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The Characteristics of Abbreviations in the Uzbek and English Languages

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Abstract: Abbreviations constitute an important linguistic phenomenon reflecting the principles of economy, efficiency, and standardization in language. In contemporary Uzbek and English, abbreviations are widely used across various types of discourse, including scientific, political, media, and digital communication. This article provides a comparative analysis of the structural, functional, and stylistic characteristics of abbreviations in the Uzbek and English languages. The study identifies common tendencies in abbreviation formation while highlighting language-specific features shaped by historical, cultural, and typological factors.

Keywords: abbreviation, acronym, initialism, Uzbek language, English language, linguistic economy, discourse

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Introduction

The rapid development of science, technology, and global communication has significantly influenced language systems, leading to the active use of abbreviations. Abbreviations serve as a means of linguistic compression, allowing speakers and writers to convey complex information in a concise form. In both Uzbek and English, abbreviations have become an integral part of modern discourse.

Despite their shared communicative function, abbreviations in Uzbek and English differ in terms of formation, pronunciation, and stylistic usage. A comparative study of these features contributes to a deeper understanding of language development processes and is particularly relevant for translation studies, discourse analysis, and intercultural communication.

Theoretical Background

In linguistics, abbreviations are defined as shortened forms of words or multiword expressions created through the omission or combination of letters or syllables (Crystal, 2003). They are often associated with the principle of linguistic economy, which aims to minimize effort while maintaining communicative effectiveness (Martinet, 1962).

Abbreviations may function as lexical units and, over time, can become fully integrated into the vocabulary of a language. Their widespread use reflects both social and technological changes influencing language evolution.

Types of Abbreviations in the English Language

English demonstrates a high degree of flexibility in abbreviation formation. The most common types include:

- Initialisms, pronounced letter by letter (e.g., UN -United Nations, FBI - Federal Bureau of Investigation, BBC- British Broadcasting Corporation)
- Acronyms, pronounced as complete words (e.g., NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organization, UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, AIDS- acquired immunodeficiency syndrome)
- Clippings, formed by shortening a single word (e.g., lab from laboratory, info from information)
- Blends, created by merging parts of two words (e.g., brunch -breakfast+lunch, smog-smoke+fog).

English abbreviations are widely used not only in formal registers but also in informal speech, social media, and digital discourse, which demonstrates their high level of lexical productivity (Yule, 2020).

Types of Abbreviations in the Uzbek Language

Abbreviation formation in Uzbek is relatively more standardized and closely associated with official and institutional contexts. The main types include:

- Initial letter abbreviations, especially in administrative and political discourse (e.g., BMT — Birlashgan Millatlar Tashkiloti, O‘zDJTU — O‘zbekiston Davlat Jahon Tillar Universiteti)
- Syllabic abbreviations, formed by combining parts of words (e.g., pedinstitut — pedagogika instituti)
- Borrowed abbreviations, mainly from Russian and English due to historical and globalization influences (e.g., TV - television, SMS – Short Message Service , IT – Information Technology, AI – Artificial Intelligence).

Unlike English, Uzbek abbreviations are less frequent in everyday spoken language and are more commonly used in formal written communication (Rahmatullayev, 2006).

Functional and Stylistic Features

In both languages, abbreviations perform several key functions:

1. Economy of expression, reducing repetition and textual length
2. Standardization, particularly in scientific, technical, and official texts
3. Informational density, enabling rapid information transfer.

However, stylistically, English abbreviations show greater penetration into informal and expressive discourse, while Uzbek abbreviations tend to preserve a formal and institutional character. This distinction reflects broader sociolinguistic differences between the two languages.

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis reveals that both Uzbek and English rely on abbreviations to meet the communicative demands of modern society. The similarity lies in their functional purpose and basic formation principles. The primary differences are observed in stylistic distribution, pronunciation norms, and the degree of creativity allowed in abbreviation formation.

English abbreviations often become independent lexical items, whereas Uzbek abbreviations are more context-dependent and regulated by normative usage.

Conclusion

Abbreviations in Uzbek and English represent an important aspect of contemporary language development. While sharing common functional characteristics, they reflect language-specific structural and sociocultural features. Understanding these similarities and differences is essential for linguistic theory, translation practice, and intercultural communication. Further research may focus on the use of abbreviations in digital discourse and corpus-based comparative studies.

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