ABBREVIATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY INTERNET-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

Igor F. Porubay,
Assistant lecturer, the department of foreign languages for humanities, Fergana State University, Uzbekistan
Erkin T. Khakimov,
Candidate of philosophical sciences, associate professor, the department of philosophy, Fergana State University, Uzbekistan

INTRODUCTION

The Internet and its advantages undoubtedly affect the process of communication, creating a new branch of vocabulary that is associated with it. It can be further concluded that the Internet is a starting point of a special layer of lexis which is characteristic, in most cases, exclusively, to an Internet-mediated communication.

Today, the significant role of the Internet in contemporary understanding of communication process is one of the key moments in various pieces of research. They highlight the fact that virtual communication provided by the internet becomes an inseparable part of people's lifestyle, and Internet communications has an impact on the behavior of society in general.[1] (1, p.69)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In modern Internet communication, one of the major characteristics is a tendency to develop its own specific words that can be classified in different categories. The majority of such Internet-specific words are various acronyms and abbreviations.

These are the words that have developed as a result of direct communication of Internet users with each other. According to statistics of web-sites aimed to study the presence of the Internet contractions, there are 4,195,875 contractions registered on the Web.[2] (2, p.18)

Some of those contractions are basically the most common phrases of everyday speech that can occur in both informal and formal types of conversation, i.e. they are based on the lexis which is not necessarily associated with the paradigm of Internet or computer terminology. Examples of this category are numerous, among them are such:

BRB – be right back
BTW – by the way
LMK – let me know
G2G – got to go
ASAP – as soon as possible
IMHO – in my humble opinion
TBH –to be honest
IDK – I don't know

D. Alekseev sees abbreviation as a multifaceted phenomenon the roots of which go deep back in time. He states that abbreviations are the way to create nominations for various phenomena that were initially described by attributive phrases.[3] (3, p.104)

Abbreviations can be classified according to different attributes they possess. Outside the Internet environment, the phenomenon is complex its own. Yu.G. Kochayan explains abbreviation as unit of written or oral speech, which is made from the fundamentals of the graphic or sound form of the original word; therefore, the original word and its abbreviated form share a mutual lexical and semantic connection.[4] (4)

---

[1] Масликова О.С. «Языковые особенности общения в Интернет-пространстве». Инновационная наука. №9, 2019 г. – с.69

[2] Баринова О.С. «Слоговые и сложнослоговые английские сокращения, используемые в сети Интернет». Известия РГПУ им. А. И. Герцена. – 2008 г. – с.18

[3] Алексеев Д.И. Аббревиатуры как новый тип слов // Развитие словообразования современного русского языка. 3-е изд. М., 1977. – с.104

[4] Кочаян Ю.А. Аббревиация как лингвистический феномен (на примере английской военной лексики) //

If we take into consideration strictly Internet-mediated discourse, abbreviations used in it can be classified in such a way:

The first type includes abbreviations based on the first letters of a particular phrase which is popular in communication. It carries the same semantic meaning with an original phrase. In most cases, these abbreviations have a very informal character despite the fact that the phrases they are based on are considered to be neutral in style, e.g. IDK ("I don't know"), ASAP ("As soon as possible"), LMK ("Let me know"). The reason why these abbreviations create an informal effect can be explained by the fact they contract commonly used phrases which creates an impression that an interlocutor didn't care to write words thoroughly, attempting to save as much time as possible. Abbreviations, therefore, produce a "relaxing" effect on the reader. Some abbreviations, like IMHO ("In my humble opinion") outside the Internet context are viewed as more formal and even outdated speech turns, which consequently create an almost comic effect in the Interest communication

There are a number of acronyms that are not widely popular, but occupy a certain place in the Internet discourse, for example, in the spheres of blogging, social media and news services:

TBA - to be announced - to be announced later

POV - point of view - point of view

IG - short for Instagram, often used in personal messages and user posts

FB is short for Facebook, also found on social media in individual posts.

The second type of abbreviations is presented by examples that are based on the words of an original phrase, but, instead of deciphering its meaning from its separate words, such abbreviations are understood as reflections of an original phrase in an indirect, symbolic, stylistically colored way. They express interlocutor's reaction or emotional state to an utterance said toward him:

LOL - lots of laugh - used to express a positive reaction to a funny, humorous situation, joke, meme, etc. It can also express a positive, informal disposition of the communication participant, in certain cases, self-mockery.

YAY / YAYX – can expresses the reaction of joy, positivity, approval.

OMG - Oh my God - used in a discursive environment extensively both inside and outside the Internet, this typical English-language phrase can express both positive and negative emotional reaction of an interlocutor, including such emotional states as hock, sympathy, disbelief, joy, surprise etc. It is important to notice that some of those abbreviations, particularly, OMG, starts outside the time and space of the Internet language. The phrase was first used, according to some pieces of research, by John Arbuthnot way back in 1917 in his letter to Winston Churchill, while its first use on the Internet saw the light in 1994 in a message on the forum.[5] (5, p.613-631) Some pieces of research classify such abbreviations as initial abbreviations.[6] (6, p.20)

As the Internet discourse is a dynamically developing phenomenon owing to its IT-based nature, over time, new abbreviations can come into use. This creates a situation typical for any new coinage or term that comes into any language – a word or phrase is not known yet and not used by everyone. Here are a few examples of such:

FYI - For your information - for your information

MSG - Message – message

There has been a tendency to express various aspects of communications including emotional state and attitude using relatively new abbreviations in various context of Internet conversation, both public and private. These can pursue different objectives, including such ones as the expression of being entertained, disposition, etc.

IFYI - I feel your pain - I understand you - serves as a means of expressing sympathy or / and compassion.

TNTL - Trying not to laugh - I try to laugh - an expression of an attempt to hide a positive reaction to something inappropriate, confusing, pitiful.

JK - just kidding – a desire to explain a lightweight nature attributed to an utterance that can possibly offensive to sensitive people or in case of misunderstanding.

IDC - I don't care an expression of the interlocutor's indifference to the information read,

ZZZ - expression by the interlocutor of fatigue, fatigue, desire to rest, sleep.

There is also an another layer of relatively new acronyms expressing an opinion (either your own or someone else's). They can include the expression of frustration, tiredness, disregard, disbelief, etc.

POV - from point of view - point of view. For example, "his POV" (his point of view)

Вестн. Моск. ун-та. Сер. 19: Лингвистика и межкультурная коммуникация. 2007. № 3

[5] Lin Y.-C., Wang K.-Y. and Hsieh J.-Y. (2017). «Creating an effective code-switched ad for monolinguals: the influence of brand origin and foreign language familiarity.» Int. J. Advert. 36, p. 613–631.

[6] О.С.Батыжина, А.А. Логинова. «Сокращения и Неологизмы-аббревиатуры в англоязычной интернет-среде». Иностранные языки в контексте межкультурной коммуникации – 2020 г. – с.20

YNK - you never know - you never know. For example: "YNK when it's the right time to make a decision"

Recently, in the English-speaking environment of Internet communication, abbreviations that serve the purpose of a warning, caution in the choice of words and thus letting the interlocutor understand that the next words will be a personal opinion. Basically, their use is associated with conducting a conversation on a more serious topic.

AFAIK - As Far As I Know - as far as I know

IANAL - I am Not a Lawyer - I am not a lawyer - thus a person makes it clear to the interlocutor that any advice on legal issues from him will be useless, since he does not understand this area.

AFAIR - As Far As I Remember - as far as I can remember

ASAMOF - As a Matter of Fact - in fact, in reality

IIRC - If I Remember Correctly - if I remember correctly

TL; DR - Too Long, Didn't Read - too long, didn't read - the interlocutor's answer to a message or publication that he didn't read because of either a reluctance to draw attention, or simply because of ignorance.

The last mentioned abbreviation has some significant features that make it stand out compared to others. First, it can be found not only in conversations themselves, but other Internet text scenarios, including web articles and blogs. Next, it reflects an overall tendency of a contemporary Internet reader, which is focusing less on detailed texts. This is a particularly striking abbreviation in the Internet discourse, which once again shows us the brevity of Internet messages and online publications in general, since indeed, most Internet users today prefer short messages to long ones, and their lose attention easily while reading extended texts.

Some researches, like L.Novikova, highlight the fact that in contemporary conditions of Internet-mediated discourse, correct interpretation of such abbreviations is crucial in understanding the overall message and direction of a single conversation, considering how often they are used.[7] (7, p.126) One of the reasons why abbreviations are so popular to be used in communication is their ability to economize time to express an idea in a written form. Another reason is also their tendency to fall into the category of informal language which is typical to young people in general who are considered the most active users of the Internet. This may create potential communication restrictions, including the requirement from an interlocutor to be able to distinguish abbreviations, be in touch with contemporary tendencies in using them, and identifying obsolete ones. Such obvious circumstances like particular person's frequency of contact with Internet discourse environment, experience in social media and, simply, age may create serious obstacles in communicating freely and without cognitive boundaries. To some extent, Internet language, with all its abbreviations, slang and other stylistic peculiarities, create a special language within the language, some concepts of which may not be understandable to wide audience in case they are not related to the sphere of the Internet on a daily, or at least, regular basis.

Abbreviations and acronyms manifest themselves in such discursive situations as communication through instant messaging services, as wells forums and chats, and within social networks. Nevertheless, in the Internet environment, these abbreviations can be used freely only in informal communication, whereas strict, formal communication situations on the Internet such use is limited or not recommended completely because of the nature of conversation which doesn't even consider using informal vocabulary, vague words and emotionally charged lexemes.

If we look at the amount of various communication contexts, it becomes visible that formal situations of communication are few compared to informal ones. This is the reason why abbreviations can be found frequently, as their use is simply dictated by the requirements of any informal conversation to use vernacular language, stylistically charged phrases and words, slang, jargon and other informal expressive means.

There are also less common abbreviations designed to alert the user to the content of certain content. It is used both in personal communication and by Internet journalists, bloggers and creators of various social media content.

OC - Original Content - the participant of the discourse makes it clear that the publication made by him on the social media is his own work and probably has a number of copyrights belonging to him.

OP - Original Poster - if the someone reposts someone's content in order to share it, he uses this abbreviation followed by the username of the author of this content.

AYOR - At Your Own Risk - a warning that the post or message in question is either psychologically difficult or contains a risk, for example, of malware or spam.

---

[7] Л.А. Новикова. «Аббревиация как феномен межкультурной коммуникации в сети Интернет». Вестник УдГУ. 2013, вып. 2. ФГБОУ ВО «УдГУ» - с.126

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As seen from these few examples there is a large number of different abbreviations with the following fundamental characteristics:

1) some abbreviations are extremely straightforward and are basically a set of the first letters of a phrase, for example, IDK, OC, TBH. Others represent a meaning which is more figurative and symbolic: LOL, IFYP, TGIF.

2) abbreviations serve different purposes in the communication process. Some express understanding: IFYP, TNTL, others - emotions: LOL, OMG, others tend to warn rather than express an emotional state: AFAIK, AYOR, the fourth type help to express a point of view: POV.

3) Abbreviations are primarily intended to reduce the time for writing messages. Since the written form of informal communication, as opposed to the oral one, takes more time to deliver the message, this method of reducing time and effort by reimagining common phrases is justified.

It is clear that such phenomena of Internet discourse make communication more informal. Some linguists highlight the fact that Internet communication and its slang have such attention-drawing features as being humorous, while literary languages are more stable and reliable.[8] (8, p.596-603)

One of the troubling issues is the longevity of these manifestations in the Internet discourse. Since the field itself is a constantly evolving phenomenon, its vocabulary is also undergoing constant changes. Despite this face, some abbreviations have proven their strong position in the language, for example, ASAP. Such abbreviations are understandable even to a non-English-speaking Internet user, at least in most cases. Some acronyms have gone out of style altogether and are not used more regularly, such as LOL. Other abbreviations, for example, AYOR, OC, do not have the same popularity, and their use has a narrower circle, therefore, their understanding is also limited to a strictly English-speaking audience. The third, and probably, most widespread and vast topic of debate is the effect Internet-abbreviations produce on the language of everyday communication in general, both within and outside the virtual environment of the Internet. Being informal expressions in its majority, abbreviations, together with related slang words and jargon, incline the language to a more and more informal nature, leading to such proclaimed negative future consequences as loss of the importance of orthography, literary style of languages and language culture. The language obtains and accepts more and more vernacular characteristics. However, other researchers see the Internet discourse and its tendencies more as a natural phenomenon which opens new ways of expression and creativity. According to some, Internet discourse means open new creative ways to study and analyze all powers of written form of communication.[9] (9, p.81) Therefore, the Internet moves the language of everyday communication to new heights and levels, in which different styles are blended with each other, where the lines between formal and informal vocabulary are blurred and can coexist together in one communication context. D. Crystal, a well-known researcher in the field of IT-related discourse, noted that such predictions always existed every time there was a new technology outbreak that modified the language under its influence.

CONCLUSION

In addition to the fact that the influence of Internet discourse creates new ways to exploit language means, it also reflects the "live" language and people's tendencies and preferences in using these means. It provides a researcher with clear and interesting examples of real time language use which helps him to outline a complete picture of modern spoken language and how it evolves with time and changing Internet trends, while analyzing which language manifestations become obsolete and outdated and which ones replace them.

Furthermore, it has to be said that the Internet-created coinages and innovative elements have a certain degree of influence outside its virtual limits, i.e. on an everyday communication language in general. There is an obvious tendency to use Internet-memes, slang and such in a n everyday life outside the Internet, meaning that the Internet slang and related linguistic phenomena surpassed the borders of the Internet itself.[10] (10, p.50)

Abbreviations and related phenomena in Internet communication have significant place and role. They serve as a constantly evolving feature of the Internet discourse and remain as one of the most interesting and rich sources in studying contemporary online communication trends.

REFERENCES

[8] Alcántara-Pilar J.M., del Barrio-García S. and Porcu L. (2013). A cross-cultural analysis of the effect of language on perceived risk online. Comput. Hum. Behav. 29, p. 596–603.

[9] Гусаров А. А. Особенности языка интернет общения // Научный форум. Сибирь. 2016. Т.2 №4. – с. 81

[10] Нишанов Я.И., Утанова Т.Г. «Интернет-сленг и интернет-общение». Вестник науки и образования. №10 (113), часть 2. 2021 г. – с.50

1. Maslikova O.S. «YAzykovye osobennosti obshcheniya v Internet-prostranstve». Innovacionnaya nauka. №9, 2019
2. Barinova O.S. «Slogovye i slozhnoslogovye anglijskie sokrashcheniya, ispol'zuemye v seti Internet». Izvestiya RGPU im. A. I. Gercena. – 2008
3. Alekseev D.I. Abbreviatury kak novyj tip slov // Razvitie slovoobrazovaniya sovremennogo russkogo yazyka. 3-e izd. M., 1977
4. Kochayan YU.A. Abbreviaciya kak lingvisticheskij fenomen (na primere anglijskoj voennoj leksiki) // Vestn. Mosk. un-ta. Ser. 19: Lingvistika i mezhkul'turnaya kommunikaciya. 2007
5. Lin Y.-C., Wang K.-Y. and Hsieh J.-Y. (2017). «Creating an effective code-switched ad for monolinguals: the influence of brand origin and foreign language familiarity.» Int. J. Advert. 36
6. O.S.Batyzhina, A.A. Loginova. «Sokrashcheniya i Neologizmy-abbreviatury v angloyazychnoj internet-srede». Inostrannye yazyki v kontekste mezhkul'turnoj kommunikacii – 2020 g
7. L.A. Novikova. «Abbreviaciya kak fenomen mezhkul'turnoj kommunikacii v seti Internet». Vestnik UdGU. 2013, vyp. 2. FGBOU VO «UdGU»
8. Alcántara-Pilar J.M., del Barrio-García S. and Porcu L. (2013). A cross-cultural analysis of the effect of language on perceived risk online. Comput. Hum. Behav. 29
9. Gusarov A. A. Osobennosti yazyka internet obshcheniya // Nauchnyj forum. Sibir'. 2016. T.2 №4.
10. Nishanov YA.I., Utanova T.G. «Internet-sleng i internet-obshchenie». Vestnik nauki i obrazovaniya. №10 (113), chast' 2. 2021

5. Lin Y.-C., Wang K.-Y. and Hsieh J.-Y. (2017). «Creating an effective code-switched ad for monolinguals: the influence of brand origin and foreign language familiarity.» Int. J. Advert. 36
6. О.С.Батыжина, А.А. Логинова. «Сокращения и Неологизмы-аббревиатуры в англоязычной интернет-среде». Иностранные языки в контексте межкультурной коммуникации – 2020 г.
7. Л.А. Новикова. «Аббревиация как феномен межкультурной коммуникации в сети Интернет». Вестник УдГУ. 2013, вып. 2. ФГБОУ ВО «УдГУ»
8. Alcántara-Pilar J.M., del Barrio-García S. and Porcu L. (2013). A cross-cultural analysis of the effect of language on perceived risk online. Comput. Hum. Behav. 29
9. Гусаров А. А. Особенности языка интернет общения // Научный форум. Сибирь. 2016. Т.2 №4. – с. 81
10. Нишанов Я.И., Утанова Т.Г. «Интернет-сленг и интернет-общение». Вестник науки и образования. №10 (113), часть 2. 2021 г.

REFERENCES (rus)
1. Масликова О.С. «Языковые особенности общения в Интернет-пространстве». Инновационная наука. №9, 2019 г.
2. Баринова О.С. «Слоговые и сложнослоговые английские сокращения, используемые в сети Интернет». Известия РГПУ им. А. И. Герцена. – 2008 г.
3. Алексеев Д.И. Аббревиатуры как новый тип слов // Развитие словообразования современного русского языка. 3-е изд. М., 1977.
4. Кочаян Ю.А. Аббревиация как лингвистический феномен (на примере английской военной лексики) // Вестн. Моск. ун-та. Сер. 19: Лингвистика и межкультурная коммуникация. 2007. № 3