

SYNONYMY IN LOGISTICS TERMINOLOGY DUE TO SHORTENING

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Abstract: *In spite of the controversial attitudes to synonyms in terminology, research proves that they do occur in various kinds. This type of synonymy resulting from shortening may be due to univerbization, blending, abbreviation and clipping. These short forms of terms taken from logistics specialized texts are met both orally and in a written form and illustrate the principle of linguistic economy.*

Keywords: *synonymy in logistics terminology, univerbization, clipping, blending, abbreviation.*

JEL Codes: *I29*

INTRODUCTION

The large number of multi-word terms boosts the tendency towards shortening and abbreviation. It is the length of names (and terms) that has made abbreviations essential according to Brunt (1999, p. 1455) and the principle of linguistic economy. Toncheva's observation that if short and full variants of a term refer to the same concept, they can also be considered synonyms, justifies the reference to it in relation to the issue discussed so far (Toncheva S., 2003, p. 91).

We need to specify that abbreviated forms of terms will be regarded here as absolute synonyms of full terms. Our corpus of synonymous terms records four types of shortening: univerbization, blending, clipping and abbreviation apart from the graphic presentation of terms which will not be commented here. These short variants occur both in oral and written speech and illustrate the principle of linguistic economy.

EXPOSITION

Shortening Resulting from Univerbization

According to Zidarova “univerbization represents a shift from a unit structurally more complex (combination of words, compound word, composite word) to a simple one (simple word)” (Zidarova V., 2008, p. 211). It occurs in English terminology with at least two-word compounds and results in a single word or compound, e.g. *charter party* → *charter* – *чартър* (*договор за наемане на кораб*); *railroad car* → *railcar* → *car* – *ж.п. вагон*; *flatcar* (a car for larger bulky loads) → *flat* – *вагон-платформа*. The latter however leads to homonymy with *flat rack container* → *flat* – *пловък контейнер без стени* (*за нестандартен товар*); *флат рак*.

In Bulgarian terminology univerbization resulting from suffixation is most productive – e.g. *визитна картичка* → *визитка*; *пароструен апарат* → *пароструйка*; *винетен стикер* → *винетка*, the shortened form being the more popular and more frequently used. Seldom cases of univerbization as a result of zero suffixation are also met – *чартърен полет* → *чартър*. Overall, univerbates thus formed are either expressively marked or sometimes tend to sound colloquial. Besides, they rarely undergo the process of univerbization in English terms, e.g. *securing arrangements* → *securings* – *средства за увързване и укрепване*.

Shortening Resulting from Blending

Blending is the process whereby new words are formed by combining parts of two (or more) words, usually the beginning of one word and the end of another (cf. Godby et al, 1982). The elements blended together are generally well recognized as enough of each unit is left in the word (Crystal D., 2002, p. 130). The term ‘splinter’ has been proposed for the constituents of blends which was originally introduced by Berman (1961, p. 279).

If we apply Plag's rule $AB + CD \rightarrow \text{blend}$, with A, B, C and D, referring to the respective parts of the elements involved (Plag I., 2003, p. 157), we will be able to identify the following subtypes in logistics terminology:

1. $AB + CD \rightarrow AC$ – *petroleum logistics* → *petrolog* – *логистика на нефтени продукти*; *chemical logistics* → *chemilog* – *логистика на химикали*;
2. $AB + CD \rightarrow AD$ - *lean + agile* – *leagile* → *икономичен + гъвкав*; *electronic retailing* → *e-tailing* – *електронна търговия*;
3. $AB + CD \rightarrow ACD$ – *electronic business* → *e-business* - *е-бизнес*; *polythene bagging* → *polybagging* - *опаковане в полиетиленово свиваемо фолио*
4. $AB + CD \rightarrow ABD$ - *tank container* → *tanktainer* - *контейнер за наливни товари*; *bulk container* → *bulktainer* - *контейнер за насипни товари*;
5. $AB + CD \rightarrow ABC$ - *food logistics* → *foodlog* – *логистика на хранителни продукти*
6. $AB + CD \rightarrow AB/CD$ – *weather cloth* → *weathercloth* – *защитен брезент*; *city scape* → *cityscape* – *градски пейзаж*, the class marking blends without an overlap

Minor spelling, phonetic, morphological, or grammar changes may also be observed in all examples pointed out so far.

This type of compression is also a method of coining new terms to denote innovations, therefore it is very common in naming new products or pieces of machinery, e.g. *alkawash* – *heavy-duty alkaline cleaner*; *liquitreat* – *single product liquid treatment for boilers* (Velikova G., 1989).

In Bulgarian blends are adopted with the respective phonetic and morphological changes, e.g. *inter + network* → *internet* - *интернет*; *European pallet* → *Europallet* – *Европалет(а)*, etc. An exception may be considered *Еврокоридор* stemming from *Pan-European transport corridor* → *E-road* where the methods of compression differ.

Shortening Resulting from Abbreviation

Abbreviations are similar in nature to blends, because both blends and abbreviations are amalgamations of parts of different words (Plag I., 2003, p. 160). They are numerous in logistics. Apart from short forms ISO 704: 2009 points out the following types of abbreviated forms:

- clipped terms;
- abbreviations;
- initialisms;
- acronyms. (2009, p. 52)

They arise in written language and their spoken varieties can be either only a graphic one or both a graphic and phonetic one, e.g. *FILLO* (*First in – Last out*) - *Първи влязъл, последен излязъл*, *LILO* (*Last in – Last out*) - *Последен влязъл, последен излязъл*, *RMG* (*rail-mounted gantry*) - *релсов портален кран*, *RTG* (*rubber-tired gantry*) - *портален автокран (на колела)*, etc.

Initialisms are regarded as subgroups of abbreviations in which only the initial letters of words, or sometimes initial syllables, are “put together and used as words” (Adams V., 1973, p. 57). There are two types of initialisms: acronyms and alphabetisms. Those pronounced as single words are referred to as **acronyms**, e.g. *LO/LO* (*Lift-on/Lift-off*) - *ЛО-ЛО*, *LOGOPS* (*Logistics Operations*) – *логистични операции*, *POS* (*Point of Sale*) – *ПОС*, *пункт за продажби*, etc. Initialisms pronounced as series of letters are referred to as **alphabetisms**, e.g. *KPI* (*Key Performance Indicator*) - *Ключов показател за ефективност*, *3PL* (*Third-Party Logistics*) - *логистичен доставчик от трето лице*, *SCM* (*Supply Chain Management*) – *УВД* (*управление на веригата за доставки*), etc.

Abbreviations in English may or may not produce similar short forms in Bulgarian. For example, *EDI* (*Electronic Data Interchange*) → *електронен обмен на данни*; *WIP* (*work-in-process*) → *незавършено производство*; *JIT* (*Just-In-Time*) → *Точно навреме*; *QA* (*Quality assurance*) → *Обезпечаване на качеството*; *RFID* (*Radio Frequency Identification*) → *Радиочестотна идентификация* are rendered as full forms.

On the other hand, *SONAR* (*Sound, Navigation and Ranging*) has a similar abbreviated equivalent → *ХАС* (*хидроакустична станция*) and so do *PKT* (*Ръководство на корабния трафик*) → *VTS* (*Vessel Traffic System*), *КВД* (*Контрол на въздушното движение*) → *АТС* (*Air*

Traffic Control) and *PMYBД* (референтен модел за УВД) → *SCOR* (*Supply Chain Operations Reference-Model*). However, more often Bulgarian abbreviations simply copy the model of the English ones, e.g. *FEU* (*Forty-Foot Equivalent Unit*) → *ФЕУ* (*40-футов контейнер*), *SAR* (*Search and Rescue*) → *САР* (*търсене и спасяване*); *OSC* (*On-scene Co-ordinator*) → *Он-scene координатор* (ръководител на операцията по търсене и спасяване в района на бедствие), etc. The latter example illustrates a trend for an abbreviation to be part of a phrase as in *ERP* (*Enterprise Resource Planning*) → *ERP система за планиране ресурсите на предприятие*; *ISBN* (*International Standard Book Number*) → *ISBN номер* (*Международен стандартен номер на книга*); *ASRS* (*Automated Storage and Retrieval System*) → *автоматизирана складова система ASRS*; *FIATA multimodal bill of lading* → *мултимодален коносамент на FIATA* and so on.

Another group of abbreviations is a combination of numbers and letters, for instance *3PL* (*Third-Party Logistics*) → *логистичен доставчик от трето лице*; *3PL* *фирма*; *4P* (*Product, price, place, promotion*) → *Продукт, цена, пласмент, промоция*; *7R* (*the right materials, in the right quantity, at the right place, at the right time, from the right source, with the right quality, at the right price*) → *правилните материали, в точното количество, на точното място, в точното време, от точния източник, с точното качество, на правилната цена*. Numbers do not replace a word in the abbreviation, they describe the structure of the abbreviation itself.

Shortening Resulting from 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 J., 1977, p. 549). 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 logistics texts are no exception, e.g. *van* < *caravan* – *ван*; *copter* < *helicopter* – *хеликоптер* but also *heli*; *plane* < *airplane* – *самолет*; *gas* < *gasoline* – *бензин*; *prop* < *propeller* – *винт*; *exec* < *executive* – *изпълнителски персонал*; *mart* < *market* – *търговски център*. Sometimes a word may be clipped and adapted as in *reefer* < *refrigerator* – *хладилен (кораб, контейнер, камион, вагон и пр.)*. 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*, *chemilog* < *chemical logistics* – *логистика на химикали*, etc.

In Bulgarian clipping and clipped forms are few, e.g. *демо* and *мемо*. As for abbreviated forms, the process is particularly intensified under the influence of the English language where abbreviations are widely used. There are some widely accepted abbreviations such as *GCM* (*Горива и смазочни материали*) → *POL* (*Petroleum, Oil, & Lubricants*), others used in International Trade, Transport and Insurance, formed as initialisms, have entered the target language as they are and have even become letter-words: e.g. *PO-PO* → *Ro-Ro* (*Roll On-Roll Off*) and *Con-Ro* (*Container-Ro-Ro*) – *комбиниран превоз на контейнери и превозни средства*; *FAS, f.a.s.* (*Free alongside Ship*) – *франко кея до борда на кораба*, *CIP* (*Carriage and Insurance Paid to*) – *превоз и застраховка, платени до* and so on. There are still others which coincide in both languages – *СП* (*Снабдителен пункт*) → *SP* (*Supply Point*), *ICT* (*Information and Communications Systems*) → *ИКТ* (*Информационни и комуникационни технологии*); *TEU* (*Twenty-Foot Equivalent Unit*) → *ТЕУ* (*двадесетфутова еквивалентна единица в контейнерни превози*), perhaps to facilitate communications.

CONCLUSION

Abbreviated forms of terms are extensively used and not only in a written form. Overall, they enter the logistics domain from different subject fields and are indicative of different communicative situations and genres.

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.

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DICTIONARIES AND GLOSSARIES

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