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SOME SPECIFIC FEATURES OF TRANSLATING ABBREVIATIONS IN MILITARY ENGLISH

In the focus of the article there is the urgent issue of optimizing military translation predetermined by the current global geopolitical situation. The key moments of qualified translation skills acquisition are being studied. Particular attention is paid to the difficulties of rendering Military English abbreviations in Ukrainian. The dominant translation techniques are distinguished and analyzed. Particular attention is given to the analysis of various translation transformations and their role in performing adequate and qualified military translation.

The research resulted in the conclusions about the most successful and productive translation means and techniques employed to fully and adequately render the semantics and pragmatics of Military English abbreviations in Ukrainian translation. It has been concluded that the most recurrent and productive means of rendering Military English abbreviations in translation there are loan translation and coinage of a new abbreviation by means of the target language and transcription especially for acronyms.

The investigation was carried out on the basis of the authentic texts in Military English, selected from the textbooks and manuals for military translators and interpreters. All the conclusions drawn have been grounded by statistic data of the conducted experiments. The results of the research are of great theoretical and practical value. The urgency of the research results both from the object and targets of the research. Military discourse translation should be the translation of exceptional quality and trustworthiness.

The perspective is seen in extending the scope of the research, in investigating the whole bulk of Military English lexis, in particular the peculiarities of rendering specific for Military English idioms and fixed expressions.

Key words: *translation techniques, Military English, abbreviations, translation transformations, acronyms.*

Introduction. Military discourse is a particular kind of the military men's world view speech organization, characterized by such specific features as the correspondence to the current military situation, the military sphere environment; particular military chronotope; intentionality; wholeness of the speech elements in use; coherence; military-factual information content; procedurality; intertextuality; authority of the origins; anthropocentricity of the military world view; ability to interact with other discourses of the institutional type.

The specificity of military discourse is predetermined by its subjects. Among the distinctive features of military discourse there are mandatory outlook, logical and precise formulations, standardized structures and clichés, communicative intensity and particular status of the communicants based on subordination.

The review of the recent publications about the military discourse has revealed different approaches to the classification of the genres of military discourse. The basic two subtypes include regulatory military discourse (statutes, orders, summaries, reports) and informational military discourse (military-scientific, military-technical, military-publicist). The addresser is abstract while the addressee is precisely identified. This is due to the mandatory character of the instructions in the army.

The outstanding feature of military discourse is the use of abbreviations and shortenings as well as nomenclature and specific notation symbols. Military discourse may be also subdivided into military official English and military slang, which differ mainly in the degree of informality and expressivity. The least specified in terminology among all the military discourse genres (statutes, orders, summaries, reports) are military statutes. This is due to the specificity of the content of this

official papers which defines the relationship of military men, regiments and squads, as well as duties and rights of all ranks in the army. The words are employed in their logical meanings registered in the dictionaries to avoid any possible ambiguity. An exception is made for the metaphoric nominations of military actions sites – mountain peaks, rivers, localities often identified as symbols on the map. It should be mentioned that these metaphors perform exclusively encrypting or codifying function, not the expressive one.

The syntactic structures of military orders are very peculiar. The dominant type of clauses are simple sentences with infinitive, gerundial and participial clauses. Complex and compound sentences are less numerous. The main distinctive feature of the functional style is brevity and ellipticity. Another characteristic is omission of modal verbs and parts of sentence. Military field is simultaneously a source of abbreviations and a stimulus for their renovation. According to A. Martine, all abbreviations appear in English because of the Law of economy of speech efforts. This law has been repeatedly mentioned in the scientific works by I. A. Boduen de Courtenay, L. V. Scherba, Ye. D. Polivanov.

The information is rendered by a fewer number of symbols in abbreviations than in full words, so the capacity of each symbol is larger than in the original units. Therefore abbreviation may be considered a way of speech optimization. However, the predominant function of abbreviation is still communicative. Abbreviation is employed to condense information and increase the informational value of certain elements. There exist different approaches to the origins of abbreviation. According to the first approach, supported by I. V. Arnold [2, p. 76] abridged or clipped forms and abbreviations proper are more characteristic of the loan words partial assimilation. On the contrary, abundance of information is considered to be the reason for shortenings.

The objective of the research is to distinguish the peculiarities of the use of abbreviations in English military discourse. The object of the research is abbreviation studies as a linguistic phenomenon in the aspect of its specificity in Military English. The subject of the research are different means of rendering abbreviations in translating Military English into Ukrainian.

The research was carried out on the basis of the dictionary “The Glossary of Military English” as well as some authentic military texts in English and their authorized translations into Ukrainian reviewed in the course of investigation.

The grounding for the research was formed by the theoretical works in this field by L. Shashok, V. Balabin, V. Lisovskyi, O. Chernyshov, L. Nelubin who laid the basis for the military translation.

The novelty and up-to-datedness of the article is seen in an attempt to formulate the main principles of rendering Military English abbreviations in Ukrainian translation in the paradigm of the widely accepted holistic communicative and functional approach to translation investigation.

Discussion. Abbreviation consists in providing the transmission of the biggest possible amount of data with the minimal employment of the language’s material shell (both acoustic and graphic form), i.e. in increasing the language communicative function efficiency.

The definitions of shortenings and abbreviations are numerous and sometimes ambiguous or even controversial. So it’s but natural that the universal fundamental definition of this notion hasn’t been elaborated yet. However, it should be emphasized that there definitely exists certain ambiguity as for the interpretation of the term “shortening” by different scholars. According to V. V. Borisov [2, p. 130], abbreviation is a letter or a short combination of letters characterized by alphabetic similarity with the source word or word combination and employed for brevity.

In many researches on abbreviation processes abbreviation is defined as the specific means of word formation, used to coin structural, semantic and stylistic variants of words (i.e. contractions are not treated as words when primarily used in oral speech but acquire traits of words only in dynamics). In the process of abbreviation multi-faced communicative words are coined. Abbreviation is a way of nominating notions and reality words, which had originated as descriptions, attributive constructions.

The main peculiarity of abbreviations is their relation to the source word. This postulation forms the basis for the classification of shortenings related to the motivated unit (full word or word combination) which predetermined abbreviation both in its structure and semantics. Abbreviation is most often used in the following two meaning: graphic presentation in a more concise way (graphic abbreviation proper) and a type of word formation (lexical abbreviation).

Abbreviations are contracted words, coined by means of the compositions of stems, still connected with their prototypical base. The main features of abbreviations are two-sidedness, nomination and functionality. Abbreviational signs are conventional clipped word signs of the basic word combinations with the same subject correlation,

the so-called stylistic synonyms. Abbreviation is a certain secondary code, representing and simultaneously replacing one material form with the other. Abbreviation is the most artificial way of word composition.

Another peculiarity of abbreviations as coined words is the loss of their original inner form or, in other words, their total demotivation. The absence of roots and affixes contributes to the issue of the alternative nature of abbreviations which cannot be considered proper words because of their particular structure.

The correlation between the graphical and acoustic shape in abbreviations and complete, full words is totally different. By admitting that abbreviations are words both in the aspect of their functions and structure we should acknowledge that there is the unity of sound and meaning, the latter being determined not by separate phonemes, constituting the abbreviation proper, but rather by specifically arranged sound complexes.

Out of 483 military English terms in the sampling 146 items were characterized as abbreviations which amounted to 19% of the bulk, consequently, the remaining 337 terminological units or 81% of the sampling were comprised by simple and composite terms. But in the focus of the research there were predominantly abbreviations in Military English.

All the abbreviations may be classified into the following groups according to their structure and specificity of meaning, i.e. polysemy or homonymy. Particular attention should be drawn to such phenomena as interlinguistic abbreviations – homonyms which are a real challenge for military English translators and should be treated as proper translator’s false friends or full pseudointernationalisms. These abbreviations are totally identical in structure but completely different in meaning.

This is true for such abbreviations like “USA” which stands for “United States Army” and not for “the United States of America”. The difference in usage in this particular case, however, is made manifest by the presence or absence of the definite article “the”. Another example is the shortened title “VC” used as the abbreviated form of both “Vice Chairman” and “Vice-Commandment”. This is also true for “SC” which may mean both “Secretary of the Army” and “security assistance”.

Another example is the initialism “ABC” which simultaneously stands for “Atomic, biological, chemical (replaced by chemical, biological, radiological (CBR), and Nuclear, Biological, Chemical (NBC))” and “Automatic brightness control”.

Abbreviation is also known as one of the most recurrent means of military titles nomination, like in the following examples: “VADM” for “Vice Admiral”, “WO” for “warrant officer”, “VC” for “Vice Commandment”, “SECDEF” for “Secretary of Defense”, “SN” for “Secretary of the Navy”, “SA” for “Secretary of the Army” and “SAF” for “Secretary of the Air Force”.

The preliminary analysis of abbreviations in Military English according to their structure has revealed the following regularities:

1) shortenings or clippings, representing the initial, medial or final clipped part of the full words, defined as military English lexical units (e.g. “muj” for “mujahideen”, “weaps” for “weapons”, “COMSEC” for “Communications Security”, “OPSEC” for “Operational Security”, “USCENTCOM” for “The United States Central Command”);

2) clipped blends coined by means of combining the clipped stems of different military terms (e.g. “infartillery” (infantry+artillery), “militainment” (military+entertainment), “lawfare” (law+warfare), “bioterrorism” (biological + terrorism), “psywar” (psychological+ warfare));

3) abbreviations proper or initialisms produced by contracting all the words in the word combinations to initial letters preserving pronunciation as in the alphabet (e.g. ABC – Atomic, biological, chemical (replaced by chemical, biological, radiological (CBR), and Nuclear, Biological, Chemical (NBC)); NVG – Night Vision Goggle; NVS – Night Vision System);

4) abbreviations-acronyms produced by contracting all the words in the word combinations to initial letters pronounced as full words (e.g. FACE – Field Artillery Computer Equipment; ADAMS – Air Defense Advanced Mobile System (US); AWOL – Absent without official leave; ATLAS – Advanced technology light artillery system; BITE – Built-in test equipment. As it may be seen in the last two examples the abbreviations are coined to resemble in their graphical form already existing full words (‘atlas’, ‘bite’));

5) foreign abbreviations borrowed from other languages, mostly French (e.g. AAK – Appliqué armor kit (US) (borrowed from French is the original form); OCC – Obus à Charge Creusé (shaped-charge shell)).

In the Diagram 1 there are presented the results of the quantitative analysis of the sampling. There has been revealed the predominance of abbreviations proper or initialisms (40%) and abbreviations-acronyms (30%) over shortenings (10%), blends (10%) and foreign abbreviations (10%).

In the Table I adduced below there are provided all the data illustrating the correlation of different types of Military English abbreviations in the sampling under analysis.

As far as the means of translation were investigated, there has been concluded that the most frequently employed means of rendering military English terminology is lexical-semantic replacement. This translation transformation consists in deliberate replacement of the lexical units of the source language by the partial correspondences in the target language which have correspondingly different scope of meaning (either extended or narrowed). In case of the extension or broadening of meaning in the target language as compared with the meaning scope of the source language item the term generalization is applied. In the opposite case of the narrowing of meaning in the translation language in comparison with the scope of the source language unit, the term concretization or specialization is used. In the sampling under analysis lexical-semantic replacement was made use of in 337 % of the bulk or in 124 cases.

Another no less recurrent means of translating lexical units is word-for-word or morpheme-for-morpheme translation which results in the production of calques or words identical in structure or morphological composition. It should be borne in mind that the parts of words in question are substituted by root morphemes, stems and affixed, coinciding in their lexical and lexical-grammatical meaning though

different in their graphic form and productivity. By this translation technique there have been translated approximately 112 terms out of 337 or 27% of the bulk.

Explication or descriptive translation, applied in 20% or 67 terms out of 337, in interpreted as translation transformation, consisting in replacing a lexical unit of the source language by a language unit of a greater length, a word-combination or even a phrase which may be considered a proper definition or description of the lexical meaning of the word under translation due to the absence of the absolute equivalent or partial correspondence.

Both grammatical and functional replacements deal with the grammatical or lexical-grammatical meaning of the source language units. Respectively, grammatical replacement presupposes the change of the grammatical form (form of number, person, case, tense, mood, voice, aspect, gender) of the translation language unit in contrast with the initial word. In case of functional replacement there takes place the change of the lexical-grammatical meaning alongside with the change of the syntactic function. These transformations are much less numerous, 22 cases of 15% of the bulk.

And to crown it all up, the least frequent means of rendering Military English terms in Ukrainian translation there have proved to be lexical transformations of transcription and transliteration. Only 12 cases or 8% of the sampling were determined as examples of these translation techniques usage.

Table I

The data of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of Military English abbreviations in the sampling

Type of abbreviation	Frequency of usage, %	Examples
initialisms	40	AAAV – Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle
acronyms	30	ACE – Armored Combat Earthmover (US)
shortenings	10	cd – candela
Blends	10	lawfare – law + welfare
foreign abbreviations	10	OCC – Obus à Charge Creusé (shaped-charge shell)

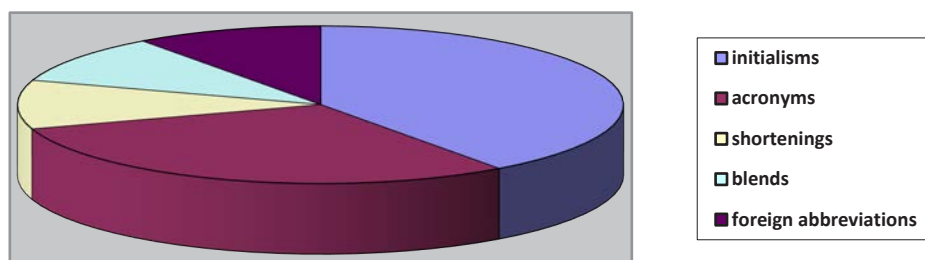


Diagram 1
The results of the quantitative analysis of the types of Military English abbreviations

And almost all of the units under analysis were defined as international units proper, like ‘laser’, ‘radar’. It should be borne in mind that a vast majority of such words were borrowed into Ukrainian from English.

However, it should be remarked that the most typical inaccuracy in rendering such terms in English-Ukrainian translation is in the search of full coincidences and absolute equivalents irrespective of reasonable cultural differences in military procedures and protocols.

The preference should be given to the tactic of preserving native coloring as opposed to the tactic of national-cultural adaptation. The translation strategy must be chosen on the basis of the particular communicative situation and requirements of the target language military science culture, especially in those instances when it concerns the realia.

Both simple and composite Military English terms may be abbreviated. It should be noted that Military English abbreviations may have solid and hyphenated written form, may be spelled with capital letters, with dots and without them, as one word or separately.

The syntactic function performed by Military English abbreviations is also relevant for the choice of translation techniques. This also results in differences in lexico-grammatical meaning and accordance in number, Possessive case. Some abbreviations are used with the definite article, others with zero article. All this results in problems in rendering Military English abbreviations in Ukrainian translation.

Particular difficulties arise when the meaning of the abbreviation doesn't coincide with that of the full form. For example, such terms as “*Military Police*” and “*Women's Army Corps*” are names of organizations while their abbreviated forms “*MP*” and “*WAC*” are used to denote particular representatives of these organizations. Besides, the abbreviation “*MP*” for a “*military police officer*” may be easily confused with abbreviations-homonyms such as “*MP*” for a “*member of parliament*”.

Abbreviations and contractions are very easily coined nowadays, which process automatically results in additional challenges for translators due to the homonymy of abbreviations in use. Abbreviation “*A*” is used in 60 different meanings, “*B*” in 42 and “*CA*” in 17 cases.

There have been distinguished the following ways of rendering Military English abbreviations in Ukrainian translation:

a) transplantation which is understood as the presentation of the abbreviation in its original form, i.e. in Latin letters like for example “*UT*” for “*Underwater Training*” («*підводне тренування*»).

This technique is especially widely used for translating flying machines like “*B737-200*”, “*ATR-42*”, “*DC-8-54*”, engines like “*RTM322*”, “*TRE331-14*”, “*JT15D-4*” and navigational equipment like “*AN/AC182*”, “*LRN500*”, “*ASR360*” etc;

b) transliteration which is interpreted as the presentation of the source language abbreviation's graphical form by means of Ukrainian Cyrillic alphabet. This may be illustrated by the following examples: “*ARTRAC*” (“*Advanced Real-Time Range Control*”) which is translated as «*перспективна система управління «Артрак» із автоматичним перетворенням у реальному масштабі часу при радіосупроводженні сигналів*»; “*FORTTRAN*” (“*Formula Translation*”) перекладається як «*процедурна алгоритмічна мова «Фортран»*»;

c) transcription which is defined as the presentation of the source language abbreviation's acoustic form by means of the Ukrainian Cyrillic alphabet, this is mostly typical of translating acronyms, i.e. abbreviations pronounced solidly as a word and often imitating widely used lexis. This may be illustrated by the following examples: “*SAGE*” (“*semiautomatic ground environment*”) rendered in Ukrainian as «*СЕЙДЖ*» which stands for «*наземна напівавторизована система управління засобами ПВО*». Another example is abbreviation “*EAGLE*” (“*Elevation Angle Guidance Landing Equipment*”) which is rendered as «*Ігл*» in the meaning of «*глісаний радіомаяк із управлінням*»;

d) mixed form which consists in partial transcription and partial transliteration of the source language's abbreviation by means of the Ukrainian Cyrillic alphabet, for example: “*CAD*” (“*Computer-Aided Design*”) which in Ukrainian turns into «*САПР*» («*система автоматизованого проектування*»); “*RCS*” (“*Radar Cross Section*”) interpreted in Ukrainian as «*ЕІР*» and defined as «*ефективна площина розсіювання повітряної цілі*»;

e) rendering the full form of the original abbreviation. This is especially true for the realia requiring explanation, like “*ALFCE*” (“*Allied Land Forces, Central Europe*”) translated into Ukrainian as «*об'єднані сухопутні війська НАТО на центрально-європейському театрі*»;

f) semantic translation combined with transcoding. “*POINTER*” (“*Partial Orientation Europe*”) is translated into Ukrainian as «*канадський інтерферометр із частковою орієнтацією «ПОЙНТЕР»*»;

g) rendering the full form of the original abbreviation by word-for-word or loan translation and consequently building a new abbreviation in the target language.

“CIA” (“Central Intelligence Agency”) is translated into Ukrainian as «Центральне управління розвідки» which is abbreviated into «ЦРУ»;

h) employing descriptive translation technique thus revealing the technical essence of the term, e.g.: “WIDE” (“Wide-angle Infinity Display Equipment”) is translated as «призначена для наземних тренажерів ширококутна система представлення візуальної інформації про повітряне середовище від ЕВМ».

However, there should be made distinction between Military English abbreviations proper and contractions or shortenings, which are peculiar of military scientific and technical literature. It should be borne in mind that although shortenings of this kind are typologically common for English they are totally uncharacteristic of Ukrainian. For example: “d.c.” is always transformed in translation into «постійний струм»; “s.a.” is always translated as «площа поперечного перерізу»; “b.p.” is rendered as «точка кипіння».

As it is seen from the examples above, such contractions require deciphering and presuppose

explication in translation. There also exist certain professional terms-abbreviations which are used in written discourse as regular conventional signs but are regularly transformed into word-combinations in oral translation, both simultaneous and consecutive. For example, “CH-47A” as “index” is deciphered in the following way: “C” stands for «вантажний», “H” means «гелікоптер», “47” is «номер конструкції», “A” is «перша модифікація». The translation correspondences and definitions of the following conventional signs are given in translation dictionaries.

The percentage of the translation techniques of rendering Military English abbreviations in Ukrainian is as follows: 25% is represented by transplantation, 45% is represented by loan translation and consequent coinage of a new abbreviation; 25% falls on transcription and 5% falls on transliteration.

The perspective is seen in researching the peculiarities of translating other types of Military English lexis into Ukrainian.

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Попелюк В. П., Наумов О. І. ДЕЯКІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ПЕРЕКЛАДУ АБРЕВІАТУР У ВІЙСЬКОВІЙ АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ

Статтю присвячено актуальному питанню оптимізації військового перекладу в умовах сучасної геополітичної ситуації у світі. У роботі вивчаються ключові моменти якісного перекладу. Особлива увага приділяється проблемам перекладу українською мовою абревіатур військової англійської. Визначено та проаналізовано провідні перекладацькі прийоми. Сконцентровано увагу на аналізі різних перекладацьких трансформацій та їх ролі у здійсненні адекватного та якісного військового перекладу.

Результатом дослідження стало визначення найбільш поширених і продуктивних засобів і прийомів перекладу для передачі семантики та прагматики абревіатур військової англійської у перекладі українською мовою. Було зроблено висновок, що калькування й утворення нової абревіатури засобами української мови є найбільш поширеними прийомами відтворення в українському перекладі абревіатур військової англійської, для акронімів більш поширеним прийомом було визначено транскрипцію.

Дослідження проводилося на матеріалі аутентичних текстів військової англійської, відібраних із підручників і посібників для військових перекладачів. Усі одержані висновки ґрунтувалися на статистичних даних проведених експериментів. Результати дослідження мають велике теоретичне значення та практичну цінність. Актуальність підтверджується як вибором предмету, так і завданнями дослідження. Переклад військового дискурсу повинен бути перекладом із найвищим рівнем якості та достовірності.

Перспектива вбачається у розширенні обсягу дослідження, аналізі словникового складу військової англійської, зокрема особливостей перекладу ідіом і стійких словосполучень військової англійської.

Ключові слова: прийоми перекладу, військова англійська, абревіатури, перекладацькі трансформації, акроніми.