ABBREVIATIONS WITHIN MILITARY JARGONS IN “GENERATION KILL” MOVIE SERIES

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ABSTRACT: This study focused on the analysis of word formation processes of abbreviations within military jargons in certain movie series dialogues. The research design of this study is qualitative-quantitative. In this study, the theory of word formation processes is mainly adopted from Yule (year?) and Prayogo (2007).

Key words: Jargon or slang, Abbreviation, Word Formation Processes, Movie Dialogue.

Abbreviations and word formation processes theories, besides being used as a medium of communication, have been used by people for different purposes. As human beings, we occasionally use abbreviations to express our feelings or jokes. Lots of people use abbreviations in texting because it is faster and more time saving. Most of the advertisements in the media use abbreviations to make an interesting catchphrase to impress their viewers. Movies and game subtitles use abbreviations in their story lines. Even in the military domain, the use of abbreviations is a very common thing.

Some shortened forms of words are also spoken in daily life. Quenqua (2011) mentioned, that they have been developed about 20 years ago to streamline the conversation on chat platforms like Usenet and IRC and popularized on AOL instant messenger and Gmail chat. The terms like LOL (laugh out loud), OMG (oh my God) and BTW (by the way) now seem to be popping up in real life (IRL) such as laser or zip code. In this case, abbreviations are used in society regardless of their kinds of purpose. In fact, they have been accepted as language identity since using abbreviations has eventually become a set of habits in social interaction.

Generation Kill is a British American 7 episode war miniseries produced for HBO, based on the book with the same name “Generation Kill” and was released in 2004 by Evan Wright, which captures his experience as an embedded reporter with the US Marine Corps 1st Reconnaissance Battalion during the 2003 invasion in Iraq. Most of the dialogues within this miniseries are using formal
English and informal English. Most of the characters are using military abbreviations in delivering the messages in their dialogues because the characters basically are military groups. Consequently, as a soldier, their way in delivering the messages is quick and efficient. The dialogues restrain various types of meaning such as abbreviations and other word formation skills. In this case, most of the viewers might not catch the meaning in some part of the dialogue.

According to Bankole (2006), generally abbreviation has common characteristics and styles; first, reduction of a single word to its initial; second, reduction of a group of words to the first two letters of each concept; third, reduction of concept of a group to equivalent of a syllable; next, reduction of the initial of just one word of the group; next, reduction of a group to the initial of the first concept and the first syllable of the second; next, transcription of the abbreviation; next, preserving a conjunction and preserving the abbreviation in its original language. Mainly, initials of short function words (and, or, of, to) are not included in abbreviations, except to make such acronyms pronounceable. Last but not least, some abbreviations are assimilated into ordinary words and are found written in low case and with time, people forget that they were acronyms. Good examples are: laser (light amplification by stimulated emission of radar) and scuba (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus).

As stated in Vygotsky (1986), the idea of abbreviation refers to type of format of dialogue in which only a few words or almost no words are necessary for mutual understanding between partner. The idea behind this phenomenon is that, under certain circumstances and relying on the relationship history, partners abbreviate their dialogue. The interpersonal communication process is achieved by previously constructed internalized mutual knowledge between partners. In other words, before we understand the abbreviated word, people should know a certain circumstances and histories of the people who abbreviated the word. For example an abbreviated word “ad” can have a different full form depend on the history and circumstances. If the one saying that abbreviated word is a business person, it could stand for advertisement by looking from its historical reference. Hence for a marine soldier, the meaning of ad can be Air Defense, Active Defense, or Aerospace Defense depending on the circumstances.
The statements above highlight that abbreviation is a reduction from a word or some words to a shorter form whether it will be in the form of only an initial, two first letters, syllable, preserving the conjunction and etc. Furthermore, understanding abbreviated word from dialogues or sentences has various problems. Sometimes each abbreviated word has its own meaning regarding of the circumstances or the history of how those abbreviated word created. Therefore, in order to analyze an abbreviated word, we need to know the word formation processes skills which are related to abbreviations.

METHOD
This study is qualitative-quantitative study in which the data were collected, analyzed and described in the form of words and statistical analysis (McLeod, 2008). The current research is done to describe and analyze every phrase which occurred in the “Generation Kill” story dialogues which contain abbreviated words and word formation processes properties. The study also show the full form of the expression and what kind of word formation processes is used. Furthermore, the current research is done by providing the statistical analysis about the use of word formation processes in all of the episodes.

The researcher used the dialogues within “Generation Kill” movie series which restrain abbreviated word and word formation processes properties as the data source. Of all the seven episodes, for the sake of efficiency, the researcher use the first three episodes in that mini war series as the source of the data which consists of: episode 1 - Get Some, episode 2 – The Cradle of Civilization, and episode 3 – Screwby. The researcher decides to use first three episodes because of so many abbreviations found in the dialogue. The data will be taken by transcribing every dialogue in “Generation Kill”. Then, the researcher collect every phrase that contains word formation processes which is related to abbreviation.

The researcher uses several steps in order to collect the data. First, the researcher watches the entire episodes and observe all the dialogues in Generation Kill miniseries. Next, the researcher transcribes all of the dialogues in Generation Kill stories. Further, the researcher identifies every sentence containing
abbreviated word and other word formation processes problems. Last, the researcher classifies the data in order to analyze the word formation processes occurring in the dialogues.

The researcher conducts several approaches to analyze the data. First, the researcher finds all of the abbreviated words in the dialogues. Second, the researcher classifies the data into three categories. The first one is acronym, it is a shortened form of the word built from the initial letter of each word, for example the word “LZ” stands for Landing Zone. Second, it is blending or a process that takes some the part of one word and combines it with the some part of the other word, for example the word “sitrep” which stands for situation report. Third, it is Clipping or the process of sharpening or cutting a word, for example the word “ammo” is the shortened form of ammunition. Subsequently, the researcher reveals the full form of abbreviated word and observes the comparison of word formation process technique used.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The researcher has classified the abbreviated words into four word formation processes categories. The results show 31 words of acronym, two words of blending, 15 words of clipping and two words of multiple processes (for the sake of efficiency, the researcher may find similar words and only mention it once). It appears that the most common process is acronym, followed by clipping, blending and multiple processes. In order to get better details, the researcher elaborates and analyzes all the abbreviated words which involved word formation processes in this section.

Acronyms or initialism are shortenings, built from the initial letters in a phrase or name. While acronyms are pronounced as single words, initialisms are pronounced "as a sequence of letters" (Finegan, 2007). From the table above the researcher found approximately 31 acronyms. Hence, in this explanation the researcher only mentioned similar word once. Some of those words are EOR or Element Of Resource (generally initial of short function word like “of” is not included, but in this case to make this word pronounceable “of” is included), DASC or Direct Air Support Center, CEOI or Communication Electronics
Operating Instruction, MOPP or Mission Oriented Protective Posture and the last is MEF or Marine Expeditionary Force and etc.

According to Prayogo (2007), blending is a combination of parts of two words. To blend is to mix or to combine two things. Blending is typically accomplished by taking only the front part of one word and joining it with the back part of another word. Hence, the process of blending could be accomplished not only by taking the front part of one word and joining it with the last part of another word. In addition, Youssefi (2009) includes that there is another way to blend words. For instance you can take both beginning of a word or take a whole word and combine it with another one. All of the blending words are done by joining both beginning of two different words. The first blend word “sitrep” is originally blended from the word situational + report. The blending process is done by taking both initials of two words and omitting the rest. The other word, “casevac” is using a typical blending process like the word “sitrep”. Originally the process of blending of word “casevac” is formed by taking the both beginning of the word; casualty + evacuation and omitting the rest.

To clip means to sharpen or to cut. The process of clipping frequently shortened words. Clipping generally occurs when a word of more than one syllable is reduced to a shorter form. It often happens in casual speech (Prayogo, 2007). The researcher verifies 15 clipping words (the researcher only mentions the similar words once) in the first episode of “Generation Kill” miniseries. Among those 15 words, there are 10 words whose back part is omitted (back clipping). Those words are congrat/s which originally from the word congratulation/s, op/s which originally from the word operation/s, cal which originally from the word caliber, recon which originally from the word reconnaissance, porn which originally from the word pornography, mag/s which originally from the word magazine/s, reg/s which originally from the word regulation/s, gent/s which originally from the word gentlemen/s, bro which originally from the word brother, and comm/s which originally from the word communication/s and etc.

Yule (2010) state that multiple processes are the operations of more than one process at work in the creation of a particular word. Since this study is limited in the scope of abbreviated word, the researcher only intends that this multiple
processes only involves acronym, blending and clipping. The researcher only found one word which restrains multiple processes (every similar word is mentioned once). Those multiple processes word involve clipping and acronym at the same time. That word is “AK” which originally is clipped from the word AK-47 and the full form is Avtomat Kalashnikova 47.

Last, it is important to note that most all of the references of the full form of the abbreviated word, especially in the military jargon, is taken from the official website of HBO, Ballistic Missile Defense Glossary, and Military acronyms and abbreviations links sponsored by Rubicon Planning, LLC.

CONCLUSIONS

The “Generation Kill” movie series showed that abbreviated words are widely used in military jargon, since this based-on-true-story miniseries movie restrains unique abbreviated words in military conversations. Almost all the military abbreviated words restrain certain meanings which are related to the military standard issue, mostly about some sort of military organization, form of command, rule, and other military issues. Moreover, most ordinary people or civilians will not recognize this kind of abbreviations.

The findings in a previous chapter showed that there are 154 acronym words from the total 242 words or 63.63% of all the data. Clipping process with 67 words or 27.7%, followed by blending with 17 words or 7.03%, and the least is multiple processes with 4 words or 1.64%. In other words, the data above showed that acronym process is the most used word formation processes in military abbreviations, followed by clipping, blending and multiple processes.

SUGGESTIONS

Inspecting abbreviations in military jargons is a research topic rarely touched by linguistic researchers. The researcher recommends the future researchers to conduct a study related to this topic since the researcher found many linguistic aspects worth to explore. The researcher would like to suggest the followings for future researchers: (1) since this study of abbreviations touches on
broader trans-academy viewpoint, it would be very challenging to conduct cross-linguistic study which employs the other kind of word formation processes or morphological aspects in a different jargon or culture or language. (2) It would also be very challenging to investigate about military jargons more since the researcher finds out that military jargons enclose other linguistic features such as pragmatic, hedging, discourse analysis, and etc. In other words, military jargon or slang is a minefield for linguistic study.

REFERENCES


