

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF WORDPLAY IN THE AMERICAN SITCOM *HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER*; THE ROLE OF NEOLOGISM AND PROTOLOGISM

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ABSTRACT:

Wordplay shows the creativity of the user by using words in different and novel ways. Keeping this in view, the current study focused on identifying various functions of Protologisms/Neologism in different contexts. In this study, the American Sitcom *How I Met Your Mother* created was selected as a sample. Simple convenient sampling technique was adopted to select the sample for the study. The documentary analysis as qualitative research method was used to collect the data. Findings of the study indicate there is generation of some new words in English language. It will be helpful for the instructors, teachers, trainers and learners of English Language to know about the new trends of English language. It will be helpful for the learner of English Language to know about new trends of English Language as how native speakers experiment with their language and how wordplay used in social media becomes famous.

Keywords:

wordplay, protologism, neologism, social media trends, experiments, creativity.

INTRODUCTION

Playing with words is the part of the communication of the users of any particular language. People use different kinds of words, phrases and expressions based on their language to communicate or to serve their purpose of communication.

Verbal humor is based on explicit properties of language such as similarity of sounds of words, words having different meanings, creating entirely a new word, mixing the two words to make a new word or sometimes words are used from the literature to fit the situation. In order to produce intellectual and situational wordplay, speakers need to have a certain social, cultural and linguistic knowledge. On the other hand, this use of wordplay can be truly deceitful because what is funny in the United States of American does not have to be funny in the United Kingdom and vice versa (Chiaro, 1992). According to Chiaro (1992),

“The term wordplay includes every conceivable way in which language is used with the intent to amuse...the term word play conjures up an array of

conceits ranging from puns and spoonerisms to wisecracks and funny stories (p. 4).”

In this sitcom, *How I Met Your Mother*, various comic devices are used to amuse the audience. This sitcom is famous for its unique and eccentric way of using the language to produce humor. The interesting fact is that a lot of new words, phrases, terms and expressions are employed in this sitcom which makes the sitcom interesting and popular not only in American society but also worldwide.

It is a fact that language changes with the passage of time due to its dynamic nature. Language change is obvious as well as mysterious. The English of the late 14th century is very different from the English of modern day life. The question that historical linguistics poses is that why and how language is changed. There is phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, and semantic change over time. Print as well as electronic media play a vital role in changing language. According to Leah (2014), English language is developing rapidly and sitcoms are source of effecting on language. He says, “Though

sitcoms, learners become familiar with collocations, phrasal verbs, and means for expressing functions, idiomatic expressions, lexical phrases and acronyms used in nowadays English (p. 101).” The reason behind this is that sitcoms are related to real life situations that audience face.

Statement of the Problem

Different comic devices are used to create humor in situational comedies. The problem this study aims to deal with what new terms and words are invented by native speakers of this sitcom and how. Previous studies show that wordplay has been the subject of many researchers. Researches have been done on several sitcoms as *Friends*(2013), *Simpson*(2008) and *Yes Minister*(2014). There is no study on *How I Met Your Mother* in this regard. Besides all these researches are based on the idea whether wordplay used in these sitcoms can be translated in other languages or not but this study will deal with the idea that how natives experiment with their language and how wordplay used in social media becomes famous.

Research Questions of the Study

Following are the research questions of the study:

- i. What are the functions of various Protologisms in different contexts?
- ii. What are the functions of various Neologisms in different contexts?

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to:

- i. Find out various functions of Protologisms and Neologism in different contexts.

Significance of the Study

Wordplay is an essential tool of the writer. This study can be helpful in understanding that wordplay is an intelligent technique to create humor, interest and attention with layers of meaning hidden even in a single word. Besides, this study can develop critical insight in viewers of sitcom. Furthermore, the study will open new doors for further research. This study will give awareness to the non-native speakers of English about new trends of English Language which are

being used by the native speakers in their everyday life. This study will also explain how new words are added in the speech of the people in their everyday life by watching social media.

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

Wordplay is an inseparable part of communication which is a frequent and common phenomenon of the language. Delabastita (1997) defines wordplay as “a deliberate communicative strategy, or the result thereof, used with a specific semantic or pragmatic effect in mind (p. 1).” Wordplay can be employed anywhere based on the situation and location. It can be employed among friends as well as in media. The goal of wordplay here is to capture the reader’s or viewer’s attention with the help of unusual constructions or inventions used in the titles, names, labels or headings of the newspaper articles or in the programs on television. As mentioned above, wordplay is often related to humor.

What is Linguistic Analysis?

Lapham (2017) defines linguistic analysis which refers to the scientific analysis of a language sample. It involves at least one of the five main branches of linguistics, which are phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Linguistic analysis can be used to describe the unconscious rules and processes that speakers of a language use to create spoken or written language, and this can be useful to those who want to learn a language or translate from one language to another. Some argue that it can also provide insight into the minds of the speakers of a given language, although this idea is controversial. The drive behind linguistic analysis is to understand and describe the knowledge that underlies the ability to speak a given language, and to understand how the human mind processes and creates language.

Kinds of Wordplay

There are different ways to produce wordplay. Delabastita (1996) suggests the following categorization according to the linguistic means used to achieve wordplay:

- Phonological and graphological structure

- Lexical structure (polysemy)
- Lexical structure (idiom)
- Morphological structure

Phonological and Graphological Structure

Delabastita (1996) says that there are certain numbers of phonemes and graphemes in any language. Due to these limited number of rules each language employs specific number of combinations. He defines the term 'sound-play' which "borders on alliteration, assonance and consonance (p. 130)." He, moreover, says that, "in sound-play sound provides the basis for the verbal association, whereas anagrammatic wordplay is based on spelling (p. 130)." As an example of sound-play, Delabastita provides an example as, "love at first bite." This sentence is based on a famous expression as "love at first sight" in which the noun 'sight' is replaced by its paronym, i.e. a word whose pronunciation is very similar but not identical.

A. Lexical Structure (Polysemy)

Evans (2006) claims that "polysemy is the phenomenon where a single linguistic unit exhibits multiple distinct yet related meanings (p. 36)."

B. Lexical Structure (Idiom)

Makkai (1972) writes that there are two main types of idioms. The first type of the idioms is called 'idioms of decoding' which means that these types of idioms are not identifiable or in other words these idioms are called true idioms. Leah (2011) explains this type of idioms in these words, "the meaning of individual words in an expression has nothing to do in the comprehension of the whole meaning (p. 01)." It means that the meanings of such idioms are difficult to apprehend because individual meanings are different than the collective meanings of the words. The other type of the idioms is called 'idioms of encoding' or idioms which can be identified. Idioms of this kind are transparent in meanings because such idioms can be found in other languages as well with a slight difference in any part of speech.

Morphological Structure

Morphological structure is related to words as how they are formed and how they have

relationships with other words in the same language. It further analyzes how the words are structured as root words, stems, suffixes and prefixes. Morphological structure leads to some important means towards vocabulary enrichment because making of new words is the inseparable part of playing the words. Following are the categories of morphological structure:

A. Neologism

Peprnik (2001) defines neologism as, "a new word or new sense of a word. Neologisms come from any of the categories of word formation (p. 76)." It is fact that literature is one of the main sources for many neologisms, as writers show creativity when they are unable to find any appropriate word in the existing vocabulary. For Example Shakespeare's 'bedazzled' from "The Taming of the Shrew": "Pardon, old father, my mistaking eyes, that have been so bedazzled with the sun that everything I look on seemeth green." This word 'bedazzled' that Shakespeare invented is to describe the gleam of sunlight that has come to describe rhinestone-embellished clothing.

B. Protologism

Epstein (2012) used this term for the first time. According to Epstein (2012), protologism is a new word which is not used into a particular language but it can be included in the language at their later stage. These words are used by a small group of people but with the passage of time these words can be used by a large community even can be included in the dictionary. He says:

"I suggest calling such brand new words "protologisms" (from Greek *protos*, meaning "first, original" and Greek *logos*, meaning "word"; cf. *prototype*, *protoplasm*). The protologism is a freshly minted word not yet widely accepted. It is a verbal prototype, which may eventually be adopted for public service or remain a whim of linguistic imagination (p. 101)."

According to Epstein (2012), every word is protologisms in the start but with the passage of time it becomes neologism. The most important feature of protologim is that its meaning is unstable because they are only used by a small group.

A. Abbreviation

There are three types of abbreviations. Firstly abbreviation is formed by the initial letters of the words such as USA is the abbreviation of United States of America or e.g. for example given. Furthermore there is second type which is called 'acronyms'. This type of abbreviation is pronounced as full word contrary to its initial abbreviation which is pronounced as separate letters such as radar and NASA. Third type is called 'clipping'. In clipping initial letters or combination of the words are not considered but one long word is abbreviated such as info is taken from information, mike is from microphone. Such abbreviated words are commonly used in language and enter in the vocabulary but in some cases such words can be used as the means of wordplay (Veselovská, 2009).

B. Composition

Veselovská (2009) defines composition as a process of word formation where two or more lexemes of the words are united to make a new one. The difference between lexical and grammatical functions of the individual parts of the words is important. There are three types of composition. The first type of composition is called 'derivation' where derivational affixes are added to the base. With the addition of the affixes the part of the speech of the base is changed. The example of this kind is 'Christmas-y' where suffix 'y' is added to the noun 'Christmas' making it an adjective. Second type of the composition is called 'blending'. In blending a new word is created by taking some parts of other words, e.g. 'smog' is the blended word from the first three letters of the word 'smoke' and last letter of the word 'fog'. Similarly the word 'brunch' is the blended word from 'breakfast' and 'lunch'. Now this word is commonly used in English language. Third type of composition is called compounding. There are two major sub categories of compounding. The first category of considers headedness and is called 'endocentric compounds'. In this category the head is a hyperonym of the whole compound as 'doghouse' is the type of the house. Other category is called 'exocentric compound' or in other words headless compound. In this type meaning are not deducible from the constituents like highbrow represents the intellectuals. Third type is called 'coordinate compound' which has two heads and there is no

relationship of subordination between the single constituents for example, 'pass-fail test'. Another category of compounds is called 'quotation compound'. It is very common in English language. Any part of speech can be included in quotation compound as a whole making it a noun such as 'hard-to-do list'.

C. Portmanteau

Another name of the second type of the composition 'blending' is called 'portmanteau'. Nash (1985) says that Portmanteau is a kind of wordplay where a word fuses both sounds and the meanings of the two words as in 'motel' which is blended from two words 'hotel' and 'motor'. It is defined as single morpheme that represents two or more morphemes. He defines it as, "...a label for the coinage that packs two meanings into one word (p. 143)." He further says that this concept of portmanteau was developed by Lewis Carroll for the first time in his book *Through the Looking Glass* (1871) where Humpty Dumpty explains to Alice the creation of new terms or unusual words in Jabberwocky as 'slithy' is the mixture of 'lithe and slimy' and 'mimsy' is combined with two words 'flimsy and miserable'. Humpty Dumpty uses the word 'portmanteau' where two meanings are packed up into one word.

D. Conversion

Veselovská (2009) says that in conversion there are two ways of producing new words. The first way of conversion is called 'true conversion' or 'zero affixation' where a new word is conversed without adding any affixation. There are lots of words in which original and final forms of the words are same such as 'both' can be used as adjective as well as pronoun without changing any spelling or sounds of the word. The second category of the conversion is called 'partial conversion' and it needs some phonological changes as, "stress shifting (as in increase), vowel length/tone or quality (sing → song) or consonant mutation (advice → advise) (pp. 26-27)."

Sitcom- Situational Comedy

Sitcom- situational comedy is the specific genre of television. Mills (2005) explains sitcom as "a standard definition of sitcom [is] concentrating on the recurring set-up and

characters, the happy ending and the fact that individual episodes rarely refer to events in previous ones (p. 27).” He further adds in that this definition of sitcom is somehow personal and dependent on the prior knowledge, therefore it is difficult to tell that when a work is no longer a part of a specific genre. Specifications of any genre contains, “of core characteristics which would be agreed to by most people (p. 26).” The sitcom genre has certain and the most agreed upon characteristics which are; three-camera setup to casting choices and program lengths, the laugh track, narrative tropes and typical stories, almost half an hour long (20-30 minutes), static setting, employing stereotypical characters who lack the capability to change themselves or the situations despite the fact that they try to change those, thus repeat the similar actions in a comic fashion.

Premise of the Sitcom

How I Met Your Mother in short HIMYM is an American sitcom that was originally broadcasted on CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System) from September 19, 2005 to March 31, 2014. Main characters of the sitcom are Josh Radnor, Jason Segel, Cobie Smulders, Neil Patrick Harris, Alyson Hannigan and Cristin Milioti playing the roles of Ted Mosby, Marshall Eriksen, Robin Scherbatsky, Barney Stinson, Lily Aldrin and Tracy McConnell (The Mother).

The series starts in 2030 with the adventures of Ted Mosby who tells the story to his children, Luke (David Henrie) and daughter Penny (Lyndsy Fonseca), as how he meets their mother. Ted Mosby goes back in 2005 when he was 27 years old, living in New York City with his best friends Marshall Erikson and Lily Aldrin in an apartment. The story primary deals with the incidents of Ted’s best friends including the long lasting couple Marshall Erikson and Lily Aldrin, the playboy and womanizer Barney Stinson and a news anchor Robin Scherbatsky. The series discovers different storylines including relationship of Robin with Ted and Barney, Lily and Marshall’s relationship, career lives of all the characters, and many conflicts among them.

The future-set frame is officially the present day of the show where narrator tells the story in multiple ways. There are multiple

flashbacks even by other characters as well. Sometimes narrator says something else but mean something else as he does not want his kids to know the real story because children must not know all the secrets of their parents but the audience knows and this thing makes this series an interesting and funny sitcom. Sometimes he forgets certain elements of the stories because it happened many years ago, for example he calls one of his girlfriend as “Blah Blah” because he forgets her name which was pretty amusing. In another episode he forgets a bartender’s name and calls him “Mark, Mike, and Derek” and finally admits that he has forgotten his real name.

This is a traditional love story of Ted Mosby with Tracy McConnell who is not in the sitcom until the 8th season finale. Instead, the show focuses on Ted’s prior relationships with other women including Robin who is the love of her since the first season. But ultimately he finds the eventual happiness with Tracy McConnell, who is the mother of his children.

There is a long lasting love story of Marshall and Lily who has been together since high school. They broke at the end the first season for a few months. Their love story is the inspiration for the whole group.

Barney Stinson creates humour and interest in the series due to his interesting, funny, sometimes silly adventures. He plays with the words a lot. Barney Stinson and Robin Scherbatsky both avoid serious relationships until they get married, but divorced after a few years. In the start of the series Robin and Ted became partners for one year but broke up because there was no future in that relationship. Robin and Ted get back together in the year 2030 when Tracy has been dead and Robin and Barney are separated (How I Met Your Mother, n.d.).

Methodology

Descriptive Research Design

The researcher used descriptive research design. This study utilized qualitative research approach to collect the data. This research approach is used by the researcher because it was fulfilling the purpose of the research. The data is based on videos which are observed by the researcher carefully to find out the examples of

those words which are fulfilling the objectives of the study.

Population

In this study target population is based on the American Sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*. This situation comedy contained nine seasons (from 2005 to 2014). And total numbers of episodes are 208. The running time of each episode is 22 minutes.

Sampling Technique

For the purpose of collecting the data the researcher chose convenience sampling technique.

This research is based on analysis of individual examples of wordplay taken from the American Sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*. By utilizing convenience sampling method the researcher selected 16 examples from English subtitles of different episodes to demonstrate the diversity of wordplay. Individual examples of wordplay were presented, categorized and commented to see how different kinds of words are playing the purpose of humor and interest. The researcher saw different episodes randomly and found out different examples of wordplay.

Research instrument

Documentary analysis technique was adopted to collect the data for this study. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for studying or evaluating documents—both in the form of printed and electronic material. Figueroa (2008) designed the Qualitative Documentary Analysis technique.

This method was used to provide an interpretation of *How I Met Your Mother* to further understand the objectives of the research by using *How I Met Your Mother* series as the text. Documentary analysis technique was adopted where a list of wordplay was checked while watching the episodes of this sitcom. This study investigated the kinds of wordplay used in new way in American Sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*.

Data Collection/Procedure

The data for this study was collected from different episodes of this sitcom randomly. Total numbers of seasons are 9 and episodes are 208 and the running time is 22 minutes. Original

release was September 19, 2005 to March 31, 2014. The researcher watched different episodes of this sitcom to find the kinds of wordplay. The data consisted of those examples of the wordplay where characters of the sitcom played with and upon the words to create humor and caused popularity. The data was analyzed qualitatively. The researcher collected the data from English Scripts taken from website <http://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk>.

Data Analysis

Introduction

To show the variety of wordplay, the American situational comedy *How I Met Your Mother* was selected. In this section of the thesis, individual examples of wordplay are presented, commented, categorized and contrasted to show how native speakers form entirely new words or change the existing words. In this chapter when every example is written, first of all there is mentioning of number of season and episode and then the name of the episode. While describing all the examples, first of all the researcher defined background of the examples in which certain wordplay is used. Background information of each wordplay gave better understanding of the examples.

There will be the use of certain abbreviations in during analysis as:

S – Season E – Episode

Results Presentation

1. Neologism (on Word Level)

In *How I Met Your Mother* there are a lot of words which are invented and are defined as well according to characters' own sense.

Example 1

In S03E16 *Sandcastles in the Sand*, when Robin meets her teen age friend from Canada, she behaves like she is sixteen again. Ted and Lily also behave in such manner when they meet their high school friends. So they gave this situation a term which is called 'revertigo'.

“Ted: When you're around someone from your past, you kind of revert back to who you were when you knew them. There's not really a name for it, though.

Marshall: It's called revertigo (Kang and Fryman, 2008)."

This term is coined from the word 'revert' which means return to previous situation, state or topic by adding 'igo' at the end. The meaning of 'revertigo' is also taken from the word 'revert' to some extent. In 'revertigo' there is a specific situation of turning back where people act in the same way as they were doing in the past when they meet people from the past.

Example 2

In S6E18 *A Change of Heart*, Marshall and Ted try to convince Robin that her new friend's habits are like a dog. Here Marshall coins a new term.

"Marshall: I think we've all noticed a few curious mannerisms.

Or rather, doggerisms (Kuhn and Fryman, 2011)."

Here Marshall wants to say that Scooby has a few mannerisms which are like dog. But soon he realizes that mannerism is not a right word to explain this phenomenon so he coins a word as 'doggerisms' which is quite obvious that a person has the characteristics like dog.

A. Abbreviation

Example 3

In S05E20 *Home Wreckers*, Ted is very desperate after his mother Virginia's second marriage with Clint and Barney as usual makes a comment that he used to like Ted's mother.

"Barney: Sometimes, people make the wrong decisions in life. Like your mother...Ted, as you know, I've always been very, very fond of your mother. In fact, Virginia and I shared a special moment back in 2006 B.C. Before Clint (Harris and Fryman, 2010)."

Barney uses the abbreviation of BC according to his own sense and gives entirely different words to those abbreviations where BC (Before Christ) becomes BC (Before Clint). Barney meant that before the arrival of Clint he and his mother used to like each other which is entirely a made up story like the made abbreviation of BC.

B. Composition

Example 4

In S02E22 *Something Blue*, Barney tries to realize Ted that what are the benefits of being single and how a person misses a lot of awesome stuff if he/she is in relationship.

"Barney: You are going to miss out on a lot of awesome stuff. You'll be at home with the kid while I am out awesome-ing all over the place (Bays, Thomas and Fryman, 2007)."

In this example first type of composition is used which is called 'derivation' where suffix 'ing' is added to the adjective 'awesome' making it verb. Lexical and grammatical function of the word is changed in this example. In the first sentence Barney uses awesome as an adjective but in second sentence he uses 'awesom-ing' as the verb means doing the stuff which is awesome.

Example 5

In S07E09 *Disaster Averted*, Barney tries his best to lose the ducky tie. Kevin, Robin's therapist figures out why Barney is so desperate to lose the tie. Barney is in fact going to meet his girlfriend Nora's parents. So he wants to look good.

"Kevin: You're meeting Nora's parents tomorrow!

Barney: Wrong! Wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong! It's in two days, and I really want them to like me!

Ted: Oh-ho! Therapist! (Rashid and Shea, 2011)."

This is also derivation where lexical and grammatical function of the word 'therapist' is changed. Ted plays on the word 'therapist' which is a noun. Therapist is the person who is skilled in a certain kind of therapy. When Kevin gets the meaning of Barney's restlessness related to lose his tie, Ted becomes so excited that he adds the suffix 'ed' to the word 'therapist' by making it a verb.

Example 6

In S06E11 *The Mermaid Theory*, Barney invents a new concept 'The Mermaid Thoery' which means every women who is initially repugnant like manatee will turn into an attractive women like mermaid with the passage of time if you spend time with her a lot. When Marshall hired a new assistant, who was not attractive to him initially became attractive with the passage of time which led him to ask the question from Barney as how to 'un-mermaid' the women?

"Barney: Once mermaid-ified, there's only one way a woman can go back to being unattractive again, but it's pretty gruesome. Marshall: Death?

Barney: Worse. Pregnancy (Rashid and Fryman, 2010)."

Barney explains how to go for the reverse condition. He adds the suffix 'fied' to the noun 'mermaid' and makes it an adjective. Now mermaid-ified is the quality of a woman in which a woman becomes mermaid from a manatee that term is used for an unattractive woman.

C. Portmanteau

Example 7

In S04E14 *The Possimpible* (Appendix A), Barney shows his video that he made for applying a job. In the video he makes a new word by combining two parts of the two words.

"Barney: All my life, I have dared to go past what is possible.

Interviewer: To the impossible?

Barney: Actually, past that-- to the place where the possible and the impossible meet to become the possimpible.

Lily: The possimpible? Really?

Barney: Inventing your own word shows creativity and vision. Visiativity (Groff and Fryman, 2009)."

In this example Barney makes two new words. He makes 'possimpible' by combining possible and impossible and 'visiativity' by combining 'vision' and 'creativity'. This phenomenon in the word formation is called 'blending' where new word is made by taking some parts of the other words.

Example 8

In S02E05 *World's Greatest Couple*, Lily welcomes Ted and Robin in her new apartment which is extremely a small room containing kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. Lily's stove got 4 characteristics.

"Ted: Hey, is that a toilet in your kitchen?

Robin: Or a stove in your bathroom?

Lily: Oh, that's not just a stove.

That's a stovenkerator: a combination of a stove, oven and sink and refrigerator.

Stovenkerator (Hsueh and Fryman, 2006)."

Lily makes up the word 'Stovenkerator' by combining different parts of the four words. She has a stove that works as a sink, refrigerator and an oven as well. So she takes 'stov' from stove, 'ven' from oven, the sound of 'enk' from sink and 'rator' from refrigerator and makes the word 'Stovenkerator'. She saves herself from the trouble of telling four names together instead she

chooses to make up a new word by blending four words together.

Example 9

In S02E09 *Slap Bet*, Barney and Marshall bet on Robin's past life as whoever wins the bet can slap the other as hard as he can. From 2nd season till 9th season all the characters use the word 'slap' and blend it to other words from time to time.

In S03E09 *Marshall Slapsgiving* Marshall invents a day using a blended word.

"Marshall: Oh, hey, by the way, if anyone wants to come over early Thursday, we can watch the Slapsgiving Day Parade...You know why? I've invented a new holiday: Slapsgiving (Kang and Fryman, 2006)."

Here Marshall invents the word 'slapsgiving' where he blends the word 'slap' with the last part of the word 'thanksgiving'. In the same episode, Marshall and Barney blends two other words with 'slap'. Firstly Ted drops some appetizers which Marshall calls as 'The slap-petizers' by blending 'slap' with the last part of the word 'appetizers'. Secondly Barney makes fun of Marshall who wants to slap Barney but cannot because Lily has forbidden him to do so.

"Barney: Marshall, you're not eating. Did something spoil your slap-petite? (Kang and Fryman, 2006)."

Barney blends slap with last part of the word 'appetite'.

In S05E09 *Slapsgiving 2: Revenge of the Slap* Ted tells Robin that she is so skillful in slapping that he wants to be her 'slap-prentice' which is combination of two words 'slap' and 'apprentice'.

D. Conversion

Example 10

In S01E07 *Matchmaker*, Ted goes to a match making office to have a girlfriend in his life. The lady of the office does not reply him for five days which makes Ted tense.

"Ted: It's been five days. Should I be worried? Just play it cool.

Lily: Don't Ted out about it.

Ted: Did you just use my name as a verb?

Barney: Yeah, we do that behind your back. Ted out. To overthink.

Also see, Ted up. Ted up, to overthink something with disastrous results.

Sample sentence, Billy Teded up when he tried to...

Ted: Okay. I get it. Don't worry. I'm not gonna Ted anything up, or out (Marcil, Johnson and Fryman, 2005)."

This is the example of the conversion in the sense that Ted's friends use his name as verb. Even they made verb phrases out of his name as 'Ted out' and 'Ted up'. In this example Barney explains to Ted the meanings of these phrases.

Example 11

In S05E16 *Hooked*, all the friends discuss about the phenomenon of keeping someone 'on the hook' which means to have someone in your life whom you do not take interest in but still you do not break up with them in case of their need in future. They all use a traditional sentence on them as "I cannot be with your right now". Similarly Lily had a boyfriend Scooter in high school who is now working in her school as a chef whom she is keeping on her hook by using "I cannot be with your right now".

"Marshall: "Right Now?" You "right nowed" Scooter? (Kang and Fryman, 2010)."

In this example there is a conversion of the verb from the adverb. 'Now' is an adverb but Marshall used it as a verb by adding 'ed' at the end of the word. So the sentence made sense that Lily used the term 'right now' on Scooter in the past. Instead of saying, 'you used 'right now' term on Scooter', he said, "You 'right nowed' Scooter?"

2. Neologism (on phrase level)

Example 12

The Olive Theory

In S01E01 *pilot*, Marshall and Lily invent a concept called 'The Olive Thoery'. This theory says that in any relationship if one person hates olives and the other one loves them, it would make them a great couple because it is a perfect

balance that both love the opposite. Ted explains this theory to Robin during the very first meeting when she says that she hates olives,

"The Olive Theory. The Olive Theory is based on my friends, Marshall and Lily. He hates olives, she loves them. And in a weird way, that's what makes them such a great couple. Perfect balance. (Bays, Thomas and Fryman, 2005).

Example 13

The lemon law

In S01E08 *The Duel*, Barney invents a law which says that when you are on a date you have first five minutes to decide whether you are going to prolong the date or to say good bye within these five minutes. Barney explains it in following way,

"A lemon law...From the moment the date begins, you have five minutes to decide whether you're going to commit to an entire evening. And, if you don't, it's no hard feelings, just, 'Good night. 'Thanks for playing. See you never.' The lemon law (Kellet and Fryman, 2005)."

Later in this episode a girl uses that law on Barney when she says,

"Yeah, I am sorry. I'm gonna have to lemon-law you (Kellet and Fryman, 2005)."

Example 14

The Woo Girl

In S04E08 *Woooo!*, Lily's colleague Jillian invites her on her birthday. Lily accompanies Robin there. But when they got there, they saw Jillian is shouting 'wooo' at every petty thing. Then Lily finds out Jillian is in fact a 'woo girl'. A Woo Girl is a single girl that likes to go out to party and frequently yells "wooooo" but in reality she is very lonely and depressed. Barney thinks it is enjoyable to see woo girls. Lily explains the woo girl in this way,

"A woo girl is a type of young woman, Who, like the cuckoo bird or the whip-poor will, Gets her name from the signature sound she makes. Now, a woo

can be elicited in many different ways. From a certain song coming on the jukebox to half-priced shots. From a ride on a mechanical bull to, well, pretty much anything (Bays, Thomas and Fryman, 2008)."

Example 15

The Chain of Screaming, The Circle of Screaming, or The Pyramid of Screaming

In S03E15 *The Chain of Screaming*, Marshall is very upset because his boss Arthur Hobbes screams at his subordinates a lot. Even Marshall becomes the victim of his screaming. Barney then tells him that when your boss screams at you, you should never scream back because eventually your boss's boss will scream at him thus completing the circle of screaming. Barney defines it in this way:

"The Chain of Screaming starts at the top. Arthur's boss's boss screams at Arthur's boss. Arthur's boss screams at Arthur. Arthur screams at you. You go home and scream at Lily. Lily screams at one of the kids in her kindergarten class. Then that kid screams at her dad, Arthur's boss's boss. And the whole thing starts all over again (Bays, Thomas and Fryman, 2008)."

Example 16

Early Relationship Chicken

In S07E14 *46 Minutes*, the future Ted tells his kids that when you are in an early relationship you do not say 'no' to anything because you want to prove your partner that you are very cool and interesting.

"NARRATOR: Kids, early in any relationship, there's a phase where you don't say no to anything. Because you want to seem interesting adventurous and open-minded. I call it Early Relationship Chicken (Gregor, Mand and Fryman, 2012)."

Conclusion

It was the purpose of the study to find out the functions of different kinds of

protologism/neologism. Besides it was also intended to show that how the newly coined words which are functional among peculiar group of people (Protologism) will gain the position of recognized words (Neologism) ultimately due to its popularity on social media. This study revealed that neologism both at word or phrase level resulted in the formation of wordplay which led to humor. The word formation was thoroughly discussed under sub headings of neologism i.e. abbreviation, composition, portmanteau and conversion.

It was found during the research that many words which were coined on social media and were in used only among the specific group of people (Protologism) ultimately gained the position as recognized words in dictionary edition (Neologism). Hotchen (2017), the editor for Oxford Dictionaries, provides examples of new words added to oxford dictionary e.g. 'fitspiration'; which is the blend of fit and inspiration and is used to refer to any person or thing that motivates you to improve your fitness, skitch: this word is a blend of 'skate or ski' and 'hitch', and refers to the activity of 'hitching' onto a motor vehicle while riding a bike or skateboard, 'craptacular'; the blend of crap with positive words like 'spectacular' and 'fantastic' generally implies ironic humour on the part of the speaker rather than a serious attempt at offence, 'superfruit'; a term used to refer to fruits considered to be particularly beneficial, 'freecycle'; something you give it away for free rather than selling it or throwing it away.

The words coined in the sitcom *How I Met Your Mother* have also been added in Urban Dictionary which is an online cross sourced dictionary of slangs and phrases. So it is expected that these words will also get a recognized position in other dictionaries as well by making them official words.

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