

Numeronym as a modern type of abbreviation in modern English

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Abstract. The article is dedicated to the Information Technologies shortenings used in electronic messages and mail in Modern English. The main accent is made on morphological description of the specific type of abbreviations – numeronyms – and their translation peculiarities. The main function of a numeronym in any written text is to heighten the informativeness and capacity of a message, and, simultaneously, shorten it and “hide” its meaning from readers who don’t belong to the specific community. In the process of translation of numeronyms into other languages the decipher method proved to be the most efficient. The necessity of explanatory glossary for decoding computer texts is also underlined.

Keywords: *shortening, abbreviation, numeronym, Leet language, decipher, decoding*

Shortening is one of the most complex and interesting objects for comprehension and translation, especially in specialized texts. During the last decades in modern European languages the number of abbreviations, as well as the frequency of their use, is increasing. The abbreviation became one of the leading methods of derivation. The intensity and complexity of this process determines our investigation relevance, the need to appeal to its scrutiny.

The interest in creating specific abbreviations in languages of different structural types and their peculiar usage in various genres is caused by the fact that the abbreviation is the way of word-formation that totally meets the pragmatic contemporary settings.

Basic theories of abbreviations and other types of shortenings in modern English are reflected in the research works of T.I. Arbekova [1] V.V. Borisov [3] E.P. Voloshin [4], B.A. Goncharov [5], E.N. Galkina [6], A.P. Sheveleva [7] etc.

The object of our research is a numeronym as a lexical unit created with the help of one of the most promising derivational means, as well as specific difficulties of its translation. The methodology used in the study is based on the general scientific methods of induction and deduction.

It is known that abbreviations are designed in order to increase the effectiveness of communication, which is the major cause of social development. Abbreviations are the result of secondary nomination, these lexical units perform mainly identifying and classifying functions, their emergence often demonstrates the relevance of the phenomenon they describe in a certain time period.

The abbreviation is a means of filling lexical or word-building gaps in the usual vocabulary, confirming the need of the society in the nomination of new realities. Any remarkable word, an abbreviation in particular, is the unity of meaning and sound, content and form that always strive for mutual conformity. In the case when this *nisus* is implemented, the additional burden on linguistic memory is removed and the further language operation becomes easier [quot. by 4, p.115].

In word-building systems of different grammatical structures abbreviations take unequal place. Inflected languages (like English and Ukrainian) demonstrate high potential in creation of words according to the abbreviation model and, having differs in degrees of synthesis and analytism, represent an opportunity to follow the impact of the grammatical structure on specific features and types of abbreviation formation.

In the study of the abbreviation trends in these languages we should consider matching of a word-token as a system unit with its implemented usage. This approach allows us to distinguish the abbreviations retained in the language system, and abbreviations that appear in speech, as well as to investigate the most productive methods of acronyms’ entry into the vocabulary, that depend on the specifics of a language and knowledge reflecting cultural background of native speakers. The problem of the study of the abbreviation position in a discourse that occurs at the intersection of two spaces, virtual (or discursive patterns), and real (or practice) is also of high importance [4].

Productivity of the shortening as a means of the word-formation is also evident in the occurrence of specific words belonging to the slang vocabulary of specialists in the sphere of Information Technologies, such as: *arg* (*argument*), *tab* (*tabulation*), *comp* (*computer*), etc. The tendency of moving such words from slang to the common lexicon stratum is another illustration of the globalization processes, which cover all segments of society. Some newly-formed words created with the help of the shortening are not used in oral speech, but can only be submitted in writing on the computer screen. For example: *edt* – *program Editor* (Ukr. *програма-редактор*); *Edlin* (*Edit lines*) – *line editor* (Ukr. *рядковий редактор*); *err* – *error* (Ukr. *помилка*); *EXT* – *the End of Text* (Ukr. *кінець тексту*.); *ext* – *extension* (Ukr. *розширення*).

A special type of abbreviations, which is characteristic of English language, is a numeronym – the shortening created on the basis of a number. Pronunciation of letters and numbers may coincide with the word they represent, for instance: “K9” (Ukr. *собака*) for “canine” (phonetically: “ka” + “nine”), “gr8” (Ukr. *чудовий*) for “great” (phonetically: “gr” + “eight”). The similar example in French is “K7” (Ukr. *касета*) for “cassette” (phonetically: “ka” + “sept”). Similarly, letters between the first and the last letters of the words are replaced by the number of omitted letters, for example: “i18n” as “internationalization”. Sometimes the last letter can be counted but, nevertheless, missed. It is believed that the first numeronym was “S12n” [8]. It was the name of the e-mail account that was given to Jan Scherpenhuizen, a worker in the corporation DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation), by some system administrator because his name was too large for the account name. The colleagues often could not pronounce his name properly and often used the abbreviation “S12n” instead of it. The usage of such numeronyms became the part of DEC corporate culture.

Number of figures can also reflect the number of words that begin with one of the same letter, for example: W3 – the World Wide Web (Ukr. Всесвітня Павутина) or W3C – World Wide Web Consortium – a consortium of Internet (Ukr. Інтернет консорціум). Numeronyms which are not so widely used are those which consist only of numbers, like “212” for “New Yorker”, “4-1-1” for “information”, “9-1-1” for “help”, and “101” for “basic introduction to a subject”. The words of this type have existed for decades, including such as “10-code”, which was in use since World War II [8].

The concept of combining numbers into words can be found in the language Leet, where numbers often replace words similar in spelling, such as H4CK3D for HACKED. Leet (or “1337”) – is the specific style of use of English language which spread in the Internet. Its main peculiarities are – replacing letters with similar numbers and symbols, imitation and parody of errors typical for fast typing, imitation of hackers and gamers jargon, ending -x0r for words (haxx0r – hacker, rocks – r0xx0rz). These reductions are mainly used in writing, because some words (for example, pwn) have no definite pronunciation [9].

When composing words have complex meaning, numeronyms always get their “IT sense” such G11n relates to the preparation of software for worldwide distribution, not to the social trend of globalization. In some cases, only the use of a suitable context allows to distinguish uppercase and lowercase letters “I” / “i” and “L” / “l”, for example: a11y – accessibility (Ukr. доступність); c11y – consumability (Ukr. витратність); c14n – canonicalization (Ukr. канонізація); d11n – documentation (Ukr. документація); E15 – The Eyjafjallajökull volcano (Ukr. вулкан Ейяфьятлайокудль); g11n – globalization (Ukr. глобалізація); i14y – interoperability (Ukr. інтероперабельність); i18n – internationalization (Ukr. інтернаціоналізація); i12n – initialization (Ukr. ініціалізація); L10n – localization (Ukr. локалізація); m12n – modularisation (Ukr. модулізація); m17n – multilingualization (Ukr. мультлінгвалізація); n11n – normalization (Ukr. нормалізація); p1r8 – pirate (Ukr. пірат); P13n – personalization (Ukr. персоналізація); P45 – pneumoultramicroscopic silicovolcanopneumonia (Ukr. пневмоультрамікроскопічне ліковулканопнемоніоз); s10n – subscription (Ukr. передплата); v11n – versification (Ukr. версифікація); v12n – virtualization (Ukr. віртуалізація); w8 –

waiting (Ukr. Чекання), c10k – 10 thousand clients problem – The C10k problem is a potential issue in web server administration, it occurs when a web server has to handle 10,000 clients simultaneously (Ukr. Проблема 10000 клієнтів), the Y2K38 Problem – the 2038 year problem – the Year 2038 problem that is a time-related data storage issue that will occur in the year 2038 (Ukr. Проблема 2038 року).

Having analyzed our investigation material, we consider possible to allocate two general types of numeronyms: full (911, 218n) and partial (2nite). In the selection of numeronyms analyzed in our paper we can register the frequent use of figures 1, 2, 3 in the shortened words. This fact may be explained by the possibility of numbers to transmit definite sounds, such as 2 – to, too, two ([tu]); 4 – four, for([fo:]), etc. It can also be connected with the quantity of letters in the word. In general, long words which have more than ten letters, are usually cut, so the figure “1” is often used in numeronyms as the designation of “ten” in the number of letters in words that are omitted.

Among the means of abbreviations’ translation, the transference of English shortenings with the native equivalent, the borrowing of foreign language abbreviations (preserving the Latin spelling), the transliteration, the reflection of the phonetic form of English abbreviations (transcription), the descriptive translation, the creation of a new native shortening and the method of the direct borrowing are commonly used [2, p. 137]. But as we see from the examples of numeronyms given above and variants of their translation into Ukrainian, while interpreting such types of shortenings it is possible only to “decrypt” them and give the corresponding full forms of words or phrases (this method is used when there is no corresponding shortening in the target language, and for the precise translation it is necessary to determine the full form of abbreviation in the original language). Taking into account these difficulties in translation process, we consider that a special explanatory dictionary of the Leet language and numeronyms in particular is of great necessity.

Thus, the adequate translation of computer texts and their components – terms (numeronyms, acronyms, abbreviations, etc.) – is of current interest today. As the spread of new technologies constantly continues, the emergence of new vocabulary and the need for its interpretation remain unchanged.

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