

The Using of Abbreviations in Chatting Language

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Abstract

This study aims to identify and recognize the abbreviations in chatting language, by focusing on the meanings of abbreviations .The present study deals with words formation processes , where English gets new words by means of easily definable processes employed by users of English. For this purpose , the study attempts to analyze the meanings of abbreviations in chatting .

استخدام الاختصارات في لغة المحادثات المكتوبة

ملخص البحث

أن هذه الدراسة تهدف الى تشخيص وتعيين الاختصارات المستخدمة بلغة الانترنت للمحادثات المكتوبة وذلك من خلال إلقاء الضوء على المعاني لهذه الاختصارات . أن الدراسة الحالية تختص بعمليات إنتاج وتوليد الكلمات حيث أن اللغة الانكليزية تكتسب الكلمات الجديدة عن طريق وسائل معروفة وسهلة التي يستخدمه مستخدمون الانكليزية. لهذا الغرض أن هذه الدراسة تترجم معاني الاختصارات التي تستخدم بلغة المحادثات المكتوبة.

Key Words

Abbrivations, acronyms,chatting, clipping, Communication,mass
Communication,intrapersonal communication and group communication

1. Literture Review of Abbreviation

Linguistically, abbreviation is a part of the study of word formation , distinguishing several ways in which words can be shortened. Initialisms or alphabetisms reflect the separate pronunciation of the initial letters of the constituent words (TV,COD)(Crystal ,2004:2). In Latin ,it means a shortened form of a word or phrase, it consists of group of letters taken from the word or phrase .It is a short form of word or phrase (e.g.TV is on abbreviation of television). Abbreviations (and acronyms) have long been part of the written

language tradition, appearing both in hand written manuscripts and print. Their most common function in both off-line writing and CMC is to conserve energy and/or space. In strict analysis, abbreviations should not be confused with **contractions**, **crasis**, **acronyms**, or **initialisms**, with which they share some **semantic** and **phonetic** functions, though all four are connoted by the term "abbreviation" in loose parlance (Carner ,2009:63). An abbreviation is a shortening by any method; a contraction is a reduction of size by the drawing together of the parts. A contraction of a word is made by omitting certain letters or **syllables** and bringing together the first and last letters or elements; an abbreviation may be made by omitting certain portions from the interior or by cutting off a part. A contraction is an abbreviation, but an abbreviation is not necessarily a contraction. Acronyms and initialisms are regarded as subsets of abbreviations ,as in: **CSE for Council of Science Editors**).

According to (Adkins,2004:261),abbreviations have a long history,shortened words were used and initial letters were commonly used to represent words in specific applications. In classical **Greece** and **Rome**, the reduction of words to single letters was common. In Roman inscriptions, Words were commonly abbreviated by using the initial letter or letters of words, and most inscriptions have at least one abbreviation. However, some could have more than one meaning, depending on their context. (For example, (**A**) can be an abbreviation for many words, such as: (**ager, amicus, annus,as, Aulus, Aurelius, aurum and avus**).Abbreviations, in English ,were frequently used from its earliest days. Manuscripts of copies of the **old English** poem **Beowulf** used many abbreviations, for example **7 or & for and, and y for since**, so that "not much space is wasted. (Denning, 1995:75).More recently **Twitter**, a popular **social networking service**, began driving abbreviation use with 140 character message limits. An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase, such as **Jan. for January**. The abbreviated form of the word abbreviation is **abbr.--or, less commonly, abbrv. or abbrev**.In **American English**, many abbreviations are followed by a **period (Dr., Ms.)**. In contrast, **British** usage generally favors omitting the period (or full stop) in abbreviations that include the first and last letters of a single word (**Dr, Ms**).When an abbreviation appears at the end of a sentence, a single period serves both to mark the abbreviation and to close the sentence(Davies,2003:1).

According to Crystal(2004:76)the abbreviations are "a major component of the English writing system, not a marginal feature. The largest **dictionaries** of abbreviations contain well over half a million entries, and their number is increasing all the time. "There is a second socially-based motivation for

incorporating abbreviations into CMC messages: to indicate one's membership among network cognoscenti.”It expands to accommodate names for new items that are introduced from other cultural or geographical venues. Abstract Written communication in instant messaging, text messaging, chat, and other forms of electronic communication appears to have generated a “new language” of abbreviations, acronyms, word combinations, and punctuation(Baron ,2000:95)

2.The difference between Abbreviations and Acronyms

According to(Bauer,1988:178),abbreviation is also called clipping, that is, a new word is created by cutting the final part, the initial part or cutting off both the initial and the final part with only the middle part left In online chatting, clipping is also an important way of word formation. There are several common types of clipping in chatting language online, as in:

u --- you

ur --- your

m:male

am --- m

n --- in

k --- ok

r u sure? ----- Are you sure?

JIMMY: 21 / m ----- I am 21, male.

JIMMY: and u ? ----- And you?

monkey_brat0016: do u want to talk ----- Do you want to talk?

johnson4luv2009: u there ----- Are you there?

While Acronym In a narrow sense, it is “made up from the first letters of the name of an organization” such as:

WB (World Bank)

CIA (Central Intelligence Agency).

Hikmat (1998: 107&Stageberg ,1981:132) points out that some new words (acronyms) are formed from the initial letters of a set of other words . These acronyms often consists of capital letters, as in: **UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)**.In a broader sense, it is formed by picking the initial letters of words, phrases or even sentences. In the Internet chat rooms, acronyms are one of the most remarkable features, which save a great deal of energy and time. It is no longer restricted to word or short phrases, but can be sentence long: **WDYS (What did you say?)**.Marchand (1969:452) claims that abbreviations and

acronyms, which are also known as ‘initialisms’, are used to create names of new scientific discoveries, trade-names, names of organizations, new foundations or offices, but occasionally, and chiefly in American English, personal and geographical names are also coined in this way. Abbreviations and acronyms are used a lot in chat conversations and text messages as a way to speed up conversations, get points across quickly and type less when you’re in a rush. Now, with [Twitter](#)’s limited characters in every Tweet, abbreviations.

3. The Meaning of Communication

Communication is a social affair through which one communicates ideas, opinions, information, beliefs, emotions etc. It refers to an act of sharing of elements of behaviour, or modes of life, by the existence of sets of rules of sign usage (Cherry, 1978:4). According to Crystal (2004:72) Communication is:

The transmission and reception of information between source and receiver using a signaling system the system involved is language .

Communication can be classified into four categories (Andersson & Trudgill, 1992:7):

1. intrapersonal communication: In this situation , communication happens within and to the self. For instance, when one thinks he is, then, communicating within himself.
2. interpersonal communication: This is the case when people communicate with each other. Examples of such situations are telephone conversations, interviews, and, in general, all face-to-face interactions.
3. group communication: This category also refers to face-to-face interaction but within groups of people communicating with each other.
4. mass communication: This category refers to communication used, or received by large numbers of people

4. The meaning of Computer-Mediated Communication

Progress, in the most general sense, brings about changes in the way people communicate. The possibilities of interpersonal interaction are

increasingly expanding in scope, and new options are being made available; amongst these the Internet (... an association of computer

networks with common standards which enable messages to be sent from any central computer (or host) on one network to any host on any other...; Crystal ,2001: 3) is winning everybody's attention. The efficacy of computer-mediated communication is obvious as it enables vast numbers of people to communicate across temporal, spatial, etc. barriers. Non-vocal communication via computer, since this is what CMC is for the most part like, provides access to global issues and makes interaction between people continuous and unbiased. Crystal (2001: 3) points out that[t]he extra significance is even reflected in the spelling in languages which use capital letters. This is the first such technology to be conventionally identified with an initial capital. We do not give typographical enhancement to such developments as 'Printing', 'Broadcasting', 'Radio' or 'Television' but we do write 'Internet' or 'Net'. The new mode of interaction is necessarily typified by certain linguistic properties; hence, it bears distinctive features that are in one way or another reflected in different communicative situations. The understanding of the Internet as a communication tool necessitates addressing its **linguistic properties**.

Crystal (2004: 24) defines the Internet as "... an electronic, global and interactive medium, and each of these properties has consequences for the kind of language found there." The three attributes 'electronic', 'global' and 'interactive' carry the information on the electronic character of the channel, on the closeness of countries, and on the anticipation of a receiver's reaction to the information projected. The implication is that firstly, one's verbal production is dependent on their computer literacy and capability of exploiting the character options on the keyboard so that the proposition of the message is sustained despite the absence of body movement or vocal paralinguistic cues. Secondly, the language used has the potential to connect people in a mindset as to the unanimity in transmitting also feelings and emotions; 'supply means' are becoming conventionalized among Net users worldwide. Thirdly, the interactivity of the medium often causes Net speak to resemble a spoken mode while making people believe that they are exposed to 'written speech. Hence, any attempt to describe such discourse should consider in what way the linguistic behavior on the Net is different from the traditional one.

Certain **distinctive features** define Net speak, an emerging genre. For the time being, the CMC is operating as a written medium. A stylistic approach to the written mode of communication is concerned with graphic, orthographic, grammatical, lexical, and discourse features. According to Herring (1996: 1),

Computer-mediated communication is communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers. Herring also refers to the more specified term computer-mediated discourse which is the communication produced when human beings interact with one another by transmitting messages via networked computers (Herring, 1996: 612).

5. Language of Internet

According to Carale(2000:14)the internet is a vast interconnection of networks created in 1969 as US Department of a defense project, and the World Wide Web (henceforth WWW) is only a part of it, this web was developed in 1991 as a system of storing and retrieving documents created in a common coding language called Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)which allows users to link to other documents. Internet browsers made it possible to view web documents with graphics, audio and video and that is what changed the media industry . Today, the Internet and WWW are impossible to avoid. Calvert (2002: 46)classifies the interaction on the internet into six categories:

1. one-to-one messaging (such as e-mail which is replacing of traditional letter writing).
2. one-to-many messaging (such as listserv which enables anyone to write an e-mail to the computer in a specified format.
- 3.distributed message databases (such as Use net new groups which is a vast forum on the Internet, composed of thousands of different topics that people can discuss by sending a message to the group and reading responses.
4. real-time communication (such as the IRC which is the most used online chat software and has many individual server companies).
5. real-time remote computer utilization (such as telnet which is replacing of traditional phone).
6. remote information retrieval (such as WWW) .

6.Language as power on the internet

Paolillo (2005: 66)points out that although the number of Web sites in other languages is increasing, English is still the language of the largest group of Internet users, and dominates Web content. While none of the current approaches

for estimating the percentage of Web content in any given language is free of criticism, there appears to be a consensus that English Web content represents the lion's share of Web sites . with estimates for English running as high as 70% of all Web content . Because of the large base of English speaking users and the high percentage of Web sites in English, many consider English to be the language of the Internet (Rhoads,2006:344).

7. Chat definitions

People use the very same strategies as they use for verbal communication when chatting. They also adapt the similar written language to meet the limitations and advantages of online communication' (Calvert,2002: 125). Burrige(2004 :55) claim that in order to adapt to certain limitations with text-based CMC, participants in chat communication use abbreviations and emoticons. An emoticon is the arrangement of symbols to represent real-life facial expressions and moods. Synchronous chat communication in its simplest form is very simply two people sitting at a computer typing in real-time. The utterances are then shown on the respective screens in real time. The coding of the usernames has been done by the creators of the corpus in order to privacy mask all usernames. The rooms in which the data has been recorded are age specific as well. Online chat is a term that refers to any kind of real time communication over the Internet, but mainly refers to direct one-to-one chat, one-to-many or text-based group chat. The notion of online chat originates from the word chat, which stands for "informal conversation". According to the conventions of the medium, people do not use their real life names, but nicknames (e.g. Shrink, Inc.) under which they interact (Bauer,1988: 364).

While the communication is synchro-nous, communicators are spatially distant. As the medium is international, online chat users will typically know only a few, if any, fellow users in person. Online chat allows communication between people who have never met and most likely will never meet (Davies,2003:98). Despite all these differences to real world communication, people build real relation-ships with real emotional involvement in chatrooms (Adkins,2004:94).

8.Linguistic characteristics of online chat

Perhaps one of the most striking features of chat conversations is that they often initially appear chaotic. When multiple participants are involved, messages can scroll quickly up and off the screen. Further, chat systems disrupt patterns of turn taking, due to the tendency of overlapping exchanges to cause an initiating

message and its response to become separated by irrelevant messages (Herring, 1999 :83). However, the same features that render chat fragmented and chaotic also make it popular. The culture of chat rooms, although varying according to purpose, is typically sociable, playful, and disinhibited. Much chat content is phatic, indeed banal, and chat conversations tend to be stylistically informal . Topics decay quickly, making unstructured chat un conducive to 40 extended, focused discussion, although users who chat together on a regular basis can develop strategies for maintaining coherence .

Many researchers point to typographic and orthographic innovations as evidence of users' attempts to compensate for the lack of vocal, facial, and gestural cues in text-only CMC .Other aspects of group chat that have been researched include choice of nickname influence of social network ties (Paolillo, 2001:75)

8.1 .Orthographic features

There are many orthographic features that used in the individual language, defined in terms as distinctive use of the alphabet, capital letters, spelling, punctuation, and ways of expressing emphasis (italics, boldface, etc.)(Carner,2009:90). In chat servers (such as Algerian chat, Skype, Hotmail), English students chatters tend to use informal ("phonetic") spelling ,for instance:**do wot I did**. They combine informal spelling with letter omission (**thx 4 yr txt**) instead of(**thanks for your text**) in addition to the absence of capitalization

Ex: got your email. i'll be over later on in the day.

8.2.Lexical features

According to Davies(2003:87),the second linguistic feature of chat is using informal vocabulary in online communication. The vocabulary of a language, defined in terms of the set of words and idioms given distinctive use within a variety .**Ex: Oh goody. ... Even goodier.**

– The use of interjections

ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

– The use of "in"-terms and abbreviations (**BTW, ROTFL, PTB**)

BTW have you heard an update on the continuing saga?

9. Text Analysis

Abbreviations	Meanings
U	You
Lol	Loud lots of laugh
U	You

Mi	Me
Ol	All
R	Are
Mi	Me
tha8	That
R	Are
R	Are
1	One
r	Are
U	You
Im	I am
1	One
2	To
Mi	Me
c	See
U	You
L8r	Later
1	One
Xxxxxxxxx	Kiss
u	You
R	Are
Ty	Thank you
u r	You
R	Are
u	You
R	Are
Ty	Thank you
u	You
R	Are
Ty	Thank you
Imo	In my opinion
ol	All
R	Are
1	One
1	One
2	To
U	You
R	Are
Wot	What

Lol	Loud lots of laugh
4	For
Mi	Me
Imo	In my opinion
4	For
1	One
u	You
Ho	How
U	You
1	One
Imo	In my opinion
U	You
Ur	You are
Lol	Loud lots of laugh
Pls	Please
L	One
2	To
C	See
U	You
l8r	Later
u	You
Wy	Why
Lol	Loud lots of laugh
1	One
4	For
U	You
R	Are
U	You
r	Are
U	You
Ty	Thank you
1	One
U	You
R	Are
wer	Where
Lol	Loud lots of laugh
u	You
Kom	Come
2	To

Mi	Me
Wen	When
4	For
mi	Me
U	You
You	You
2	To
Mi	Me
2	To
4	For
U	You
4	For
U	You
4	For
Mi	Me
4	For
c	See
U	You
2	To
U	You
U	You
C	See

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- 92.wildcat > PMMMMMMMMMMLLLLLLLLLLLLLL
- 93.Andy *A > don't cry babies!! ur money is kept
- 94.geogadam-45 > where ?????????????? dad : -))))))))
- 95.blueeyes34 > lol
- 96.=> jamemids Has Joined The Room
- 97.Andy *A > in secret pls !!
- 98.Andy *A > pm l
- 99.WhyMe > have 2 leave..... c u l8r byeeeeeeeeeee allllllllllll
- 100.Andy *A > hiiiiiii jame
- 101.jamemids > hey room
- 102.blueeyes34 > bye honey
- 103.jamemids > hiiiiiiiiiii andyyyyyyyyyy
- 104.<= WhyMe Has Left The Room
- 105.geogadam-45 > with u wy lol !!! bye ROOOOOOOOOM
- 106.<= geogadam-45 Has Left The Room
- 107.=> andro -45 Has Joined The Room
- 108.blueeyes34 > hey andro
- 109.andro -45 > hhhhhhhhhhhhhiiiiiiiiiii aaaaaaaaaaalllll
- 110.andro -45 > any1 wanna chat
- 111.blueeyes34 > waiting 4 u ?!!!!
- 112.blueeyes34 > how r u ando
- 113.andro -45 > ooooooooookkkkkkkkkkkk ty blue
- 114.=> Gentleman@X Has Joined The Room
- 115.Andy *A > hi Gentleman
- 116.Gentleman@X > heyyyyy every 1
- 117.Gentleman@X > hi andy
- 118.blueeyes34 > hey gentle
- 119.andro -45 > it is sunny in chi Chaco!!
- 120.andro -45 > ho is at ur places????????????
- 121.jamemids > dismalllllllllllllllllllllll !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- 122.blueeyes34 > wer ?? jame
- 123.andro -45 > besides my house
- 124.andro -45 > lol : O))))
- 125.blueeyes34 > it rains heavily in france
- 126.=> babieface Has Joined The Room
- 127.=> yule1234545 Has Joined The Room
- 128.jamemids > wrong !!!above it
- 129.<= babieface -45 Has Left The Room
- 130.jamemids > hehehehhahahahah
- 131.andro -45 > pmmmmmmmmmmlllllllll

