SHORTENING IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE NAVY

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is the typology of shortened terms and terminological phrases in the language of the Navy using the lexico-semantic method. The examples discussed are excerpted from learning materials designed for cadets at Varna Naval Academy forming a large corpus representative of the domain they are used in. Shortening is used here as an umbrella term for initialisms, acronyms, clippings, blends and univerbates. The topic is worth discussing to meet syllabus goals and needs of learners who are going to function in a multinational environment and be faced with varieties of English as the primary language for international communication.
Keywords: shortening; univerbates; blends; clippings; abbreviations

Theoretical Assumptions. If there is such a phenomenon as language of the military, one of its characteristic features globally is the abundance of shortened forms of terms and terminological phrases. This study will reflect on the typology of shortened forms in Naval English. It is based on a corpus created using the coursebook "English for the Navy" developed for the needs of cadets at the Naval Academy – Varna, Bulgaria, and comprising 1950 items. The corpus itself is compiled using the learning materials in the book as well as extracts from the Multinational Maritime Manuals (MMM) contained in it. It is authentic in nature, sufficiently large in size with a finite number of items in order to be objective and representative of the domain it is used in.

Generally, scholars consider shortening as a means of term formation. Calling it lexical shortening Danilenko regards it a "structure for naming one and the same concept with the same meaning but shortened by means of definite linguistic processes" (Danilenko, 1977). Sager offers an umbrella term compression which "has the dual function of providing shorter forms of expression for frequently used terms and new exclusive names for long forms that might not be understood as terminological units" (Sager, 1997). Shortening according to Fischer is "any word which can be deduced from one or more longer words, yet … the association with the original base form still exists" (1998). Quirk et al. use the term abbreviation for shortening of words and claim

that it is involved in English word-formation through acronymy, clipping and blending (1985).

On the other hand, Ginzburg states that shortening is "a substitution of a part for a whole" and adds that the process of shortening is not confined only to words because many word-groups also become shortened in the process of communication. Therefore shortening affects both single- and multi-word terms. Further on, Ginzburg insists that a distinction should be made between shortening of words in written and oral speech, consequently graphical and lexical abbreviations should be differentiated (Ginzburg et al., 1979).

On the whole, linguists use the hyperonym 'shortening' to group 'initialisms', 'acronyms', 'clippings' and 'blends' (with some variation in the terminology) together. The same typology will be examined here by adding one more – univerbization. Besides, the corpus of military abbreviations registers precisely four types of shortening: univerbization, blending, clipping and abbreviation, apart from the graphic presentation of terms which is also common. In all these cases, the term 'short form of a term' may be considered a common generic term of this classification group (Popova, 2012).

Classification of Shortened Forms in English for the Navy

Univerbization. Univerbization is regarded here as a form of shortening and a process of word-formation by which the words existent in the language making up a compound lexeme or a syntactic phrase fuse into a single word/one-word lexeme according to the Encyclopaedia of Modern Bulgarian (Russinov & Georgiev, 2000). It is a typical method of "economizing" linguistic means, … to convey maximum information through minimum linguistic means" (Zidarova, 2008). In English terminology univerbization occurs with at least two-word compounds and results most often in a single word or compound. We determine three types in our corpus – substantivization, decomposition and ellipsis.

1. Substantivization with English navy terms follows three major models:

– Adj + N → N(pl) – *spare parts → spares – резервни части; combatant assets → combatants – бойни сили и средства, auxiliary units → auxiliaries – спомагателни части*, etc.

– Adj/Past Participle + N → N – *enlisted men → enlisted – матроси и старшини, military services → military - военни, wounded personnel → wounded – ранени*, etc.

– V + prep/N + N → N – *leadthrough operation → leadthrough – форсиране на минно заграждение, sail pass ceremony → sailpass – парад по време на учение*, etc.

2. Decomposition affects the attribute in the compound making it a headword. It can be exemplified with *patrol combatant ship → patrol combatant – патрулен боен кораб, air/sea lift operation → air/sea lift – прехвърляне на войски и бойно оборудване*

по въздух и море, layer depth → layer – дълбочина на слоя на скока, etc. Very often compounds with more than one attributive element are subject to decomposition.

3. Ellipsis differs from decomposition in that (one of) the attributive component is left out, e.g. *nuclear arms proliferation → nuclear proliferation – разпространение на ядрените оръжия, Persian Gulf war → Gulf war – война в Залива,* etc.

Blending. The use of blending in forming new words and terms seems to be on the rise (especially in English). Fandrych insightfully remarks that the name 'blending' is metaphorical, because blends 'mix' random parts of existing lexemes (splinters) – structurally and semantically (Fandrych, 2008) and the very presence of at least two elements places them close to compounds. Not incidentally according to Marchand blending is "compounding by means of curtailed words" (1969).

An important aspect in relation to this study is that blending involves two consecutive processes of clipping first and compounding then. It is a conscious method of term formation, in fact "It is not uncommon for new technical terms to be created by blending" (Stockwell & Minkova, 2001). If we apply the so-called blending rule defined by Plag as AB + CD → blend with A, B, C and D, referring to the respective parts of the elements involved (Plag, 2003), we will be able to identify the following subtypes in navy terminology:

1. AB + CD → AC – *medical evacuation → medevac – медицинска евакуация; electronic intelligence → elint – електронно разузнаване; experimental tactics → extac – публикация на НАТО за взаимодействие с ненатовски сили*

2. AB + CD → AD - *operational plan – oplan → оперативен план; destroyer squadron → desron – дивизион разрушители*

3. AB + CD → ACD – *directing staff → distaff – щаб на ръководството на учението; submarine area → subarea – зона за подводни операции; parachute troops → paratroops – парашутни войски*

4. AB + CD → ABC – *unit identification → unitid – идентификация на частите; air coordination → aircoord – координация на военните действия във въздуха; radar data → radardat – радарни данни,* etc.

5. AB + CD → AB/CD – *air task → airtask – задача за въздушни операции; air asset → airasset – разгръщане на сили и средства във въздуха*, the class marking blends without an overlap.

Yet other classes may be differentiated based on 3 elements as in *commander destroyer squadron → comdesron – командир на дивизион разрушители* where the blending is an initial-initial-final splinter formation; *European Maritime Forces → EUROMARFOR – европейски морски сили* where all elements are cut off initially. There may even be longer blends such as *STANAVFORMED* – a formation from *Standing Naval Force Mediterranean – постоянен флот на НАТО за Средиземно море*, or combinations of abbreviated and blended elements as in *UNPROFOR → United Nations Protection Forces – миротворчески сили на НАТО* and so on. These hybrid forms will be discussed in detail later on.

Clipping. Clipping is apparently used more often in professional slang than in regular terms. According to Marchand (1969), clippings are not coined as words belonging to the standard vocabulary of a language, rather they form part of a special group in professional jargon. Another important point to consider is that "the moment a clipping loses its connection with the longer word of which it is a shortening, it ceases to belong to word-formation, as it has then become an unrelated lexical unit (Lyons, 1977). Clipped words arise after dropping either the beginning, final or central part of the word. Users of each language tend to express themselves as economically as possible and to omit redundant parts of long compounds or multi-word terms without diminishing their meanings. This type of shortening is much more used in English, and naval terminology is no exception, e.g. *copter < helicopter – хеликоптер* but also *heli; plane < airplane - самолет; shun < attention – мирно* where clipping is initial*; gas < gasoline - бензин; prop < propeller - винт; amph < amphibious - десантен; en < enemy – вражески; recon < reconnaissance – тактическо разузнаване; log < logistics - логистика,* etc. where clipping is final, the latter being very common in the language of the Navy. Medial clipping is very rare as in *fo'c'sle ← forecastle – бак* and *bosun ← boatswain – боцман.*

An interesting type of shortened forms, mostly a result of clipping, occurs in the so-called Multinational Maritime Manuals (MMM), otherwise known as EXTAC, such as *CO < command, EX < exercise, ME < meteorology, NA < navigation, RE < readiness* and many others. These are used to designate groups of signals to be exchanged in multinational exercises.

Last but not least, multi-word terms may undergo clipping by preserving and combining their initial parts, e.g. *satcom < satellite communications – спътникови комуникации; sitrep < situation report - доклад за обстановката*, *subroc < submarine rocket – подводна ракета,* etc. but the process leads to blends of the AC type. It should be noted that written clippings do not leave the written domain, so when read aloud, their full forms are pronounced.

Abbreviation. Abbreviations ensure communication not only through economy of effort but also by condensing information and enhancing the information value of certain linguistic units. They are short or abbreviated forms of terms, consequently a special category of synonym which assumes a particular importance in special languages (Sager, 1990). They combine "economy of effort with repetition of the familiar" (McArthur, 1988) and are contextually conditioned.

Linguists are divided in their understanding of the essence of abbreviation: some believe that it is a method of term formation, others – that it is just a lexical variant of the full form of a term. According to McArthur (1988) several factors are to be considered when discussing abbreviations and shortenings:

– depending on the speaker, there is a range of transparent examples to completely obscure ones;

– some abbreviations are general property, others are technical terms;

– many abbreviations can be used parallel with their full forms which may be unknown to the speaker (e.g. *SS, sub, U-boat, submarine*);

– 'people in the know' do not always deem it necessary and/or desirable to enlighten others, as the use of jargons enhances their feeling of superiority, belonging to an in-group, etc.;

– homonymy is pervasive, e.g. AA – *1. Air-to-Air; 2. Anti-aircraft; 3. Auxiliary vessel – 1. (ракета) въздух-въздух; 2. зенитен; 3. спомагателен кораб.* In addition, there may be two or more abbreviated forms of a term, e.g. *ves, vsl, V → vessel – кораб.*

Various classifications of abbreviations have been offered – morphological (Medina, 2004), phonological (Mc Arthur, 1988), or combinations thereof. We are going to apply the one proposed by Sager as cited by Vicheva (2003) with slight modifications. Apart from blends and clippings which do belong to the classification but will be omitted intentionally, the following categories are outlined in it:

1. Initialisms
2. Acronyms
3. Single letter /digit symbols
4. Reduction by omitting vowels and middle consonants.

To make it complete, two other categories will be added, such as

5. hybrid types – a combination of two (or more) of the above classes as well as

6. technical abbreviations – units of measurement as well as mathematical symbols also fit in here.

Initialisms are formed from the first letters of each of the elements of a complex term or name. There are two types of initialisms: acronyms and alphabetisms. Those pronounced letter by letter are alphabetisms, e.g. AIO ← *Action Information Centre – боен информационен пост, ASMD ← Antiship Missile Defence – противоракетна отбрана, CIWS ← Close-in Weapon System – оръдейна система за близък бой, CTG ← Commander Task Group – командир на оперативна група, EOOW ← Engineer Officer of the Watch – вахтен механик, IFF ← Identification Friend or Foe – система за радиолокационно опознаване свой или чужд, NBCD ← Nuclear Biological and Chemical Defence – ядрена, биологична и химическа защита* and many others.

Alphabetisms are also the so-called ship designations, however, there is seemingly a controversy between the short and long form or there are other rules at work. These can be illustrated by the following examples: *AE ← Ammunition ship* where *A* stands for an *auxiliary ship* and *E* – for *explosives*; *LPD* is a *landing platform/dock* or *an amphibious transport ship*, *LSD* is a *landing ship, dock,* or *a dock landing ship. AO ← a fleet oiler* and *AR ← a repair ship* are also easy to interpret, but *AFS ← a combat store ship* is not. Similarly, *CV ← aircraft carrier*

does not come from carrier vessel but from *C ← cruiser* and *V ← fixed-wing aircraft*[1] It is also not hard to associate the suffixes *A* meaning *attack, E* meaning *escort, N* signifying *nuclear, G- guided missiles* when added to ship's designations as in CVAN, CVHE, etc. Last but not least, there is a rule for basic ship types the symbol to be the first letter of the type name, doubled, e.g. *DD ← destroyer, FF ← frigate, SS ← submarine,* etc.[2]

Those abbreviations pronounced as single words are referred to as **acronyms**, they are "put together and used as words" (Adams, 1973). They represent a large group such as *CHOP ← Change of Operational Command* – преминаване в оперативно подчинение, *CINC ← Commander in-Chief* – главнокомандващ, *ECDIS ← Electronic Chart Display and Information System* – информационна система с електронни карти, *FAST ← 1. Fast Automatic Shuttle Transfer* – автоматизирана система за подаване на ракетен боезапас and *2. Fleet Antiterrorist Security Team* – флотска антитерористична група, *STREAM ← Stream Tensioned Replenishment Method* – стандартен метод за попълване на запасите по траверзния способ, *TLAM ← Tactical Land Attack Missile* – тактическа ракета повърхност - земя, etc. Acronyms may be formed by combining the initial letters or syllables of all or several of the elements of a complex term or name in order to become pronounceable, see for example *COGOG ← Combined Gas or Gas Turbine* – комбинирана газотурбинна енергетична уредба where the last word is left out, or *HARM ← High-speed Anti-radiation Missile* – високоскоростна противолокационна ракета where the second word is left out but not the prefix. Or *PIM ← Position and Intended Movement* – местоположение и предстоящо движение where the conjunction *and* is omitted unlike other examples where prepositions are kept, e.g. the above quoted *CINC*.

Types of warfare and weapons can be abbreviated as either alphabetisms or acronyms, compare CM ← *Cruise Missile* – крилата ракета and *AMRAAM ← Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile* – усъвършенствана ракета клас въздух-въздух със среден радиус на действие, *HMS ← Hull-mounted Sonar* – подкилна ХАС and *TACTAS ← Tactical Towed Array Sonar* – тактическа буксируема ХАС and others.

Abbreviation in English is often carried out by **leaving the vowels out**. It is common mostly for written documents, sometimes becoming an accepted form alongside the full form, e.g. *asg ← assign* – назначавам на длъжност, *bmr ← bomber* – бомбардировач, *ctms ← countermeasures* – противодействие, *ldg ← landing* – кацане, десант, *prwd ← proword* – изразяване чрез кодове. The rule is applied to all words except those that start with a vowel where the initial vowel is included in the abbreviation – *eqpt ← equipment* – оборудване, *atk ← attack* – атака, *acft ← aircraft* – летателен апарат. This type of shortening does not have its own distinctive pronunciation but is either spelled with capital letters or with small letters.

Another group of abbreviations is a **combination of numbers and letters**, for *example C2 ← Command and Control – командване и управление, C2W ← Command and Control Warfare – борба със системата за командване и управление на противника; C3 ← Command, Control and Communications – командване, управление и свръзки,* etc.

Technical abbreviations are also part of the language of the Navy – *kt ← knot(s) – възли, nm ← nautical miles – морски мили, yd ← yard – ярд, in ← inch – инч, shp ← shaft horse power – валова мощност, deg ← degree – градус,* etc.

Abbreviations and symbols in charts are an indispensable part of graphic representation of routes and navigation in general. They are usually in a written form and denote specific terrain features, dangers to be encountered, leading marks whether on land, at sea or in the air. Besides, they are used for the display of navigation-related information on all navigation equipment and systems on board and are consistent and uniform. Typical of sea charts are bottom characteristics abbreviations (Velikova, 2018).

Hybrid abbreviations may also be considered here as a result of two or more ways of shortening as in *ASROC ← Antisubmarine rocket – противоподводна ракета* where the first element is abbreviated as an initialism while the second is clipped. Likewise *CDSORG ← Civil Direction of Shipping Organization – Организация на гражданското корабоплаване,* is also a combination of an initialism and a clipped form of the headword. In *NAVSTAR ← Navigation Satellite Providing Time and Range – спътникова радионавигационна система* we witness the same two processes at work but this time reversed. In *MIF CDR ← Maritime Interdiction Force Commander – Командир на съединение, изпълняващо международно наложени санкции,* there are two types of shortening again – initializing and leaving vowels out. Finally, a mention should be made about abbreviations where one of the elements is left full as in *NORTHAG ← Northern Army Group – Група армии Север* or *CINCAFSOUTH ← Commander in-Chief Allied Forces South – Командващ на обединените въоръжени сили в Южна Европа* in order to emphasize the geographical region affected.

It may be observed from the examples above that the spelling of abbreviations differs: either with capital letters or with small letters, or a combination of both, e.g. *hPa – hectopascal; GHz – GigaHertz*; with or without dots. In fact, since the end of 20th century the trend has been not to use dots. Some abbreviated terms may be written with a slash, e.g. *R/P ← Rendezvous Position –място на среща в морето; L/T ← Leadthrough – форсиране на минно заграждение; F/F ← Fire fighting – борба с пожари.* Others contain the symbol & - *R&A ← Rescue and Assistance – спасяване и помощ; O&M ← Operations and Maintenance – експлоатация.*

Teaching and Practicing Shortened Forms
We as teachers must include English abbreviations wherever they logically

fit throughout our ESP instruction programs. This doesn't mean waiting till our students reach the advanced level before bringing up the idea. On the contrary, practice has proved that to familiarize them with the mechanism of getting a full form short makes them aware of the phenomenon and eager to guess how each one was formed.

Activities to be used when practicing such forms may involve matching, differentiating, choosing a correct answer, even suggesting how they were created or making their own abbreviated terms or phrases.

Conclusions

Shortening has been used in this study as an umbrella term for initialisms, acronyms, clippings, blends and univerbates. All of them are extensively used and not only in a written form. This is particularly true about the language of the Navy. Overall, they enter the naval domain from different subject fields and are indicative of different communicative situations and genres.

From a thematic point of view they belong to different spheres: weapons, equipment, policy, legal matters, documents, etc. They tend to spread even in everyday life. Thus the introduction of Internet 'netcronyms' or 'e-abbrevs' (McArthur, 2000) has also affected everyday and professional communications likewise.

Very few English abbreviations have an accepted standardized abbreviation in Bulgarian. Therefore the abbreviations which are used are either the English ones or there is no abbreviated form. It is essential to introduce them parallel with their full forms and develop skills for recognizing and successfully employing them whenever the situation requires.

It is important for our students to know that both the full and short forms of terms are absolute synonyms but it is up to them to decide on the type of communication they are going to be involved in and attempt to avoid communication breakdowns by not choosing the correct forms.

NOTES

1. Cf. https://www.quora.com/What-does-CVN-stand-for-in-the-U-S-Navy-How-is-the-abbreviation-used.

2. Cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hull_classification_symbol

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