

## ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORTENINGS IN MODERN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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**Abstract.** *The article is devoted to the abbreviations and shortening in Modern English as the most productive for the lexical completion in general. The modern pace of life demands to convey a great bulk of information as quickly as possible, saving the space written. The most popular methods of shortening from structural and pragmatical points of view are taken into consideration. Shortening of words mean the formation of new ones by substituting a part of the word for a whole, affecting both separate words and word-groups. All shortened words function in the language as other ordinary words do, thus taking on specific grammatical inflections.*

*All of them can be divided according to the traditional division: graphical abbreviations, lexical shortenings, blends and splinters. Besides, all the new shortenings have to be familiar to an average customer in order to be recognized at once while reading them. But it should be kept in mind that they cannot be taken as a standard, though quite a lot of them are officially used everywhere. Having their own peculiarities in style, they demand some special skills from people, while being written. In general, shortening remains one of the most productive ways of writing new qualitative words because of their memorability and economy of written space.*

**Keywords:** *shortenings, graphical abbreviations, lexical shortenings, initials, a hybrid*

**Introduction.** Realities of today, global interrelation of the nations and different cultural customs of our planet of the 21-st century, growing needs in communication and work among countries and people of different languages and traditions demand training of highly qualified specialists that are expected to translate from foreign language to another, to know two or three foreign languages and are capable to take part in an international cooperation and formation of a new attitude to Ukraine in Europe and the whole world as well. Nowadays, abbreviation is one of the main trends in the development of Modern English language, especially in its colloquial layer, which, in its turn, at high degree is supported by constant development of modern informational technologies and simplification of speech with no loss of its informative content. It should be mentioned that abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase, which consists of a letter or group of letters taken from the word or phrase. Nevertheless, abbreviation has appeared as a fad just to code the words which people wanted to hide from others, but nowadays it is one of the most well-known way of derivation. Abbreviation has a high degree of productivity in modern languages, especially in official-business, scientific and technical styles, because it is aimed at increasing regulation and orderliness. In some types of texts the abbreviation can makeup 50% of all word uses and 15 % of the vocabulary. Abbreviation has been used as long as phonetic script existed, in some senses actually being more common in early literacy, where spelling out a whole word was often avoided, initial letters commonly being used to represent words in specific application. Abbreviations have a large creative potential, because they can create a lot of neologisms. Literal

abbreviations also take part in the derivation of the compound words. Not every one knows how to use abbreviations, because many abbreviations are used in one sphere and we can not use them in other spheres.

The **topicality** of this article can be proved by the following reasons: a) abbreviation is one of the developing branches of lexicology nowadays; b) abbreviation reflects the general trend of simplification of a language; c) abbreviation is closely connected with the development of modern informational technologies.

**Analysis of recent researchers and publications.** The problems of abbreviations (i.e. shortened lexical units) as specific language phenomena in modern languages attract the attention of many researchers, and they have been considered in numerous articles and separate researches of Ukrainian, Russian and foreign authors. Towards the most circumstantial works relating to the last ones we can outline such scientists as D. Alekseeva, O. Jespersen, V. Pavlova, T. Pilze, M. Segal, L. Shelyahovsky, E. Voloshina, R. Walse, and others. B. Voloshin and V. Borisov also described formal structure abbreviations and their relationships with generators units. The philologists I. Stern, M. Schlauch, L. Shelyahovska and L. Sapogova studied the basic principles of modeling of shortened lexical units [1].

**The purpose of this paper** deals with the peculiarities of abbreviations and shortenings, to analyze the dynamics of the experimental work. It is mostly based on materials of English dictionaries and instructions.

**Methods.** Analysis, synthesis, learning the latest linguistic resources are used in this paper.

**Results.** Abbreviations take many forms and can be found in ancient Greek inscriptions, in medieval manuscripts, and in the Koran [2].

Abbreviations began to proliferate in the 19th century and have been prevalent since; they are employed to reduce the time required for writing or speaking, especially, when referring to the myriad new organizations, bureaucratic entities, and technological products typical of industrial societies [6].

An abbreviation (from Latin *brevis*, meaning short) is a shortened form of a word or phrase. Usually, it consists of a letter or group of letters taken from a word or a phrase. For example, a word abbreviation can itself be represented by the following abbreviations: *abbr.*, *abbrv.*, or *abbrev.* In strict analysis, abbreviations should not be confused with contractions or acronyms (including initialisms), with which they share some semantic and phonetic functions, though all three are connoted by the term "abbreviation" in loose parlance [4, p.167].

In modern English there exist two main ways of shortening: contraction (or clipping) and abbreviation (or initial shortening). Contraction is the act or process of making words smaller. For example: *lab* (for laboratory), *mag* (for magazine), *story* (for history), *fancy* (for fantasy), *Liz* (for Elizabeth), etc.

Linguists distinguish various types of classification of abbreviations. Kazakh scientist

a) a string of letters – often spoken as such – formed from the initial letters of the (main) words of a phrase (called initialism), eg.:

*RNA -ribonucleic acid*

*BT corn – corn that is toxic to some insects but non-toxic to humans and animals;*

*DNA – deoxyribonucleic acid;*

*EPA– Environmental Protection Agency;*

*GMO – Genetically modified organism;*

Sometimes the letters of abbreviation represent syllables of a word, e.g.:

*ID – identity or identification card;*

*TB – tuberculosis.*

b) a word (sometimes called clipping) standing for the whole, retaining at least one syllable of the original word. E.g.: ad – advertisement; demo – demonstration; flu – influenza; pub – public house; phone – telephone; sitcom – situation comedy.

There are a few special written abbreviations for plurals: pp – pages; ff – following pages; mss – manuscripts.

Chemical formulae and other symbols can be regarded as a special type of abbreviation: H<sub>2</sub>O – water; Fe – iron; & - and; + - plus; - - minus [5].

Sylvia Chalker states that initialism is a type of abbreviation. The use of the initial letters of a name or expression as an abbreviation for it, each letter being pronounced separately, as in BBC, RSVP, RSPCA (also called alphabet abbreviation), etc.

Clipping is a type of abbreviation. The formation of a new word by shortening an existing one; an example of this. E.g. (omni)bus, exam(ination), (in)flu(enza), (tele)phone.

Syllabic abbreviation

A syllabic abbreviation is an abbreviation formed from (usually) initial syllables of several words, such a

*r DNA -recombinant DNA molecules, as RNA – a natural or experimentally generated nucleotide complementary to RNA;* Syllabic abbreviations are usually written using lower case, sometimes starting with a capital letter, they are always pronounced as words rather than letter by letter, and should be distinguished from portmanteaus [6].

According to the research of the American linguist Garland Canon abbreviations as words produced by shortening the immediate constituents of phrasal terms up to their initial letters are subdivided into 5 groups: 1) acronyms; 2) alphabetic abbreviation; 3) compound abbreviations; 4) graphic abbreviations; 5) Latin abbreviations.

An acronym is usually formed by taking the first initials of a phrase or compounded word and using those initials to form a word that stands for something, e.g.: UNO /'ju:nəʊ/ (< United Nations Organization), UNESCO /'ju: 'neskəʊ/ (< United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization), NATO /'neltəʊ/ (< North Atlantic Treaty Organization), SALT /'sɔ:lt/ (< Strategic Arms Limitation Talks), STEM /'stem/ (for scanning transmission electron microscope), radar /'reɪdə/ (< radio detecting and ranging), and so on.

Alphabetic abbreviation is a special kind of abbreviation in which letters get their full individual alphabetic pronunciation, rather than a phonetic pronunciation, and a full stress, e.g.: USA /'ju: 'es' eɪ/ (< the United States of America), B.B.C. /'bi: 'bi: 'si:/ (< the British Broadcasting Corporation), M.P. /'em 'pi:/ (< Member of Parliament), F.B.I. /'ef 'bi: 'al/ (< Federal Bureau of Investigation), and further on.

Alphabetic abbreviations are sometimes used for famous persons' names, for instance: B.B. (< Brigitte Bardot), F.D.R. (< Franklin Delano Roosevelt), G.B.S. (< George Bernard Shaw), etc.

Compound abbreviations are those in which the first IC (immediate constituent) is a letter (or letters) and the second one is a complete word, e.g.: A-bomb (< atomic bomb), V-day (< Victory day), Z-hour (< zero hour), L-driver (< learner-driver), ACD solution (< acid citrate dextrose solution), and further on.

One or both ICs of compound abbreviations may be clipped, for example: StarLink™- an insect-resistant variety of corn, X-ray etc.

Graphical abbreviations are the result of shortening of words and word-groups only in written speech while orally the corresponding full forms are used. They are used for the economy of space and effort in writing.

Scientists-linguists identify several semantic groups of graphical abbreviation: a) days of the week, e.g.: Mon – Monday, Tue – Tuesday, etc.; b) names of months, e.g.: Apr – April, Aug – August, etc.; c) names of counties in UK, e.g.: Yorks – Yorkshire, Berks – Berkshire, etc.; d) names of states in USA, e.g.: Ala – Alabama, Alas – Alaska, etc.; e) names of address, e.g.: Mr. – Mister, Mrs. – Mistress, Ms. – Miss, Dr. – doctor, etc.; f) military ranks, e.g.: capt. – captain, col. – colonel, sgt. – sergeant, etc.; g) scientific degrees, e.g.: B.A. – Bachelor of Arts, M.A. – Master of Arts; D.M. – Doctor of Medicine (Sometimes in scientific degrees we run across abbreviations of Latin origin, e.g.: M.B. – *Medicinae Baccalaurus*); h) units of time, length, weight, e.g.: f. / ft – foot/feet, sec. – second, in. – inch, mg. – milligram, etc. [3].

Latin abbreviation was once the universal academic language in Europe. From the eighteenth century authors started using their mother tongue to write books, papers or proceedings. However, many Latin abbreviations continued to be used due to their precise simplicity and also Latin's status as a learned language. The most common Latin words, abbreviations, and initialisms are still in use. For instance: i.e. /'al 'i:/ – that is, a.m. /'el 'em/ – before midday, in the morning, e.g. – for example, id. – in the same place, cf. – compare, and further on.

An abbreviation is a shorter way to write a word or phrase. People use abbreviations for words that they write a lot.

**Discussion.** To sum up, we investigated the aspects of abbreviations in our article such as the act or result of abbreviating; a shortened form of a written word or phrase used in place of the whole. We also revealed various types of abbreviations as follows: acronyms; alphabetic abbreviation; compound abbreviations; graphic abbreviations; Latin abbreviations. The studying of the abbreviation phenomenon as one of the two types of shortening in the English language is immensely important in the process of learning a foreign language by a future specialist, especially philologists or translators. It will help training future specialists as competent professionals, ready to take part in an international cooperation and formation of a new attitude to Ukraine in Europe and the whole world as well.

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## АБРЕВІАТУРИ ТА СКОРОЧЕННЯ В СУЧАСНІЙ АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ

Н. А. Глуховська

**Анотація.** Стаття присвячена абревіатурам та скороченням в сучасній англійській мові, як одному із найпродуктивніших способів для поповнення лексичного запасу мови в цілому. Сучасний темп життя вимагає від друкованих засобів передачі великого об'єму інформації за найкоротший проміжок часу, економлячи на письмі. Скорочення означає утворення нових слів, замінюючи ціле слово його частиною, що є дієвим по відношенню як до окремих слів, так і до словосполучень. Розглядаються найбільш популярні способи словотворення з точки зору структури і прагматики. Всі скорочені слова функціонують в мові як і звичайні інші, таким чином набираючи специфічні граматичні флексії. Всі вони традиційно діляться на: графічні абревіатури, заглавні абревіатури, лексичні скорочення, слова-гібриди. Окрім того, всі нові скорочення мають бути знайомими пересічному споживачеві, щоб їх можна було відразу впізнати при читанні. Але треба також пам'ятати, що нові скорочення не є мовним стандартом, хоча багато з них офіційно використовується в усіх сферах. Маючи свої власні особливості стилю, вони вимагають від людини спеціальних навичок при їхньому написанні. В цілому, скорочення залишається одним з найбільш продуктивних способів написання якісних слів завдяки здатністю до запам'ятовування і економності на письмі.

**Ключові слова:** скорочення, графічні абревіатури, лексичні скорочення, ініціали, слово-гібрид

## АББРЕВИАТУРЫ И СОКРАЩЕНИЯ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена аббревиатурам и сокращениям в современном английском языке, как одному из самых продуктивных способов для пополнения лексического запаса языка в целом. Современный темп жизни требует от печатных средств передачи большого объема информации за самый короткий промежуток времени, при этом экономя на письме. Сокращение означает образование новых слов путем замены целого слова его частью, что является действенным по отношению как к отдельному слову, так и к словосочетаниям. Рассматриваются наиболее популярные способы словообразования с точки зрения структуры и прагматики. Все сокращенные слова функционируют в языке, как и обычные другие, таким образом вбирая специфические грамматические флексии. Все они традиционно делятся на: графические аббревиатуры, заглавные аббревиатуры, лексические сокращения, слова-гибриды. Вот почему все виды сокращений используются в расширенных текстах, предоставляя широкую информацию о рекламируемой продукции. Кроме того, все новые сокращения должны быть знакомы среднему потребителю, чтобы их сразу же можно было распознать при чтении. Но следует также помнить, что новые сокращения не являются речевым стандартом, хотя многие из них официально используются во всех сферах жизни. Со своими особенностями стиля, они требуют от людей специального умения при написании. В целом, сокращение остается одним из наиболее продуктивных способов написания новых качественных слов благодаря способности к запоминанию и экономии на письме.

**Ключевые слова:** сокращения, графические аббревиатуры, лексические сокращения, инициалы, слово-гибрид