

ABBREVIATIONS IN TELEVISION AND THE ECONOMY PRINCIPLE IN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Abbreviations are an example of the principle of linguistic's economy. When it is said SMS, AMC, OKB, NATO or MMS there are abbreviations or acronyms that are formed and used in a precise way, following the laws of the language. Hence, in Albanian language as well as other languages, blends are formed and combined for instance MAPO, Eurovision, Wikipedia, etc. The goal in this paper is to look at the abbreviations, for pragmatic purpose, in communication speed and the small volume of matter. The topic of this paper is about the abbreviations created by individuals and used in public. This problem it has been found in audiovisual media, especially in direct communications with the public. In programs such as "Top select", "Aldo Morning Show" and in all other musical programs, what dominates is the abbreviations formed without any systematic character. These are the kind of abbreviations that often get in all TV programs, where the public is part of them in writing messages. Although the usage of these abbreviations creates a variety of lectures, it breaks all the rules of language giving negative results, especially used in the spoken language. Furthermore, there are other programs, especially in politics, for example: "Opinion", "Top Story" or "Tonight, Ilva Tare" where the public is part of them and interacts using social networks such as facebook, twitter, etc. In these programs, the viewers are more accurate in the messages they write. Why does it happen? This happens because of their intellectual and cultural level. How does this phenomenon affects the language?

Keywords: *principle of linguistic's economy, abbreviations, pragmatic purpose*

Introduction

The rapid development of the technology along with modern life fast rhythms seems to have an impact on accelerating language in order to reach towards a faster communication. On the other hand, because of the existence of the internet, social media networks or electronic messages, considering that nowadays people have the opportunity to communicate in real time in long distances, makes even more visible this communication swiftness realized through language means. Aiming to win time, rapidity or space, language users try to economize its means, which, in several cases, happens to be reduced until the level of harming the language and jeopardize communication. This is exactly where the question: “at what point /level can the language means be economized” comes on spot. Does this economization be based upon language principles?

In the above reasoning, we will see a panorama of language economy in abbreviations used through electronic messages in various TV broadcasts. The observations about these phenomena which actually are done in some TV screens are being widely used among text-writers and also among individuals, especially young people. Taking into consideration that this phenomena is encountered even in different languages and the fact of its abroad usage among young people, it gives us hints on the influence of these languages especially that of English one. The issue stands due to the question comes into the spot; of what point can the economization of language’s means be achieved without risking the communication itself?

Language economy in abbreviations as its manifestation

Through the general understanding, from a lexical point of view, the word “economy” means; profit, savings, less load, less tiredness. It derives from the Greek word “oikòs” that means “home” and “nomòs” meaning “distribution”. So, the first meaning encountered in the word economy, relates to a better management of resources inside the house. In a metaphorical way, this concept is being transferred in other levels, including social and language levels. The economy concept means “better resources management” (Vicentini, 2003). When the term is used in the language context it means “a better management of language’s means”. This language economy is defined by Andre Martinet as “giving of information as much as possible with less effort and load” (Martinet, 2002, p. 176). Upon this principle in the Albanian and other languages are created “abbreviations”, which are known and encountered in various forms. Those are parts of legitimization in spoken and written language and in some cases they manage to function as lexical units, for example, UN, USA, UNESCO, (OKB, SHBA, UNESKO) etc. Due to the way of how these units are created and categorized by the used terminology in the class of abbreviations, the Albanian and other languages do recognize different types of abbreviations, realized for different purposes and used in different ways. The reason of using these abbreviations is the language economy, consuming less time and space possible, to transmit information as much as possible.

Terminology

From a general point of view, we see that different languages use different terms to define abbreviations, furthermore they are connected with the way of how these units are created and used. In French we find terms like; abrégations, sigles, acronymes, while in English are mentioned; abbreviations, acronyms, initialisms, (wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbreviation, 2008). In Albanian language we find such terms as; abbreviations, acronyms and shortenings (emertime te shkurtuara, shkurtesa, shkurtime). In the book “Abbreviations in Albanian language” co-authors with Prof. Dr. Valter Memisha, we have used the term “abbreviations” as a “hiperonymy” to summarize acronyms and shortenings” (Memisha & Bregasi, Dukuria e emertimeve te

shkurtuara ne shqipe dhe ne gjuhe te tjera, 2008, p. 14). According to Albanian Language Today's Vocabulary, the shortening is a representation of a word or a group of words in a short form, this is because of writing it faster and with less space (eg. *km.* "kilometer", *ex.* "for example, *etc.* "etcetera"). (Fjalori i Gjuhes se Sotme Shqipe, 1980). On Albanian Language Today's Vocabulary, acronym is a word formed from fusion of syllables, sounds or first letters of a group of words (exmple. ATSH-ja, SMT-ja etc.) (Fjalori i Gjuhes se Sotme Shqipe, 1980). Thus, definition of boundaries and distinction between the two terms is very clear: acronym is a word (a lexical language unit) that can regularly and easily be encountered in spoken and written language; it is being brought in the linguistic communication as an independent lexical unit; while shortening is not a word but a graphic representation of a word or group of words in a short form because of the need of written economization. In this case the shortening it is not a lexical unit used in spoken and written language.

Abbreviations in TV messages

In this paper, referring to the abbreviations term (that includes acronyms and shortenings) we will specifically see those units that are realized for pragmatic purposes, created from the language users, because of the time and place effect. This language with abbreviations is found in virtual communications such as, different social media nets and messages through mobile phones. We are particularly referring to the language used from TV viewers in direct communication via messages in some TV programs. This phenomenon dragged attention because recently is being spread in almost all the informative televisions in Albania such as; "Ora News", "News 24", "Top- news"; musical TV-s as; "BBF" or "Supersonic" and in special emissions of main national TV-s as: "Top select" and "Aldo Morning Show".

Lets us have a look of sent messages in the above mentioned TV programs:

Përsh. Aldo. Dua të uroj motrën time x ditëlindje dhe i them tdsh.

Sara tkxh, djali nga Fieri.

Klaudia zmr, je shumë sweet. Endri

Hi Supersonic, flm për muzikën e bukur që transmetoni.

Uroj villain tim Landi, gëzuar ditëlindjen dhe kllb sot.

Mrb BBF, lidhur me temen mendoj se respekti fitohet.

Hi cuna, nje shprehje pop. thotë: punën e sot memos e lër për nsr.

Me këngën e radhës përsh. shogen time. Klm

We haven't translated in English the examples above because they express the originality of abbreviations in Albanian language and represent the incompatibility with other languages.

The words used in the messages of the above examples are generally words of daily language and are widely used in communication. Referring the concept that the economy in language consist on exactly "in a graphic reduction of a word or of a group of words with the aim of winning space in the text, paper or elsewhere" (Adegboku, 2011) it is clear that usage of abbreviations in these messages, is done by pure intentions of linguistic economy. Because of the limited screen space or because of the accelerated text writers want to give their answers, they choose the language of abbreviations. On the other hand, the observation of these messages, relates to the fact that the major part of them are shortenings and not abbreviations. This conclusion comes if we refer to the above definitions according the Today's Vocabulary of Albanian Language. Even though these abbreviated units in the above cases have independent meanings, they are not being used in the spoken language and do not enjoy the words values. According to Jani Thomai during the lecture, the word exposes many values where we can

distinguish: semantic, emotional, stylistic, syntagmatic, paradigmatic and value or substitution capability. (Thomaj, 2006, pp. 34-36) .

The above units do not enjoy these characteristics, thus, cannot be considered words. In parallel, we notice that these units belong to the written and not to the spoken language.

Referring to the abbreviations in the Albanian language and in other languages as well, various models of their creation are known because of the effects of language economy.

In our study with Prof. Dr. Valter Memisha, we agreed that shortened units that generally are found within a word as: prof. - profesor, arkeol. - arkeologjik, name shortenings, differentiate from acronyms that are formed from initial syllables or letters on a phrase. egx: OKB, ATSH, NATO, etc (Memisha & Bregasi, Emertimet e Shkurtuara ne Shqipe, 2008, p. 40).

Shortenings have some characteristics of whom we are mentioning:

- They do not function in the spoken language as independent lexical units; they do not enter in lecturing as ready-made units.

- They remain problems of spelling, meaning they belong to written language.

- They are not pronounced as short forms, but as full words, egx: prof. (professor), kg. (kilogram), Na (natrium), VP (veriperëndim) p.sh. (për shembull), mb. (mbiemër), p.e.r. (para erës sonë), p.l.k. (para lindjes së Krishtit), a.i. (ad interim) etc.

- Because they are not independent words but just symbols or conventional representations of the words, do not take grammatical indicators.

- Shortenings do not accomplish any syntactic functions as independent units, do not function as limb sentence, as we so far mentioned, they are not lexical units as the word but words abbreviations.

Furthermore, the short forms used in messages sent in TV programs resemble with shortenings because:

- They do not function in spoken language, but only in the electronic messages written in chat or mobile.

- They are pronounced as full words, egx. tkxh-të kam xhan, tdsh- të dua shumë, flm-faleminderit, nsr- nesër.

- They do not have grammatical indicators.

- They are not part of the sentence and do not have any function.

Based on our definition about the shortenings, we found that shortenings are often used as a shortened form of a word, meanwhile the examples above are mainly shortened forms of a phrase; të kam xhan, kalofsh bukur, të kam zemër, të dua shumë, etc.

From the structural point of view this units are more similar with abbreviations created of initials syllables, sounds or letters in a phrase. But we have seen that this kind of abbreviations play the role of a lexical unit, a single word and they take grammatical indicators egx. NATO- ja, AMC-së, BE-në, etj. Meanwhile the shortenings that we have seen, used in television, do not meet the criteria of being a lexical single unit. This contradiction leads us on the conclusion that this units are created against the language principles. We find the presence of this phenomenon in the astronomical abbreviations, in the book with Prof. dr. Valter Memisha, egx: U. Ma- Ursa Major, Ge- Gemini. “We can notice that this type of abbreviations are not used as independent words and does not have a determined principle on their creation” (Memisha & Bregasi, Dukuria e emertimeve te shkurtuara ne shqipe dhe ne guhe te tjera, 2008).

But as we know, these abbreviations are used only in a specific field and they have a specific target group of users. It is worthy to mention that this abbreviations, used for a long time, are now unified and do not present any danger for the language principles.

On the other hand, when we deal with the shortenings used in television especially from the teenagers, we mean the units created impromptu by users, such as: tkxh, klm, flm, zmr, tdsh, nsr, etc. As it is seen, we do not find any principle of language in this kind of shortenings and these phenomena can jeopardize the communication in some cases. In this paper, it is important to strengthen the fact that we find this type of abbreviations in different languages as a part of their development. The examples below are presented by Dele Adegboku and are taken from the dictionary Veryn –Ferrer, edited in 2007. This dictionary shows the language of SMS used in France. (Adegboku, 2011).

- a) Quel âge as-tu ? = ta kelage ?
- b) On se quitte = on s kit
- c) Je vais au cinéma = jvè o ciné
- d) Je t'embrasse = jtembras / jte kiss
- e) Elle est trop géniale = L è troGnial
- f) C'est très bien = tb
- g) C'est nous = C ns
- h) Bon, je te quitte = je go
- i) C'est cher = C chR
- j) Il est trop tard = tro tar

In the same time, we can find in the webopedia at least 1375 abbreviations, used especially on chat (Beal, 2010). Here are some of these examples, used in Albania too, from the teenagers.

BRBB- be right back babe

2 EZ- too easy

4COOL – for crying out loud

B2W- back to work

FB- facebook

THNX- thanks

LOL- laughing out loud

Influence in the language

Nowadays we can find that the usage and creation of abbreviations is a present and an inevitable fact, especially in chat, sms or virtual communications. This phenomenon represents clearly the language economy principle, and begins as a pragmatic necessity of the language's users with the intention of a faster communication of winning time and space in the text messages they write. By another perspective, we can say that the influence of other languages, especially the English ones at the teenagers, is very much present. We can see now why the youth is more affected by this phenomenon. This is because of their access to internet, virtual communication and foreign languages, much more than old people. The elders generally do not use this kind of communication and they have difficulties to decode the shortenings used by the young people in their messages. It is clear now why the messages and the language with abbreviations are more common in musical and entertaining programs. This is because of the fact that the audience is dominated from the young people. Meanwhile, in the other programs such as "Opinion" or "Tonight, Ilva Tare" although the public interacts using social networks such as Facebook, twitter, etc., the TV viewers are more accurate in the messages they write and the language is more correct. This happens because of their intellectual and cultural level, but their age is another factor which affects more their behavior.

But, what happen if anyone creates abbreviations for each word or phrase for pragmatic purpose? egx: paç fat- pf, ditë të mbarë – dtm, këngë- kng, dashuri- dshr. (Good luck- gd, good day- gd, song-sg, love-lv).

That would be chaotic for the language and people risk to misunderstand each other. Creating new units, without language principle would risk the whole communication between people, but the language itself can select the usage of the words. For example, some of these abbreviations used in written language now are tending to be part of spoken language, especially on the teenager's slang such as: flm, prof- profi, etc. Although the usage of these abbreviations does not enrich the language in forms or in units, they are now part of our daily virtual communication. This is why it is necessary to know and use them in an appropriate way.

Conclusions

It is clear that the usage of language abbreviations by people is done for pragmatic purpose, affected by language economy principle, or influenced by the other languages. In this paper, we tried to explore the abbreviations in the written language and their usage in some TV programs in direct communication with public. The scope of this study is to show the way of how this abbreviations are created and used in the everyday communication.

Underlining and highlighting some of the problems that the usage of this units generates, (which by being screened on TV do create a broader impact rather than those which actually are used in a general communication between two people) we do understand that this abbreviations as part of the expression of economy principle in linguistic, are inevitable part of development of the language and society.

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