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ABBREVIATIONS IN ENGLISH

Abstract

The essence of good writing is precision and clarity, and the use of abbreviations is an ideal way to ensure these essentials. Abbreviations are shortened forms of words. Their purpose is to provide readily understandable substitutes and in this way aid the reading effort. This phenomenon perfectly reflects the spirit of our time, when there is a need to transmit much information during the shortest period of time.

Abbreviations add colour, fun and interest to language and thereby they act as mnemonics, or memory devices. Many abbreviations when used properly can certainly enhance communications, because they act as 'short-hand' and therefore increase the efficiency of communications; in other words, more meaning is expressed in less time and fewer words. Abbreviations are a fascinating reflection of the development of communications, language and social attitudes. As literacy rose, and as advances in science and technology brought with them more complicated terms and concepts, the tendency of abbreviating terms became increasingly convenient. In business, industry, education and government abbreviations are often used by people working within the same fields. The major benefit of abbreviation is precision, concision and clarity; as in mathematics complicated structural ideas may be expressed briefly but precisely.

Keywords: *acronym, alphabetic abbreviation, orthographic abbreviation, clipping, blending, initial abbreviation*

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İngilis dilində qısaltmalar

Xülasə

Düzgün yazının əsasını dəqiqlik və aydınlıq təşkil edir, qısaltmaların istifadəsi bu əsasların təminatı üçün ideal yoldur. İxtisarlarda sözlərin qısa formalarıdır. Onların istifadəsində əsas məqsəd asanlıqla anlaşılan əvəzədiciləri vermək və bu yolla mətnin daha qısa müddətdə oxunub dərk edilməsinə yardım etməkdir. Bu fenomen müasir dövrün tələbinə tam uyğundur, xüsusilə də ən qısa vaxt ərzində çox informasiyanı ötürmək zərurəti yarandıqda qısaltmalardan istifadə məqsədə uyğundur.

Qısaltmalar dilə rəngarənglik, əyləncə, maraq əlavə edir və beləliklə onlar dildə mnemonik rolunu oynayır. İxtisarlardan düzgün şəkildə istifadə etdikdə məlumatlandırma səviyyəsi daha da genişlənir, çünki onlar qısa vasitələrdir və beləliklə məlumatlandırmanın effektivliyini daha da artırır; başqa sözlə desək, az sözlə və qısa zamanda daha çox məna ifadə olunur. Qısaltmalarda kommunikasiya, dil və sosial münasibətlərin inkişafı açıq-aşkar öz əksini tapır. Elm inkişaf etdikcə, elm və texnikadakı irəliləyişlər nəticəsində dilə çoxlu mürəkkəb termin və məfhumlar daxil olduqca qısaltmalardan istifadə tendensiyası daha da artır. İdarəetmədə, təhsildə, biznesdə və sənayedə qısaltmalar eyni sahədə çalışan insanlar arasında çox geniş şəkildə istifadə olunur. Qısaltmaların əsas faydası dəqiqlik, müxtəsərlik və aydınlıqdır; necə ki, riyaziyyat elmində mürəkkəb quruluşlu konsepsiyalar qısa, lakin dəqiq şəkildə ifadə edilir.

Açar sözlər: *akronim, əlifba abbreviaturası, orfoqrafik abbreviatura, kəsmə, qarışdırma, ilkin abbreviatura*

Introduction

Our intention in this article is to provide the detailed explanation for the Abbreviations. We give the definitions given by different lexicologists, on the structure, origin and usage of abbreviations. The chief purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the significance of impact of the abbreviation forms on the English language and to prove the fact that this influence is mostly distinctive feature of the vocabulary of the language. The given paper gives us a notion about the abbreviations, their stylistic functions in modern linguistics. We also give classification of abbreviations. The chief purpose of this paper is to detect the peculiarities of processes of abbreviation formation in modern English. The main aim of the research is to analyze the usage of abbreviations in Modern English. The tasks are:

1. to analyse the word formation processes in modern linguistics;
2. to give the definition of abbreviation;
3. to study the ways of forming abbreviation in the English language;
4. to investigate common Latin abbreviations used in English;
5. to analyse the usage of abbreviations in various spheres;
6. to give solutions for eliminating abbreviations to a minimum;

As we see we are making progress day by day and we are learning to make shorter nearly everything. It's human nature to make hard things easy or to make hard things disappear. Same goes with the long words. Rather than writing or typing various long words we use the method of typing or writing each letter for each word, thereby we shorten our workload and make it easy for others also to understand.

Our investigation identifies the basic characteristics and tendencies of English abbreviations. The method that has been adopted to explore the topic and carry out the analysis combines descriptive and comparative approaches.

Abbreviations in English.

It's human nature to make hard things easy or to make hard things disappear. Same goes with the languages and long words. Rather than writing or typing various long words we use the method of writing or typing each letter for each word, thereby we shorten our workload and make it easy for others also to understand. These shortened forms are known as abbreviations.

Abbreviation became possible around 1000 BC and was common in the classical world: the Greek letters *ΙΧΘΥΣ* (making up the word for 'fish') stood for *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ Υἱός Σωτήρ* (Jesus Christ Son of God Saviour), and as a result of their use the fish became a Christian symbol; the Latin letters *SPQR* stood for *Senatus Populusque Romanus* (the Senate and the Roman people). In addition, short forms such as *IMP CAES* (*Imperator Caesar* Emperor Caesar) were common on inscriptions and coins (McArthur, 2005).

People use the Acronyms and Abbreviations for almost thousands of years. We can find a large number of Abbreviations in Ancient Greek's manuscripts. After the 11th century, Acronyms and Abbreviations came to their Golden Age. Even in every chapter of the legal documents existed Acronyms and Abbreviations. This kind of situation had been continued to 15th century, after the invention of printing machine. In the Second World War due to the rapidly military communication, the Acronyms and Abbreviations started to be used very widely.

The phenomenon of abbreviation perfectly reflects the spirit of our dynamic epoch. It is an urgent need to transmit much information during the shortest period of time. Abbreviations are a convenient way of presenting information in a smaller amount of space. Now, let's define the word *abbreviation* in a proper definition.

Abbreviation is a shortening of a word or words using more than one letter from each word (Television — TV, the German Elektrokardiogramm — EKG), by cutting off letters from the end (General — Gen.) or from the middle (road — Rd.) and adding a period, or, in postal standards, by eliminating most vowels and some consonants (boulevard — Blvd, highway — Hwy).

Abbreviation (from Latin *brevis* "short") is a shorter form of a word, but more particularly, an abbreviation is a letter or group of letters, taken from a word or words, and represents them for the

sake of brevity. Brevity is the basic rule in the development of language and words, and when expressing complex meanings and much information, abbreviations could effectively save the time of writing, reading, and talking. It must be stressed that abbreviating words is to a great extent orthographically-based, so it differs considerably from most other word-formation processes. Abbreviations are a significant and the most dynamic area of the lexicon of many languages. They replace longer terms with simpler ones.

Abbreviations take on various forms: an abbreviation can be (1) the first and last letters of a word, as Dr., Mr.; (2) the initial letter, as C. (= Catholic, Celtic, etc.); (3) the initial letters of the words of a phrase, as EST (or E.S.T. or e.s.t. = Eastern Standard Time), OTC (or O.T.C. = Officer's Training Corps); minor words such as preposition are often left out, as D.D.S. (= Doctor of Dental Surgery), but occasionally retained, as in MIA and POW; (4) the first few letters of a word, as *illus.* (= illustration); (5) a combination of (1) and (4), as *mol. wt.* (= molecular weight); (6) a shortened form based on substitution, as i.e. (= *id est*), P.M. or p.m. (= *post mortem* after death; also = *post meridiem* afternoon) (Cherry, 1986: 29).

As we mentioned, an abbreviation is a short way of writing a word or a phrase that could also be written out in full. Thus, for example, we might write *Dr Kinsey* instead of *Doctor Kinsey*. As we see *Dr* is an abbreviation for the word *Doctor*. In the same way, the phrase *for example* can be shortened to *e.g.*

Many abbreviations are not understood unless the term is written in full at first mention, with the abbreviation given in brackets. We should follow these general rules:

a) In general, we may abbreviate words only when the short form will be immediately recognized by the reader, and we must sure that the same abbreviation is used elsewhere in our text to represent the word or words involved.

b) Some standard abbreviations such as i.e., AD, IQ, ESP, CBC and MP need not be spelled out because they are well known and in many cases occur as dictionary entries.

c) Many commonly used words that are actually abbreviations are now rarely regarded as such, including phone, ad, fridge, exam, memo, math and photo. Most such words should be avoided in formal writing, though bus and cello are exceptions to this rule.

d) Unless you are confident that the reader will know exactly what the abbreviation stands for, write the term in full at first mention, with the abbreviation following in parentheses: Several government departments were amalgamated to form Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC).

e) Common abbreviations often in the news need not be spelled out if the full term is rarely used or is difficult to pronounce:

3M Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company

DNA deoxyribonucleic acid

HIV human immunodeficiency virus

If there is a doubt about the correct abbreviation, it is better to use the long form.

Abbreviations are generally not used in formal writing with the exception of some scientific or technical writing. They could occur in both spoken and written English. If they are used in formal writing, it is necessary to reference them correctly (Sproule, 2007: 96).

This work is dedicated to an importance of abbreviations. Everybody doesn't know how to use abbreviations, because many abbreviations are used in one sphere and we can not use them in other spheres. They add colour and texture to the spoken and written word, and to life in general. Abbreviations are a fascinating reflection of the development of communications, language and social attitudes. As literacy rose, and as advances in science and technology brought with them more complicated concepts and terms, the practice of abbreviating terms became increasingly convenient. In business, industry, education, and government, abbreviations are often used by people working within the same fields.

Customary usage within a certain professional group often determines when to abbreviate and which abbreviation to use: for instance, when engineers smash concrete samples into cubic

centimetres, they use the abbreviation 'cm3', while doctors use the abbreviation 'cc' when prescribing cubic centimetres of pain-killer. Although there have been attempts to compile comprehensive dictionaries of abbreviations, this task doesn't look feasible with each professional field developing its own abbreviations.

Types of shortenings (abbreviations).

In the literature of abbreviations, there is a lack of consistency and much vagueness as well as overlapping with respect to what is termed an abbreviation in general, in contrast with what should be regarded, for instance, as a proper clipping, an alphabetism, an initialism, or an acronym.

Cannon (1968: 106), considers as legitimate abbreviations only words which are pronounced by their initial letters, such as D.B.S. (De Bonis Suis), while López-Rúa (2002: 40) reserves this label for a heterogeneous set of cases which are only used in writing and with a variable degree of shortening (e.g. Dr. → Doctor, Mr → Mister).

The position of clippings, acronyms, and initialisms within the category of abbreviations is even more controversial, and terminology varies from one author to another. Jespersen (1942: 533-552), for example, under the label "shortenings" lists "clipped" or "stump-words" such as sec for second, as well as "alphabetic shortenings", either read letter by letter (M.P. for Member of Parliament) or read as regular words (Dora for Defence Of Realm Act). Marchand (1969: 452-454) relegates acronymic abbreviations to the process of word-manufacture, distinguishing between "letter words" (e.g. Eto → European Theater of Operations), "syllable words" (e.g. sial → silicon + aluminium), and a combination of the two (e.g. radar). Bauer (1983: 233-238) takes only clippings, blends, and acronyms into account, thus excluding initialisms of the type USA from his morphological description. Cannon (1989: 99), by contrast employs the term "initialisms" as a "general rubric for acronyms and abbreviations", whereas López-Rúa considers initialisms as a superordinate category comprising acronyms and alphabetisms. On the other hand in Adams (1973) and Kreidler (2000) "acronyms" is a cover term including the other two categories, classified by Kreidler (2000: 957) as "alphabetic or letter-naming" (e.g. UK) and "orthoepic, or letter-sounding" (e.g. NATO) (Mattiello, 2013: 68). The principle of economy is strongly felt in the processes which shorten longer words, as for example telly or TV for television, phone for telephone. Other patterns, such as amalgamation and ellipsis are related linguistic phenomena since they result in a shorter form in the language. For instance, familiar words have their origin in phrasal forms, such as o'clock → of the clock, or goodbye → God be with ye. For Marchand the tendency of shortness in English is much greater than in other European languages. Crystal notes that short words contribute brevity, a much admired stylistic feature.

Three main types of shortenings can be mentioned:

1. Clipping or truncation: the reduction of a simple or complex base from one of its parts, while still retaining the word class of the longer form, as in fanatic → fan, telephone → phone, influenza → flu.

2. Initialism: an orthographically-based process whereby a new word is built by the use of initials. According to their pronunciation two categories emerge:

- a. Alphabetism, if the resulting lexeme is read as if you were spelling out a word: BBC → British Broadcasting Corporation, CIA → Central Intelligence Agency.

- b. Acronym, if the resulting lexeme is read as an ordinary English word: laser → light wave amplification by stimulated emission of radiation; AIDS → acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

3. Blend or portmanteau word: the formation of a new lexeme from parts of two (or even more) words in such a way that the meanings and sounds of both original bases are present in the output, as for example, motel → motor + hotel, smog → smoke + fog (Marquez, 2008: 85).

But according to Arthur abbreviations fall into 4 types: initialism, acronym, clipping, blend. He also adds that there are at least five variations and hybrids of these basic types: (1) Both initialisms and acronyms: VAT (Value Added Tax) is referred to as both 'vee-ay-tee' and 'vat'. (2) Forms that look like one type but behave like another: WHO (World Health Organization) is 'double-you-aitch-oh', not 'hoo'; POW (prisoner of war) is 'pee-oh-double-you', not 'pow'. (3) Part-initialism, part-

acronym: *VTOL* (vertical take-off and landing) is pronounced as 'vee-tall'; *CD-ROM* (compact disk read-only memory) is pronounced as 'cee-dee-rom'. (4) Combinations of clippings and letter groups: *ARPAnet* (Advanced Research Projects Agency computer network). (5) Initialisms adapted as acronyms: *SLCMs* (sea-launched cruise missiles) and 'GLCMs (ground-launched cruise missiles) are called Slickems and Glickems.

We consider the classifications of abbreviations (shortenings) given above correct but not more comprehensive. We offer to divide abbreviations into 5 groups: 1. acronym formation, 2. alphabetic abbreviation, 3. orthographic abbreviation, 4. clipping, 5. blending. These processes share the same abbreviatory mechanism, obtaining new word forms by shortening existing lexemes. We think our classification concerning abbreviations is much more detailed and clear.

Shortening (abbreviation) results in new lexical items and a specific type of shortening is graphical abbreviations which are only signs representing words and word-groups of high frequency of occurrence in various spheres of human activity as for example, St for Street and RD for Road in addresses on envelopes and in letters; aer for aerial, tu for tube in Radio Engineering literature, etc. Shortenings, i.e., abbreviations that are formed by taking the first letters of the abbreviated word, usually end with a full stop.

We may say that graphical abbreviations are signs or symbols that stand for the full words or combination of words only in written speech. The commonest form is an initial letter or letters that stand for a word or combination of words. For instance: Feb. (February), p. (page), s. (see), sym. (symposium), pl. (plural), b.b. (ball-bearing), fig. (figure), Mr. (Mister), Mrs. (Misses), MS (Microsoft), Prof. (Professor), proc. (proceedings). In oral speech graphical abbreviations have the pronunciation of full words. To indicate a plural letters are often doubled, as: pp. (pages). It is common practice in English to use graphical abbreviation of Latin words, and word combinations, as: e.g. (exempli gratia), etc. (et cetera), viz (videlicet), i.e. (id est), ff. (folios). In oral speech they are replaced by their English equivalents, 'for example', 'and so on', 'namely', 'that is', 'the following pages' respectively. Graphical abbreviations are not words but signs or symbols that stand for the corresponding words. Graphical abbreviations are restricted in use to written speech, occurring only in various kinds of articles, texts, advertisements, books, letters and so on. Many of them are substituted in reading by the words and phrases that they represent, e.g. Mr.=mister, Dr. = doctor, Oct.= October, etc.; the abbreviations of Latin words and phrases are usually read as their English equivalents. Thus we may say that graphical abbreviations cannot be considered new lexical vocabulary units. It is only natural that in the course of language development some graphical abbreviations should gradually penetrate into the sphere of oral intercourse and, therefore, turn into self-contained lexical units used both in oral and written speech. For instance, a.m. [ei 'em] — 'in the morning, before noon'; p.m. [pi: 'em] — 'after noon' etc.

Acronyms and letter abbreviations are lexical abbreviations of a phrase. There are different types of such abbreviations and there is no unanimity of opinion among scholars whether all of them can be regarded as regular vocabulary units. It seems logical to make distinction between acronyms and letter abbreviations. Letter abbreviations are mere replacements of longer phrases including names of well-known organisations of undeniable currency, names of agencies and institutions, political parties, famous people, names of official offices, etc. They are not spoken or treated as words but pronounced letter by letter and as a rule possess no other linguistic forms proper to words. The following may serve as examples of such abbreviations: CBW = chemical and biological warfare, DOD = Department of Defence (of the USA), ITV = Independent Television, Instructional Television, SST = supersonic transport, etc. It should be remembered that the borderline between letter abbreviations and true acronyms is fluid and many letter abbreviations in the course of time may turn into regular vocabulary units. Occasionally letter abbreviations are given 'pronunciation spelling' as for instance deejay (= D.J. = disc jokey), emcee (= M.C. = master of ceremonies) in which case they tend to pass over into true acronyms (Ginsburg, Khidekel, Knyazeva, Sankin, 1979: 189).

The other subgroup of abbreviations consists of initial abbreviations with the alphabetical reading retained, i.e. pronounced as a series of letters. Initialism (alphabetism): An abbreviation pronounced by reciting the individual letters (Digital Video Disc—DVD, British Broadcasting Corporation—BBC, Hypertext Markup Language—HTML, Magnetic Resonance Imaging—MRI, Automatic Teller Machine—ATM Portable Document Format—PDF). These examples are also popular: *B.B.C.* [bi:bi: 'si:] — *the British Broadcasting Corporation*; *G.I.* [dʒi: 'aɪ] — for *Government Issue*, a widely spread metonymical name for American soldiers on the items of whose uniforms these letters are stamped. The last abbreviation was originally an Americanism but has been firmly established in British English as well. *M.P.* [ɛm 'pi:] is mostly used as an initial abbreviation for *Member of Parliament*, also *military police*, whereas *P.M.* stands for *Prime Minister*.

When pronouncing each letter, the last sound (letter) normally carries the primary stress / ' / and is, therefore, pronounced more strongly. The other sounds (letters) carry the secondary stress / , / and are, thus, pronounced more weakly (Sproule, 2007: 96).

For example: ATM [ɛti:'em] automated teller machine

DNA [di:en'eɪ] deoxyribonucleic acid

Initialisms are usually written in capitals and take no points:

EEA, EAGGF, EMCDDA, UNHCR, WTO, also AD for *Anno Domini* and NB for *Nota Bene*.

If the full expressions are lower-case or mixed-case, however, the initialisms may follow suit:

aka, BAe (British Aerospace), MoD, PhD, TfL (Transport for London)

To ensure clarity, initialisms written in lower case may take points or be italicised:

f.o.b. or *fob*, c.i.f. or *cif*

Note that 'e.g.' and 'i.e.' are never capitalised (even at the beginning of footnotes) and always take points. In contrast, 'plc' (public limited company) never takes points even though it, too, is never capitalized (English Style Guide, a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission, 2011: 27).

Initial abbreviations are words - nouns - produced by shortening nominal combinations. Each component of the nominal combination is shortened up to the initial letter and the initial letters of all the words of the combination make a word, as: *MP* - *Member of Parliament*. In speech initial words function like nouns, they take the plural suffix, as *MPs*.

New words may be derived from initial words by means of adding affixes, such as: *LDPR-er*, *ex-PM*, *MP'ess*, or adding the semi-suffix - *man*, as *GI-man*. As soon as the corresponding combination goes out of use the initial word takes its place and becomes fully established in the language and its spelling is in small letters, as *radar* - radio detecting and ranging, *laser* - light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation; *maser* - microwave amplification by stimulated emission of radiation. There are also semi-shortenings, as: *A-bomb* (*atom bomb*), *Hbomber* (*hydrogen bomber*), *U-boat* (*Untersee boat* - German submarine). The first component of the nominal combination is shortened up to the initial letter, the other component (or components) are full words.

Other examples of initial abbreviations with the alphabetical reading retained are: *S.O.S.* ['es'ou'es] — *Save Our Souls*, a wireless code-signal of extreme distress, also figuratively, any despairing cry for help; *T.V.* or *TV* [ti:'vi:] — *television*;

Some initialisms can create new words in which they act as root morphemes by various ways of word building:

a) affixation, e.g. *ex-rafer*, *AWALism*, *AIDSophobia*, *ex- POW* etc.

b) composition, e.g. *STOLport*, *USAFman* etc.

There are also compound-shortened words where the first component is an initial abbreviation with the alphabetical reading and the second one is a complete word, e.g. *A-bomb*, *U-pronunciation*, *V - day* etc. In some cases the first component is a complete word and the second component is an initial abbreviation with the alphabetical pronunciation, e.g. *Three-Ds* — *Three dimensions* (3D may refer to: any technique capable of recording three-dimensional visual information or creating the illusion of depth in an image).

Abbreviations do not differ from full words in functioning. They take the plural ending and that of the possessive case and make any part of a sentence. New words may be derived from the stems of abbreviated words by conversion, as: *to demob*, *to taxi*, *to perm*, or by affixation, chiefly by adding the suffix **-y**, **-ie**, deriving diminutives and pet names, as: *hanky* - from *handkerchief*, *nighty* (-ie) - from *nightgown*, *unkie* - from *uncle*, *baccy* - from *tobacco*, *aussie* - from *Australians*, *granny* (ie) - from *grandmother*. In this way adjectives also may be derived, as: *comfy* - from *comfortable*, *mizzy* - from *miserable*. Adjectives may be derived also by adding the suffix **-ee**, as: *Portugee* - for *Portuguese*, *Chinee* - for *Chinese*.

Abbreviations do not always coincide in meaning with the original word, for instance: *doc* and *doctor* have the meaning 'one who practises medicine', but *doctor* is also 'the highest degree given by a university to a scholar or scientist' and 'a person who has received such a degree' whereas *doc* is not used in these meanings. Among abbreviations there are homonyms, i.e. the same graphical complex may represent different words, as: *vac* = *vacation*, *vac* = *vacuum cleaner*; *prep* = *preparation*, *prep* = *preposition*.

Abbreviations are highly colloquial; in most cases they belong to slang. The longer word disappears from the language, the abbreviation loses its colloquial or slang character and becomes a literary word, for instance, the word *taxi* is the abbreviation of the *taxicab* which, in its turn, goes back to *taximetercab*; both words went out of use, and the word *taxi* lost its stylistic colouring.

Acronyms. An *acronym* is an initialism that is pronounced as a word (Van Dongen, 2012: 54). Acronym is an abbreviation formed by combining the first letters (initials) or syllables of all or select words in a series, resulting in a new grouping of letters that can be pronounced as a word (North Atlantic Treaty Organization—NATO, International English Language Testing Ssystem—IELTS, Mobile Army Surgical Hospital—MASH, SOund Navigation And Ranging—sonar, HAZardous MATerials—HAZMAT, Association of South-East Asian Nations—ASEAN, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome—SIDS, National Aeronautics and Space Administration— NASA, Radio Detection And Ranging— radar).

Acronyms are regular vocabulary units spoken as words. They are created in various ways:

1) from the initial letters or syllables of a phrase — as a succession of sounds denoted by the constituent letters forming a syllabic pattern, i.e. as regular words, e.g. UNO ['ju:nəʊ] = United Nations Organisations; NATO ['neɪtəʊ] = North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, UNESCO [ju:'neskəʊ]; laser ['leɪzə] = light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation; radar [reɪdɑ:] = radio detection and ranging; BMEWS ['bi:mju:z] = Ballistic Missile Early Warning System;

2) Acronyms may be formed from the initial syllables of each word of the phrase, e.g. Interpol = international police; tacsatcom = Tactical Satellite Communications: Capcom = Capsule Communicator (the person at a space flight centre who communicates with the astronauts during a space flight).

3) Acronyms may be formed by a combination of the abbreviation of the first member of the phrase with the last member undergoing no change at all, e.g. V-day = Victory Day; g-force = gravity force; H-bomb = hydrogen bomb, etc.

Formation of acronyms. During the World War I and increasingly during the World War II, abbreviations were coined to denote terms and concepts as clearly as possible. This practice might also have been popularized by the fact that the enemy would not recognize the meaning of the shortenings. Later, the use of acronyms expanded to the technical, scientific and medical fields. Acronyms are heavily used today in computer science. The formation of an acronym has both advantages like avoiding repetition, saving space and disadvantages too. The main problem with acronyms is that they are highly polysemous, one acronym can have meaning expansions. In many cases the meaning of an acronym cannot be deduced from its base form but has to be learned instead. For instance, to a banker, ABA is the *American Banking Association*, to an attorney, it is the *American Bar Association*, and to a bowler it is the *American Bowling Association*. Moreover, acronyms are often homonyms which can only be decoded within the context.

Acronyms with **five letters or less** are uppercased:

AIDS, COST, ECHO, EFTA, NASA, NATO, SHAPE, TRIPS

Exceptions: Tacis and Phare, which are no longer considered acronyms

Acronyms with **six letters or more** should normally be written with an initial capital followed by lower case. Thus:

Benelux, Esprit, Helios, Interreg, Resider, Unesco, Unctad

Exceptions: computer terms such as FORTRAN, WYSIWYG

Note, however, that some acronyms eventually become common nouns, losing even the initial capital, e.g. *laser*, *radar* or *sonar* (English Style Guide, a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission, 2011).

Acronym-initialism hybrids: Pronunciation includes a letter and acronym (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries —

OPEC, Joint Photographic Experts Group — JPEG, Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network — CSPAN).

Anacronym: It is used to describe acronyms that their original meanings have been widely forgotten: Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation — *laser*, Self - Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus — *scuba*, Radio Detecting and Ranging — *radar*, Geheime Staats Polizei (State Secret Police) — Gestapo (the secret police of the Nazi period in Germany 1933-45, who used cruel and evil methods and were involved in the killing of a very large number of people).

Pseudo-acronym: A catch-all for embellishments and variations, such as creating an acronym from other abbreviations (IT Acquisition Center—ITAC) or ignoring words in a series just to make a pronounceable word (Princeton Institute for the Science and Technology of Materials — PRISM), or pronouncing vowels that are not there (GTMO — Guantanamo Bay, pronounced Gitmo) to coin a word.

Some acronyms even become words of our daily language, such as *zip* code or *laser*. But the most famous word based on a shortening is the initialism *OK*, whose origins are fairly argumentative.

No account of coined words would be complete, of course, without reference to possibly the most famous word in the English language, one that has become an international vocabulary item: *OK*. Dozens of theories have been advanced to explain the origin of this word, which is attested in American English as early as the 1830s. According to one theory, *OK* stands for *Old Kinderhook*, the name of a Democratic party organization, abbreviated as the O.K. Club, which supported President Van Buren for reelection in 1840 (Kinderhook being Van Buren's birthplace in New York State). According to another theory, *OK* stands for *oll korrekt*, a parody spelling of *all correct*. There is also some speculation that it may have been connected with another abbreviation, *DK*, for *don't know*. In any event, all of the theories seem equally dubious. The important point is that a word such as *OK* is felt to be a complete word and not merely an abbreviation, as evidenced by the fact that in casual styles of writing we now see spellings like *okay* (Akmajian, Demers, Farmer, Harnish, 1995: 24).

All acronyms and initialisms are abbreviations, but not all abbreviations are acronyms or initialisms. And acronyms and initialisms differ only in the way they are pronounced. There is *ASAP*, which is used as both: [eɪ.es.eɪ 'pi:] or ['eɪ səp]. *ASAP* is an abbreviation for *as soon as possible*.

The other subgroups of abbreviation - *Abbreviation of words* consists in clipping a part of a word and blendings. As a result we get a new lexical unit where either the lexical meaning or the style is different from the full form of the word. In such cases as «*fantasy*» and «*fancy*», «*fence*» and «*defence*» we have different lexical meanings. In such cases as «*laboratory*» and «*lab*», we have different styles.

Blending is the creation of words by merging irregular fragments of several words as in *transceiver* (=transmitter and receiver), *transistor* (=transfer and resistor) or at a syllable boundary like *cute* (from *execute*) in *electrocute*, *medicare* (from *medical care*) or boundaries of both kinds may be disregarded as in *brunch* (from *breakfast* and *lunch*), *smog* (from *smoke* and *fog*) etc.

Blending is similar to clipping since it involves deletion. However, in blends two bases are used, whereas in clippings only one base is used.

Blending is a combination of clipping and compounding, i.e. two lexemes are clipped and then combined into one unit, e.g. smoke+fog > smog, motor+hotel > motel, breakfast+lunch > brunch. This process is moderately productive today, though the results more often than not are rather short-lived (Hogg, Denison, 2006: 214).

A blend may be defined as a new lexeme built from parts of two (or possibly more) words in such a way that the constituent parts are usually easily identifiable, though in some instances, only one of the elements may be identifiable. Blends may also be referred to as ‘telescope’ or ‘portemanteau’ words (Jackson, Amvela, 2000: 87).

For example:	slang	+	language	→	slanguage
	sheep	+	goat	→	shoat
	dove	+	hawk	→	dawk
	channel	+	tunnel	→	chunnel

These examples show that in the formation of blends the first part of the first element is added to the second part of the second element. The resulting items are generally nouns, however a few are adjectives such as ‘glitzy’ (glitter + ritzy), and verbs such as ‘guesstimate’ (guess + estimate) and skyjack (sky + hijack).

A blending is a combination of two or more words to form a new one, in most cases by taking the beginning of one word and the end of the other one. So new words like *spork* (spoon + fork), *fanzine* (fan + magazine), *bromance* (brother + romance) or Spanglish (Spanish + English) are created. There are of course other ways to create a blending: for example, we can take both beginnings of a word (cybernetic + organism → *cyborg*) or take a whole word and combine it with a part of another one (guess + estimate → *guesstimate*).

A more recent example concerning blending is ‘genome’ blended from gene and chromosome, or ‘edutainment’ from education and entertainment. Sometimes the blend takes the whole of one word, especially if it is quite short, and combines it with part of another word, e.g. ‘eyerobics’, from eye and aerobics (exercises for the eyes).

Creations by blending are also called *portmanteau words*, following Lewis Carroll (Charles L. Dodgson), the author of *Through the Looking Glass*. He wrote:

Well, ‘slithy’ means ‘lithe and slimy’. . . You see it is like a portmanteau – there are two meanings packed up into one word. . . . ‘Mimsy’ is ‘flimsy and miserable’ (there is another portmanteau).

Of course, to appreciate what Carroll was saying, you have to realize that portmanteau itself is a rather old-fashioned word for “suitcase”, originally designed for carrying on horseback. Other examples of blends created by him are *chortle*, from *chuckle* and *snort*; and *galumph*, from *gallop* and *triumph*. In blendign parts of two familiar words are yoked together (usually the first part of one word and the second part of the other) to produce a word which combines the meanings and sound of the old ones (Stockwell, Minkova, 2001: 6).

Successful examples, in addition to Lewis Carroll’s whimsical literary examples above, are *heliport* from helicopter and airport, *flurry* from flutter and hurry, *flush* from flash and gush.

Blends are coined not infrequently in scientific and technical language as a means of naming new things, as trade names in advertisements. Blends break the rules of morphology. Most of the blends have a colloquial flavor (Ginsburg, Khidekel, Knyazeva, Sankin, 1979: 190-191).

In most cases, blending results in the creation of new morphemes or in the addition of new meanings to old ones. For example, ‘automobile’ taken from French, was originally a combination of Greek autos - ‘self’ and Latin mobilis – ‘movable’. The element auto became productive as evidenced by the words autobiography, autodidact, autograph, autocar and autobus. Similarly, hamburger is blended so often with other words, e.g. cheeseburger, chickenburger, vegeburger, steakburger. As we see the form *burger* has acquired the status of an independent word.

Clipping is no so much a method of forming new words because it alters old ones without changing their meaning. The clipping tendency is obviously on the increase in present-day English. Clipped words are useful and practical. Clipping refers to the creation of new words by shortening a word of two or more syllables (usually nouns and adjectives are clipped) without changing its class membership. Clipped words always differ from the non-clipped words in the emotive charge and stylistic reference. Clipped words are characteristic of colloquial speech. Though, in the course of time, a number of clipped words find their way into the literary language losing some of their colloquial colouring. Clippings show different degrees of semantic dissociation from their full forms. Some of them are no longer felt to be clippings, e.g. pants (cf. pantaloons), bus (cf. omnibus), bike (cf. bicycle), etc. Some retain rather close semantic ties with the original word. So this gives ground to doubt whether the clipped words should be considered separate words or not. Some linguists hold the view that in case semantic dissociation is slight and the major difference lies in the emotive charge and stylistic application the two units should be regarded as word-variants (e.g. lab and laboratory, exam and examination and so on).

There do not seem to be any clear rules by means of which we might predict where a word will be cut though there are several types into which clippings are traditionally classified according to the part of the word that is clipped:

- 1) Words that have been shortened at the end—the so-called *a p o c o p e*, e.g. ad (from *advertisement*), lab (from *laboratory*), mike (from *microphone*), etc.
- 2) Words that have been shortened at the beginning—the so-called *a p h a e r e s i s*, e.g. car (from *motor-car*), phone (from *telephone*), copter (from *helicopter*), etc.
- 3) Words in which some syllables or sounds have been omitted from the middle—the so-called *s y n c o p e*, e.g. maths (from *mathematics*), pants (from *pantaloons*), specs (from *spectacles*), etc.
- 4) Words that have been clipped both at the beginning and at the end, e.g. flu (from *influenza*), tec (from *detective*), fridge (from *refrigerator*), etc.

Usually nouns are clipped: *pram* – from *perambulator*, *varsity* - from *university*. In some rare cases adjectives are abbreviated (as: *imposs* - from *impossible*, *comfy* from *comfortable*, *pi* - from *pious*), but these are infrequent. Verbs are rarely shortened.

The original may be a simple word (as: *grad* - from *graduate*), a derivative (as: *prep* - from *preparation*), a compound (as: *foots* - from *footlights*, *tails* - from *tailcoat*), a combination of words (as: *pub* - from *public house*, *medico* - from *medical student*). Clippings are words of one syllable or two syllables, the final sound being a consonant or a vowel: *trig* - for *trigonometry*, *Jap* for *Japanese*, *demob* - for *demobilized*, *lino* - for *linoleum*, *mo* - for *moment*.

Abbreviations are made regardless of whether the remaining syllable bore the stress in the full word or not (as: *doc* - from *doctor*, *ad* - from *advertisement*). The pronunciation of abbreviations usually coincides with the corresponding syllable in the full word, if the syllable is stressed; if it is an unstressed syllable in the full word the pronunciation differs, as the abbreviation has a full pronunciation. There may be some differences in spelling connected with the pronunciation or with the rules of English orthoepy, as *mike* - from *microphone*, *bike* - from *bicycle*, *phiz* - from *physiognomy*, *lube* - from *lubrication*. The plural form of the full word or combinations of words is retained in the abbreviated word, as: *pants* - from *pantaloons*, *digs* - from *diggings*.

It must be stressed that acronyms and clipping are the main ways of word-creation and most active in modern English. The main peculiarities of both types of words are that they are structurally simple, semantically nonmotivated and give rise to new root-morphemes.

Abbreviations must be clearly distinguished from *contractions*. The main difference is that an abbreviation does not normally have a distinctive pronunciation of its own. There are some types of contractions:

- a) The apostrophe is used in writing contractions – that is, shortened forms of words from which one or more letters have been left out. In English, this generally happens only with a small number of conventional items, usually involving verbs. These are some of the commonest examples, with their uncontracted equivalents: *it's* (*it is* or *it has*), *she'd've* (*she would have*).

b) A few words which were contractions long ago are still conventionally written with apostrophes, although the longer forms have more or less dropped out of use. There are very few of such forms, thus, we can easily learn them all. Here is the commonest one, with its original longer form: o'clock (*of the clock*).

c) Some generations ago there were rather more contractions in regular use in English; these other contractions are now archaic, and you wouldn't normally use any of them except in direct quotations from older written work. Here are a few of them, with their longer forms: 'tis (it is).

I want to mention the difference between abbreviation and contraction. For instance, the abbreviation *oz* is pronounced just like *ounce(s)*, the abbreviation *Dr* is pronounced just like *Doctor*, and the abbreviation *e. g.* is pronounced just like *for example* (True, there are a few people who actually say "ee-jee" for the last one, but this practice is decidedly unusual.). A contraction, in contrast, has its own distinctive pronunciation. For instance, the contraction *can't* is pronounced differently from *cannot*, and the contraction *he's* is pronounced differently from *he is* or *he has*.

Conclusion

New words can enter a language either by the changing of the meaning of already existing words or through the word formation rules. Abbreviation is a popular way of forming words. It is considered that orthography plays a central importance in the formation of abbreviations.

We have seen that new words can also be created by abbreviation or shortening process – a word formation process involving deletion of linguistic material. It has been shown that the abbreviating process can be done in a variety of different ways. We divided abbreviations into 5 groups:

1. acronym formation,
2. alphabetic abbreviation,
3. orthographic abbreviation ,
4. clipping,
5. blending.

These processes share the same abbreviatory mechanism, obtaining new word forms by shortening existing lexemes. In acronyms and initialisms multi-word combinations are shortened to their initial letters. "Orthographic abbreviation" is seen only in the written form of a word, however, its pronunciation remains unaltered. In clippings a part of a base word is deleted. Blending involves deletion of a part of one base or of two bases and the combining the remaining parts. In spite of its variability, shortening or abbreviation process is not a random word formation process. It follows certain regularities. All this processes have in common that they don't create longer forms but predominantly reduce existing forms into shorter ones.

We tried to show the difference between Initialisms and Acronyms by giving different examples. We defined that both of them are shortenings, built from the initial letters in a name or phrase. While acronyms are pronounced as single words (*NASA*, *AIDS*), initialisms are pronounced "as a sequence of letters" (*DNA*, *USA*). We may also add that all acronyms are abbreviations but not all abbreviations are acronyms.

Many abbreviations are not understood unless the term is written in full at first mention, with the abbreviation given in brackets. We should follow these general rules:

a) In general, we may abbreviate words only when the short form will be immediately recognized by the reader, and we must sure that the same abbreviation is used elsewhere in our text to represent the word or words involved.

b) Some standard abbreviations such as i.e., esp., AD, IQ, CBC and MP need not be spelled out because they are well known and in many cases occur as dictionary entries.

c) Many commonly used words that are actually abbreviations are now rarely regarded as such, including phone, ad, fridge, exam, memo, math and photo. Most such words should be avoided in formal writing, though bus and cello are exceptions to this rule.

d) Unless you are confident that the reader will know exactly what the abbreviation stands for, write the term in full at first mention, with the abbreviation following in parentheses: Several government departments were amalgamated to form Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC).

e) Common abbreviations often in the news need not be spelled out if the full term is rarely used or is difficult to pronounce:

3M Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company

DNA deoxyribonucleic acid

HIV human immunodeficiency virus

If there is a doubt about the correct abbreviation, it is better to use the long form.

Abbreviations are the most intensively developing units of the English language. There is the distinctive interest to them in modern linguistics. The subject of our analysis, i.e., abbreviations, make our life easier. But when using them, we shouldn't overdo it. If we use abbreviations more our text will be vague to readers.

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