and infixation often create playful or marked forms that may be appropriate for informal contexts but less suitable for professional broadcasting, where clarity and authority are more important. The absence of these processes supports Mudhoffar's (2023) observation that shoutcasters in tournament contexts prioritize understandable terminology over creative language.

CONCLUSION

This study found 9 types of word formation processes in the scope of analysis on Mattiello's (2008, 2013) framework in the 392 distinct registers used by Filipino shoutcasters in the MPL Philippines Season 16 Playoffs English Broadcast. Grammatical processes dominate with 325 data, with compounding (252 occurrences) that is used by shoutcasters to describe strategic concepts in an understandable language through various compound types. Suffixation (33) and conversion (35) create role-based terminology and adapt lexical roots across grammatical contexts, while prefixation (5) demonstrates how rare processes can create specialized terminology. On the other hand, extra-grammatical processes total 48 data with abbreviations (41), enabling quick information explanation through initialisms, clippings, and acronyms. Creative

formations, including variation (5), coinage (1), and elliptic rhyming slang (1), demonstrate that shoutcasters deploy creative language in a rare situation. Borderline cases total 19 data with hybrid formations that combine grammatical and extra-grammatical processes to efficiently describe in-game or tournament situations. The absence of processes like blending and infixation reveals the limitation of professional broadcast contexts to have morphological creativity. This study contributes to understanding word formation in digitally mediated professional discourse and extends Mattiello's framework to new media contexts.

Based on the findings and discussions of this study, several suggestions can be offered for future research interested in analyzing esports discourse. Future research should extend this study's analytical framework to other esports titles and other regional contexts. Comparative studies examining how shoutcasters in different games (League of Legends, Dota 2, Valorant) deploy word formation for different linguistic purposes would reveal whether the patterns identified here are specific to Mobile Legends: Bang Bang or reflect broader tendencies in esports discourse. Similarly, cross-cultural comparisons examining how shoutcasters from different linguistic backgrounds construct different word formation processes in English international broadcasts would reveal how morphological formation in multilingual interaction occurs in globalized media contexts.

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