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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS AS A PART OF THE INTERNET SLANG AND THEIR ROLE IN SAVING SPEECH EFFORTS IN THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE CHATSPEAKS

*The article is devoted to the analysis of acronyms and abbreviations as a part of the Internet slang and to the highlighting of the way they influence the development of the language. It underlines the specificity of acronyms and abbreviations in the process of communication in so called chatspeaks in the Internet and their possibility to assimilate and transform in accordance to the needs and rules of the target languages. The article examines the key aspects of acronyms' and abbreviations' changes in the process of live language developing due to the communication of English-speaking Internet users from the countries all over the world. It includes the comparison between the English and the Ukrainian variants and equivalents of addressing to the speaker in the process of Internet communication in social networks, chats and discussion boards. The article puts a stress on the importance of a context understanding and adequate interpreting due to the situations when some acronyms as well as abbreviations have more than one meaning which can be completely lexically opposite to the needed one. It presents not only examples and variants of possible acronyms and abbreviations but also highlights the transformations which have had a place due to the language development. The article works out the most widely used acronyms and abbreviations of the Internet slang in two languages – English and Ukrainian and provides numeral examples on the similarities in sounding forms of some units and differences in their actual form in the target language. It underlines the reasons of the Internet slang usage and the necessity of scientific researches of this field due to the relevance of the studies turned to the Internet communication including acronyms and abbreviations as well which help to form trendy and popular ways of chatspeaks.*

**Key words:** Internet, Internet acronyms, acronyms, abbreviation, communication, slang, language development, source language, target language, social networks, chats and discussion boards, chatspeak.

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## АКРОНИМИ ТА АБРЕВІАТУРИ, ЯК ЧАСТИНА МЕРЕЖЕВОГО СЛЕНГУ ТА ЇХ РОЛЬ У ЗБЕРЕЖЕННІ МОВНИХ РЕСУРСІВ У ПРОЦЕСІ СПІЛКУВАННЯ У МЕРЕЖЕВИХ ЧАТАХ

*Стаття присвячена дослідженню акронімів та аббревіатур, як частини сленгу інтернету та висвітлює шляхи їх впливу на розвиток мови. Вона підкреслює особливості акронімів та аббревіатур у процесі комунікації у так званих чатах у мережі інтернет та їх можливості асимілювати та трансформуватися згідно з потребами та правилами країн, які не є англомовними. Стаття розглядає ключові аспекти змін акронімів та аббревіатур у процесі розвитку мови через спілкування англомовних інтернет користувачів з країн усього світу. Вона включає порівняння англійських та українських варіантів перекладу фраз звернення до мовця у процесі спілкування у мережі інтернет, яке включає комунікацію у соціальних мережах, чатах та форумах. Також стаття наголошує на важливості повного розуміння контексту через ситуації, коли деякі акроніми і аббревіатури мають більше одного значення, і які можуть повністю відрізнитися від потрібного варіанту тлумачення.*

**Ключові слова:** інтернет, акроніми, акроніми інтернету, аббревіатура, комунікація, спілкування, розвиток мови, мова джере-ла, мова перекладу, соціальна мережа, чат, форум.

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## АКРОНИМЫ И АББРЕВИАТУРЫ, КАК ЧАСТЬ СЕТЕВОГО СЛЕНГА И ИХ РОЛЬ В СОХРАНЕНИИ РЕЧЕВЫХ РЕСУРСОВ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ОБЩЕНИЯ В СЕТЕВЫХ ЧАТАХ

*Статья посвящена изучению акронимов и аббревиатур, как части сетевого сленга и описывает пути их влияния на развитие языка. Она подчеркивает особенности употребления акронимов и аббревиатур в процессе общения в, так называемых, чатах сети интернет и их возможность ассимилировать и трансформироваться согласно с потребностями и правилами стран, которые не являются англоязычными. Статья рассматривает ключевые аспекты изменений акронимов и аббревиатур в процессе развития языка путем общения англоязычных интернет пользователей из стран по всему миру. Она включает в себя сравнение англійських и українських варіантів фраз звернень до мовця у процесі спілкування у мережі інтернет, яке включає комунікацію у соціальних мережах, чатах та форумах. Також стаття наголошує на важливості повного розуміння контексту через ситуації, коли деякі акроніми і аббревіатури мають більше одного значення, які можуть повністю відрізнитися від потрібного варіанту тлумачення.*

**Ключевые слова:** интернет, акронимы, сетевые акронимы, аббревиатура, коммуникация, общение, развитие языка, язык источника, язык перевода, социальная сеть, чат, форум.

Nowadays a big amount of philological researches are devoted to the understanding and analysis of the communication, moreover to the live communication via the Internet which is easy to be accessed because of numeral modern devices which brightly show the high level of technological progress. As the interest in the youth communication including the Internet chatspeaks grows up many scientists keep this field under the research. There are such scholars as Chumak L., Crystal D., Kyrychenko O., Makarov M. [4; 6; 1; 2] and many others who make studies on the fields of linguistics analyzing communication on all the possible aspects. It is necessary to underline that the more we communicate on the Internet the more users influence the languages of other countries

and the more we are influenced by these changes, because the live communication has a huge impact on the language development. This article is devoted to such phenomena as *Internet slang* including *acronyms* and *abbreviations* which are very popular among the youth and the Internet users as well.

The actuality of this article is determined by the spreading of Internet communication which has come up to every level of society, every profession, age and gender. Many scientific works are devoted to the English Internet slang, but today in times when the Ukrainian-speaking users have activated themselves – the need in the research which includes the fundamental aspects of the Ukrainian acronyms and abbreviations used in a huge system of Web has grown up. The goal of the article is to highlight the specificity of using the acronyms and abbreviations in the process of communication via the Internet including social networks, chats and discussion boards, to compare the levels of development of these phenomena in two languages – Ukrainian and English and to present the key aspects of influence which is committed towards the Ukrainian language.

Mostly you are in the web following two goals – the first one to share information and the second one to learn something new. This article is mainly based on the first group of Internet users. Every time you start your communication via the Internet you try to share as much information as possible and to show your attitude to the various publications of your «friends» and «followers» whether you are limited in time or simply have no desire to type long phrases. Communicating or having so called «chatspeak» you stop monitoring the time but still want to be in touch not for a long. In such case the Internet speaker uses *Internet acronyms* and *abbreviations*, which easily help to show the emotional state or reaction to news of others and help the Internet users to save time saving speech efforts. They give a possibility to a co-speaker to understand one another from the first sound, they are used not only to mark the words, word phrases but also the whole sentences. In the Internet texts there are specific forms of shortening (substitution of a word or its part by the homonymous due to the sound letter or even by the number) which help to save your time spending on the Internet and increase the text's expressivity [3, p. 298].

Talking about the development of the chat live language we should remember that it would be impossible without trendy social networks, numeral chats and discussion boards such as Twitter, Facebook, Ask, WhatsApp and many others. Almost every live chat or Internet message exchanging program use acronyms and abbreviations because it makes the communication easier and more informal. But before looking deeper inside the nature of Internet acronyms and abbreviations, their influence and meaning transformations on the source language as well as the target language it is necessary to see the main differences between the concepts «acronym» and «abbreviation». So, Crystal D. insists on the determining the concept «acronym» as abbreviation which is formed from its first letters and can be read as alphabet sounds (BBC, EEC), as well as in the accordance to the rules of orthoepy (NASA, NATO) [6]; but, according to the Oxford Primary Dictionary we can understand «acronym» as a word or name that is formed from the first letters of other words [7, p. 5] and «abbreviation» as a word or group of letters that is shorter form of something longer [7, p. 1]. So, acronyms are pronounceable words (*CU* – see you) when the abbreviations are mostly used in written form and are meant as a whole unit (*2moro* – tomorrow, *approx.* – approximately).

Trendy Internet communication enlists thousands of acronyms and abbreviations. Some of them are more popular and are widely used as well as others are limited in use due to their professional, age, skills, gender and other specificities which play not the last role in the Internet communication. For instance, most Internet users from all over the world are familiar with such acronyms as *LOL* (Laugh Out Loud), *OMG* (Oh My God), *CU* (See You) and many others. If the second and the third ones are used only in the English-speaking countries or by the English-speaking Internet users and are understandable for them only, the first one *LOL* is clear for every chatspeaker whether he/she speaks English or any other language. The basic meaning for this acronym, which has already come to life in live oral communication, is based on the desire to show speakers' «laughing emotion» on the publication or situation. Some languages have transformed and developed the meaning of *LOL* as the work's answering has shown out. For instance, in the Ukrainian language this acronym does not mean only «funny» and «amusing» but also serves as an answer to the extraordinary and unexpected ending of the situation, moreover in the Indian language the same acronym has another meaning in addition and serves as a response to the situation when someone's joke fails down or cracks. So, as we can see, the situation when the acronym becomes a separate word may have place and being influenced by the rules and needs of other (not the source one) languages it may transform the meaning as well. Also this acronym has become the basis for other units which are widely used. They are – *Look of Love* «погляд сповнений кохання» describes the person's look which is full of love, *Lots of Love* «море кохання» or «безмежне кохання» describes the desire to show someone's strong feeling of love, *Love of Life* «вiчне кохання» or «кохання на все життя» describes the immortality of the feeling of love, *Lots of Laughs* «смятися без зупину» describes the high emotional state and the strong desire to laugh, etc [5]. But, due to the efficient limited development of the Ukrainian-speaking Internet using of acronyms and abbreviations there is not any possibility to find appropriate equivalents of their rendering in the target language as acronyms and abbreviations.

In the process of chatspeak some acronyms can be fully or partially changed, that we can see in *CU* which comes from *See You* but has completely substituted the first letters of the basic words in accordance with the sounding form not with the written one. It is quiet important to put a stress on a fact that the word «you» almost always turns into the *U* at the numerous chatspeaks. That can pose some difficulties in its understanding by users who are not English-speaking or who are only on their way of learning.

The basic principle for acronyms and abbreviation in the Internet – it is not necessary to understand the words hidden in the depth of letters but to know the meaning of the whole unit. Many people know the international organizations such as *NATO*, *WTO*, *WHO*, *UNESCO*, *UNICEF* [5] and others (even if their knowledge of the English language is limited) but only a few of them know how to interpret these acronyms and abbreviations letter by letter. So, translation in these cases does not play a fundamental role, but different target languages may have their own variants and equivalents of these units. If we look closer at the international names mentioned earlier then we will understand that some of them have the same sounding form in the target language but may completely differ in the words' translation. *NATO*, *UNESCO* and *UNICEF* [5] in the Ukrainian sound the same – *HATO*, *ЮНЕСКО* and *ЮНІСЕФ* but almost all of them differ in rendering *HATO* stands for «Пiвнiчноатлантичний альянс», *ЮНЕСКО* stands for «Органiзацiя Об'єднаних Нацiй з питань освiти, науки i культури» and *ЮНІСЕФ* «Дитячий фонд ООН». As the examples show the higher is the level of organization's popularity the more chances that it would be used in the target language unchanged in the sounding form but it is still impossible to have the same lexical form as it is in the source language. But that is for international organizations which are heard everywhere and understandable in every language but what about the acronyms and abbreviations

which are used only in the English-speaking countries and among English-speaking Internet users? It is possible to find some full equivalents which in the source language as well as in the target language are represented by acronyms and abbreviations. The first and the most widely used are ones which serve for greetings, thanking and byes as well.

Chatspeak may start from various phrases, the most common are – «good morning», «how are you», etc. *GM* [5] is used for «good morning». But it is important to keep in mind that the meaning of acronyms and abbreviations should be understood in accordance with the context because, for instance, *GM* may have completely different meanings – «genetically modified», «general motors», «general manager» and tens of others. *How RU* or even *HAY* [5] – if the first variant does not have any common meanings the second one has some other meanings such as «Helping America's Youth» (that is at-risk youth support program), etc. The second but not less important is to say «thank you» or «thanks» these phrases have many variants of being used in chatspeak as abbreviations such as *TY*, *THNX*, *TNX*, *TQ* and *THS* [5]. Some of them have other variants of interpretations and also have to be caught, understood and answered to in accordance with the context. For instance, *TY* is also the name of a popular American online shop which sells toys for children, *THS* has tens of meaning which mostly apply to the proper names of places and can stay for a word «thousand». Talking about the English variants of thanking someone we can add that the Ukrainian-speaking Internet users have their full equivalent which is widely used in the social networks – *ДЯК*, which is formed from the word «дякую».

Many of the Ukrainian acronyms and abbreviations are made on the basics of the English ones and they keep the same meaning and the sounding form but the structure of the units is formed due to the alphabet of the target language. These acronyms and abbreviations are – *кк* which comes from the English «Ok», *плз* is formed from the word «please» and keeps its consonants writing them in the target language; the English Internet slang also has the acronym with the same meaning and original word «please» – *PLS* and *PLZ* [5] (the second one is formed due to the sound form), *нп* this unit is formed from two words and contains the first letters of each of them «no problems», *лвл* in this case situation with the consonants repeats «level» – this word has found itself in the English-speaking chatspeaks as *LVL* [5], *млд* this unit leaves as well as some of mentioned above only three consonant letters from the English «million», but as well that can be interpreted as the unit which comes from the Ukrainian word with the same meaning «мільярд». But still there are some examples of the acronyms and abbreviations which are formed on the basics of the Ukrainian words and phrases – *тчн* «точно» which means «exactly», *хз* «хто знає» which means «who knows» this unit has close variant in the English Internet slang *WK* [5] which comes from «who knows» but it is used very frequently and there is another one which is in a wide use *WTHK* [5] which is formed from «Who The Hell Knows, *мо* «можливо or можна» which means «maybe or may/can» this unit as well as the next one also has its own variant which is used in the English chatspeak *Mb* which comes from «maybe», *мб* «може бути» which means «maybe/probably», *та* «так» which means «yes» and in the English Internet slang it sounds like *Y*, *млд* «молодець» which means «good on you/well done», «well done» can be said with the help of *WD* and «good on you» as *GOU* [5]. As it is possible to see from the proposed examples the biggest quantity of acronyms and abbreviations are formed with the help of the first two or three letters of a word (*INT* – International), using the first letter of each word of a phrase (*WTH* – What The Hell) and finally with the help of all or some consonants of a word (*PRS* – partnership).

It is impossible to avoid the phenomenon when the acronyms formed with the help of numerals. They become a part of words and entered the Internet slang on the new level of communication, these numbers contain their sounding form as well as a written one, but in the connection with the letters they create new units. For instance, 2 as to/too – *2morrow* (tomorrow), *2night* (tonight), *B2W* (back to work), *2BH* (to be honest) and many others, 4 as for/four – *4U* (for you), *4get* (forget), *4ever* (forever), 8 as eight – 8 (ate), *L8R* (later); some acronyms contain even symbols, for instance – *?4U* (question for you) as in the sentence: «It's my ?4U». Comparing to the English Internet slang the Ukrainian one can not present usage of numerals and symbols in acronyms' and abbreviations' forming, only few examples are available for now – *7я* (сім'я) – a family, *40ка* (сорока) – a magpie and *ак3са* (актриса) – an actress and some others.

Besides the units which are introduced in the Internet and in the process of communication serves more as informal phrases, there are also acronyms and abbreviations which can be used in both types of communication – formal and informal. Mostly they are used to introduce the words of Latin origin. Let's look through some of them. «For example» – *eg* [exempli gratia], «that is, namely, in other words» – *i.e.* [id est], «against someone» – *vs.* [versus], «and so on» – *etc.* [et cetera]. These units we can see in official letters as well as in the process of «chatting». They are widely used without any limits connected with age or the level of users' skills in the Internet communication.

To sum up it is important to put a stress on the fact that Internet acronyms and abbreviations serve as the key mechanism of saving time spent on the speech efforts. Nowadays Internet communication is an essential and valuable part of life whether he/she is nineteen or ninety, a teacher or an engineer, the Internet is all over the society. Internet acronyms and abbreviations in the English language are bigger in quantity and are more used due to the high development of the Internet sphere and the social networks. The Ukrainian Internet acronyms and abbreviations have been starting entering the social networks for three or four years due to the situation in the country and the high step towards the nationalization of all spheres of living including the Internet.

Using the Internet slang every should keep in mind the context and the specificity of communication, if some units are allowed in the official style others are strongly forbidden due to the emotional marking or to the words' expressivity.

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