

# Latin Abbreviations in English

---

**Glavan, Karla**

**Undergraduate thesis / Završni rad**

**2018**

*Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj:* **University of Zadar / Sveučilište u Zadru**

*Permanent link / Trajna poveznica:* <https://um.nsk.hr/um:nbn:hr:162:229790>

*Rights / Prava:* [In copyright](#)/[Zaštićeno autorskim pravom.](#)

*Download date / Datum preuzimanja:* **2025-01-08**



**Sveučilište u Zadru**  
Universitas Studiorum  
Jadertina | 1396 | 2002 |

*Repository / Repozitorij:*

[University of Zadar Institutional Repository](#)



zir.nsk.hr



DIGITALNI AKADEMSKI ARHIVI I REPOZITORIJI

Sveučilište u Zadru

Odjel za anglistiku

Preddiplomski sveučilišni studij anglistike (dvopredmetni)



Zadar, 2018.

Sveučilište u Zadru

Odjel za anglistiku  
Preddiplomski sveučilišni studij anglistike (dvopredmetni)

Latin Abbreviations in English

Završni rad

Student/ica:

Karla Glavan

Mentor/ica:

Izv. prof. dr. sc. Ivo Fabijanić

Zadar, 2018.



## Izjava o akademskoj čestitosti

Ja, **Karla Glavan**, ovime izjavljujem da je moj **završni** rad pod naslovom **Latin Abbreviations in English** rezultat mojega vlastitog rada, da se temelji na mojim istraživanjima te da se oslanja na izvore i radove navedene u bilješkama i popisu literature. Ni jedan dio mojega rada nije napisan na nedopušten način, odnosno nije prepisan iz necitiranih radova i ne krši bilo čija autorska prava.

Izjavljujem da ni jedan dio ovoga rada nije iskorišten u kojem drugom radu pri bilo kojoj drugoj visokoškolskoj, znanstvenoj, obrazovnoj ili inoj ustanovi.

Sadržaj mojega rada u potpunosti odgovara sadržaju obranjenoga i nakon obrane uredenoga rada.

Zadar, 15. rujan 2018.

## Table of contents:

1. Introduction .....	5
2. <i>Methodology</i> .....	6
3. <i>Corpus Analysis</i> .....	6
4. <i>Latin influence throughout the history of English</i> .....	7
5. <i>The classification of abbreviations</i> .....	13
6. <i>Submorphemic word formation processes</i> .....	16
6.1. <i>Acronyms and initials</i> .....	17
6.1.1. <i>Acronyms vs. Alphabetisms</i> .....	18
6.2. <i>Blends and splinters</i> .....	19
6.3. <i>Clippings and free splinters</i> .....	20
7. <i>Types of abbreviation in the medieval Latin</i> .....	21
8. <i>Orthographical analysis</i> .....	22
8.1. <i>Initialisms in narrower sense</i> .....	23
8.2. <i>Initialisms in broader sense</i> .....	25
9. <i>Lecical analysis</i> .....	27
9.1. <i>Medical abbreviations and abbreviations used in prescription</i> .....	28
9.2. <i>Chemical elements</i> .....	32
9.3. <i>Abbreviations used in academic or scholarly writing</i> .....	35
9.4. <i>Ecclesiastic abbreviations</i> .....	37
9.5. <i>Abbreviations used in genealogy</i> .....	39
9.6. <i>Abbreviations used in educational certificates</i> .....	40
9.7. <i>Abbreviations used in legal practices</i> .....	42
9.8. <i>Abbreviations used in biology</i> .....	44
10. Conclusion .....	45
11. Works cited .....	48
12. LATIN ABBREVIATIONS IN ENGLISH: Summary and key words.....	50
13. LATINSKE KRATICE U ENGLISKOM: Sažetak i ključne riječi.....	50
14. Tables.....	51

## 1. Introduction

The English language is considered the modern world's "lingua franca", but it had to undergo various influences throughout history in order to reach its present state. Despite its Germanic origin, it was significantly impacted by different Romance languages, among which Latin, the former "lingua franca". The entrance of Latin loanwords into English can easily be traced back to the Old English period, whereas Latin abbreviations, although present since the Sumerian times, became widely used only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not only in the formal register, but in the informal as well.

In the first chapter of my work I am going to explore the development of the English language from the period in which its formation only began, when the Germanic tribes inhabited the territory of today's Great Britain, until the Contemporary English, with the stress on Latin influence, which differs from one period to another in both the number of words that entered the language and their semantic fields.

The following chapter is going to deal with abbreviations more thoroughly, analysing the ways in which they are created and later classifying them as simple or complex, and further as blends, clippings or initialisms. Furthermore, the origin of Latin abbreviations and their formation from the medieval times are going to be discussed, after which they are going to be categorized according to their orthographical features, and then placed in the corresponding lexical fields, such as academic writing, legal terms, medical terms etc.

My motivation for the topic arose from my interest in the study of lexicology. To be more specific, Latin influence on the language, Latin loanwords and the ways in which they changed, and the coexistence of words with their Latin doublets provoked my interest and encouraged me to choose this topic for my research.

The main purpose of this work is to give a somewhat different approach to the classification of abbreviations, which I partially adopted from Fabijanić and Malenica (2013a; 2013b), who have dealt with a different type of abbreviations than I have.

## **2. Methodology**

For the theoretical part (the history of the English language, the creation of Latin abbreviations in the Middle ages, and the word formation processes of abbreviations) I have used books by Algeo (2009), Baugh et al. (2005), Capelli (1982), Kent (1923) and Plag (2003), and the scientific articles by Cannon (1989), Fandrych (2003), Fabijanić and Malenica (2013a; 2013b), and López Rúa (2002; 2004), but for the final part of my work where I dealt with Latin abbreviations and their classification I did not rely on any previous works.

After I have dealt with the theoretical part, I have tried to find Latin abbreviations from various lexical fields, and chose their representatives for my corpus in such a way that they show diversity in orthography. Next I compared them to each other and noted the differences according to which they could be differently classified. Since I had previously read Fabijanić and Malenica's works (2013a; 2013b), I let their classification influence mine to a certain extent.

## **3. Corpus analysis**

My research was conducted on a limited corpus of both Latin and English abbreviations taken from different books and linguistic articles listed in my bibliography, such as Cannon (1989), Fandrych (2008), López Rúa (2002; 2004), Plag (2003), as well as from a number of internet sources which are also listed at the end of my work. I selected them in such a way that it contains enough representatives for each of the categories I am going to list later in my work.

My corpus consists of 245 abbreviations, 210 of which are Latin. The English abbreviations were used as examples of types of abbreviations which I was not able to find in Latin, that is to say clippings and blends. Latin abbreviations that constitute my corpus are in majority initialisms, but they differ in the number of initials they contain, whether they are written in lower or upper case, whether they have dots or not, etc. Some even have more than one possible spelling.

The corpus is analysed on three levels: morphological, orthographic and lexical.

Morphological includes the formation of abbreviations, orthographic deals with their graphic representation and number of elements of which they are formed. Lexical level includes the division of abbreviations in the corresponding lexical fields in which they are used today.

The approach I am using in this work is loosely based on Fabijanić and Malenica (2013a; 2013b), since they also placed importance on the orthographic elements of abbreviations in their classification. As far as (non-)morphological processes are concerned, I based my classification mainly on Fandrych (2008) and López Rúa (2002; 2004), with other authors to a smaller degree. But before we get into that, let us take a look at the development of the English language and Latin influence on it.

#### **4. Latin influence throughout the history of English**

Nowadays the English language is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, and for that reason it is interesting to think about influences which entered English during the long history of both its people and its language. Despite the fact that it belongs to Germanic languages, it was significantly impacted, both directly and indirectly, by Latin and other Romance languages originating from it. Grammar was influenced as well, but its far greater contribution was lexical, which can be seen from the fact that more than half of the English vocabulary originated from Latin (Baugh et al., 2005, pp.10-11). More specifically, 2880



words derived directly from Latin, and 6154 indirectly through the mediation of other Romance languages (Kent, 1923, p. 6), which makes it the most prolific language of origin of English words.

The influence of Latin began even before English was an actual language, while the Germanic tribes such as Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Frisians inhabited the British Isles. During this period, known as the Old English period (450-1150), these tribes were involved in trade, military affairs and agriculture with the Latin-speaking population, which is shown by the words inherited in that so-called Latin influence of the First Period, for example *camp* (battle), *cēap* (“bargain”; “cheap”) (Baugh et al., 2005, pp. 72-73), *ancor* (“anchor”), *cycene* (“kitchen”) and *strǣt* (“paved road”, “street”) (Algeo, 2009, p. 249).

The Second Period revolves around the introduction of Christianity, brought to the Isles by Saint Augustine of Canterbury with the baptism of the king (Ibid, p. 78), which resulted in religion-related vocabulary, for instance the words *altar*, *martyr*, *shrine*, *anthem*, *disciple* and *priest* (Baugh et al., 2005, p. 78). Some words from this period are related to education, which also shows the church’s influence of the time, such as *school*, *master*, *grammatic(al)*, *verse* and *metre*. A great number of plant names entered the English vocabulary in this period, (*cucumber*, *ginger*, *periwinkle*) (Ibid, 2005, p. 80), as well as animal names (*ostrich*, *oyster*, *lobster*, *dragon*, *phoenix*) (Kent, 1923, pp. 43-44). Latin had an impact on the vocabulary of the household and ordinary life, which can be seen from the fact that there are Latin loanwords even in this domain, such as *fork*, *table*, *wine*, *kettle* and *pound* (Kent, 1923, p. 44). Foreign words were added to the language in order to name things not previously known to man (*heaven*, *hell*, *bishop*, *monk*), but some of them also coexisted with native words (*prayer* and *gebed*; *baptizāre* and *fullian*) (Baugh et al., 2005, pp. 81-82). All of these borrowings can be divided into two groups, depending on the way in which they were used: the first one

consists of the words which were borrowed without change and used in their original form, and were considered foreign words by the speakers, whereas the other group was not considered foreign, that is to say those words were used in word formation just like native words. The example of this is the Latin word *camp* (“battle”), which has provided a number of compounds, such as *un-camp-rōf* (“unwarlike”), *camp-ian* (“to fight”), *ge-camp-ian* (“to gain by fighting”) and *cempa* (“soldier”) (Kent, 1923, p. 46). There were around 175 early Latin loanwords and a large number of them is still present in Modern English (Algeo, 2009, p. 249).

The period after the Norman Conquest, the Middle English period (1150-1500) (Baugh et al., 2005, p. 146), Norman French was introduced as the language of the government (Algeo, 2009, p. 112) and thus became more influential than Latin, especially among aristocracy and in literature, even though the most influential poet of the period, Geoffrey Chaucer, wrote in both French and English, and thus established English in literary uses (Ibid, pp. 114-115). Latin, on the other hand, was still the tongue of the church and the ecclesiastics, and even though less popular, still managed to furnish the lexicon with words like *lucrative*, *library*, *moderate*, *private*, *legitimate* (Baugh et al., 2005, pp. 171-172). This was also the time when the London speech began to rise among other dialects spoken on the territory as the Standard English, which started to gain more importance as the language of the majority of the population (Algeo, 2005, p. 119). In the end of the Middle English period, English has replaced French as the language of the government, as well as Latin as the language of the church (Ibid, p. 157).

During the Renaissance (1500-1650) (Baugh et al., 2005, p. 187) English started to become the language of literature, although Latin still had a great influence on it, which is best shown by the fact that classical words (Latin words and Latinised Greek words) form two thirds of

William Shakespeare's vocabulary, and one fifth of all the words used (Kent, 1923, p. 52). It remained the scholarly language as well, and therefore provided many scholarly words, for example *abdomen*, *monopoly*, *frivolous* etc. Some words inherited during this period retained their original form, for example *appendix*, *climax*, and some were adapted to English mostly by cutting off the Latin ending (*consult-are* < *consult*) or by substituting it with an English ending (*externus* < *external*) (Baugh et al., 2005, p. 209). Since this was the time of great influence of both French and Latin, some words are difficult to determine whether they have come into English directly from Latin or indirectly through French. Such words are for example verbs *consist* and *explore*, which could have come either from the French *consister* and *explorer*, or the Latin *consistere* and *explorare* (Ibid, 2005, p. 211). Some words came indirectly through Italian, which were mostly concerning art and literature, and others through Spanish or Portuguese, concerning exploration and trade routes, for instance *cargo*, *armadillo* and *cobra* (Kent, 1923, pp. 34-35).

The following centuries showed purist tendencies regarding the development of the language, so Latin influence and borrowings were limited to the need to describe new scientific discoveries and other knowledge, and thus words like *nucleus* and *machinery* entered the language (Baugh et al., 2005, p. 280). It was also the time when new types of enrichment of the vocabulary appeared, such as compounds, especially the ones combining Latin and Greek roots, for instance *automobile* (Greek "self" + Latin "movable") (Ibid, 2005, p. 286). The majority of borrowings from these periods is still present in Modern English.

In our present-day English vocabulary there are pairs of words one of which is of classical origin, and the other is of native origin. The difference in meaning between such words is very small; they differ mostly in the register they are usually used in. These pairs are called doublets. Such pairs are, for example *commence*, which has a classical origin, and *begin*,

which has a native origin. The word that has come from Latin is usually used in the formal register, whereas the other one is used in everyday communication and informal contexts with a similar or identical meaning. Let me give you a few more instances of such pairs: *felicity-happiness; labour-work; paternal-fatherly; virginity-maidenhood; double-twofold* etc. (Kent, 1923, pp. 60-61). Another kind of doublets come to exist when one word is taken directly from Latin and the other goes through changes throughout history or in mediation of some other language, most frequently French, and thus its origin becomes obscure. An example of this is the word *fragile* which has come directly from the Latin word *fragilis*, and its pair *frail*, which has undergone changes through French and then entered the English lexicon (Ibid, p, 61).

Latin loanwords are still very much present and widely used in contemporary English language, in different domains of our lives. Latin has provided us with kinship terminology, names of the months of the year and days of the week, terminology concerning religion and religious rites as well as words regarding reign and politics (*republic, state, court, administration, executive, senator, deputy, conservative, liberal*) (Ibid, p.64). Scientific studies and technical terminology are especially rich in such borrowings. Scientists involved with botany and zoology use Latin words on a daily basis since all the names of the plants and animals are two-word Latin names (*Quercus alba*-white oak; *Felis domestica*-the cat; *Felis tigris*-the tiger etc.) (Ibid, pp. 72-74). In anatomy about 4500 Latin terms and Latinised Greek terms are used, almost all of which are unchanged so they enable international intelligibility, for instance *cerebrum, uvula, biceps, pupil, appendix* (Ibid, pp. 73-74). In chemistry Latin words are used as the names of the chemical elements. Of 82 names of elements, 20 originated from Latin, such as: *aurum*-gold, *ferrum*-iron, *argentum*-silver, *plumbum*-lead, *stannum*-tin (Ibid, p. 75).

Other than words, Latin has borrowed English its prefixes and suffixes as well, in order to enable it not only to adopt new words, but to invent new words on its own. There are a lot of them, so I am going to touch on just a few examples. Latin prefix *vice-*, which means “in the place of”, has come to English to create words such as *vice-president*, prefix *mis-*, which signifies “wrongly”, has helped to create words like *miscount* and *misunderstand*, and prefix *re-*, meaning “to make again”, has made words like *recover*, *remake* and *reform* (Ibid, pp. 81-82). The most common Latin suffix is *-tor*, as in *doctor*, *inventor* and *operator* (Ibid, p. 91). Other also frequently used suffixes are *-ation*, *-ity* and *-ment*, all of which are used to create abstract nouns, for example: *starvation*, *condemnation*; *scarcity*, *sociability*; *atonement*, *torment* (Ibid, pp. 93-94).

From this chapter we have seen how great of an influence Latin was during the development of the English language and how much English owes it. Two thirds of the English vocabulary is derived from classical languages, as well as the means of derivation and word formation, our syntax and grammar, even the different styles of writing (Ibid, p. 156). But maybe the best way to depict how influential and important it was is to look at the following paragraph, which is the beginning of the American Declaration of Independence, but with all the classical words taken out of it:

“When in the \_\_\_ of \_\_\_ \_\_\_s, it becomes \_\_\_ for one \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ the \_\_\_ bands which have \_\_\_ed them with another, and to \_\_\_ among the \_\_\_s of the earth, the \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ \_\_\_to which the Laws of \_\_\_ and of \_\_\_’s God \_\_\_ them, a \_\_\_ \_\_\_ to the \_\_\_s of mankind \_\_\_s that they should \_\_\_ the \_\_\_s which \_\_\_ them to the \_\_\_.” (Ibid, p. 157),

and compare it to the full version:

“When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station

to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

It can be noticed how difficult, or nearly impossible, it would be to understand the first paragraph since it lacks over a third (24) of the full number of words (71), all of which are of classical origin. As can be seen from the comparison, those are the following: nouns (10) – *course, event, people, power, station, nature, respect, opinion, cause* and *separation* – but without the suffix –s if they contain it in the original since it is not a classical suffix, verbs (7) – *dissolve, connect, assume, entitle, require, declare* and *impel* – which are erased without the suffixes –ed and –s, since they are not of classical origin, and adjectives (6) – *human, necessary, political, separate, equal* and *decent*.

## 5. The classification of abbreviations

Now that we have explored the development of English throughout centuries and Latin influence on it, we are going to discuss Latin abbreviations that have entered English. The human need to economise language dates all the way back to the Sumerian times where the first abbreviations had been noted, after which the Romans invented and used the famous abbreviations *SPQR* “Senatus populusque Romanus” and *INRI* “Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum”, which are still to this day taught to children in schools (Cannon, 1989, p. 99). Abbreviations were used ever since, and their usage expanded over the centuries, but it was only during the World War Two when they became common among the people, since they were used not only in military, business, and government affairs, but also in informal situations and everyday life (Ibid, p. 101). In the last 75 years their number exploded in the majority of the world's languages, from thousands to about 800,000 that are recorded in dictionaries, without the ones that are still unrecorded but widely used (Ibid, pp. 104-105). Up to 1961 most of them were not common nouns and that is why they had not entered the everyday use, whereas today's abbreviations come to existence mostly as common nouns, and

even though at the beginning they may have been connected to a particular field of technology or scientific discipline, through time they have moved into general English (Ibid, p. 118).

Over the years of research in the field of abbreviations and their classification, there are disagreements about the definitions of each type of shortenings, because of which we can find in some authors' works blends such as *motel* or *smog* listed as acronyms (Ibid, pp. 105-106).

Another reason for such a confusion according to Cannon (1989, p. 106) is the fact that dictionaries ever since the fifteenth century have been putting different types of abbreviations in one and the same category, so clippings, contracted forms like *can't* and acronyms could be found under the same name. López Rúa (2002, p. 31-32) explains this confusion with the so-called nondiscrete approach to classification, that is to say, the prototype theory and the fuzzy-set theory, which consider the boundaries between categories not to be clear-cut, so a certain abbreviation can sometimes fall under more than one category, depending to which extent. This can be seen from the example of the hybrid of a blend and an abbreviation: *Ms*, used instead of *Mrs* and *Miss*, which López Rúa (2002, p. 51) described as follows:

“The item resembles abbreviations as far as orthographical shape is concerned. Its use is almost exclusively restricted to writing [...], for some speakers, the word is unpronounceable. However, it actually has an orthoepic pronunciation - /mɪz/ or /mɛz/, - which could be interpreted as a phonic blending of the realizations of the source forms [...] This phonic blending could be said to be reflected in writing by taking the common constituents of *Miss* and *Mrs* in order to build the new item *Ms*.”

There is another inconsistency regarding the creation of abbreviated words, which are by many linguists considered non-grammatical or non-morphological word formation processes, but more about that in the following chapter.

López Rúa (2004, p. 116-118) criticises Algeo and his classification of abbreviations in different works as being inconsistent and sometimes guided by other authors' wrong classification just because it was already made, so for instance in one of his works “uses

“abbreviation” as a superordinate term to refer to acronyms [...] uses “abbreviation” as a superordinate term to refer to acronyms”, and in another he “regards “shortening” as a unifying device which results in three subgroups of items: “clippings”, “alphabetisms or initialisms” and “acronyms”. This time acronyms and alphabetisms appear as independent categories subordinated to the general device of shortening and on a level with clippings.”

The classification used in this work is based mainly on López Rúa’s (2004, pp. 123-124) categorization in her work, which she based on the works of Kreidler (1979), Quirk et al. (1985) and Algeo (1991). She regards *shortening* as a superordinate term for all the types of shortened words discussed in her work. For the same concept I am using the word *abbreviation*, since in my opinion it has the exact meaning if we are to consider the Latin root of the word, *ad breviare*, which literally means *to shorten*. Furthermore, she divided those shortenings into *simple* and *complex*. According to her, simple abbreviations are present only in writing, while in speech they are pronounced as though they are not abbreviated at all, for instance dr., Mr or prof. These are also called *proper abbreviations*.

Complex abbreviations are further divided into initialisms, blends and clippings, which I am going to discuss in more details in the following chapter. The most problematic one are initialisms, whose division is not the same according to all authors. Cannon (1989) uses the term *initialism* as a superordinate term for the two subgroups *acronyms* and *abbreviations*, while Plag (2003) used the same three terms, but made *abbreviations* superordinate to *acronyms* and *initialisms*. Fandrych (2008) uses only two of those terms in her work, *acronyms* and *abbreviations*, where the former are superordinate to the latter. López Rúa took *initialisms* as a superordinate term and divided them into *alphabetisms* and *acronyms*. In my opinion it makes the most sense for *initialisms* to be the name of the words which are formed



by taking the initial letters of a phrase, and *alphabetisms* to be pronounced as a sequence of the letters of the alphabet, so I have adopted this terminology in my work.

ABBREVIATIONS	
COMPLEX	SIMPLE
CLIPPINGS phone, flu, fridge	PROPER ABBREVIATIONS prof., dr., Mrs
BLENDS motel, modem, emoticon	
INITIALISMS	
ALPHABETISMS BBC, FBI, CIA	
ACRONYMS NATO, radar	

**Table 1.** Taxonomy of abbreviations by López Rúa used in this work

## 6. Submorphemic word formation processes

Now that we have seen the problems with the categorization and managed to categorize them, let us take a look at the way in which abbreviations are created. The classification and information provided in this chapter is based mainly on Fandrych and her definition of non-morphological word formation processes, with slight change in terminology, since she states that other authors did not give enough attention to this kind of linguistic processes, but simply

called them non-grammatical, odd or irregular, and her proposition of three submorphemic concepts which can be used in the study of such processes (2008, p. 105). López Rúa called these processes non-morphological, but I am going to use the term “submorphemic” for the same reason as Malenica and Fabijanić (2013b, p. 61): “[...] which implies that the elements involved are smaller than morphemes, while the former term would imply that there are not any morphemes involved at all.”

Morphological word formation is a process of forming new words using different morphemes and connecting them into a single word, whose meaning then can easily be deduced according to the meanings of its constituents. This refers mainly to affixation (*mis-spell*) and compounding (*blackbird*). Submorphemic word formation therefore uses other linguistic elements in order to form new words: initials in the case of initialisms, splinters in the case of blends, and free splinters in the case of clippings (Fandrych, 2008, p. 107).

### **6.1. Acronyms and initials**

Fandrych (2008, p. 109) defined acronyms as abbreviations that “consist of initial letters of longer words or phrases. Not all initials of the longer phrase are always used in the acronym: function words tend to be ignored in order to keep the acronym manageable”, and Cannon (1989, p. 108) summarised their most important features:

“[...] an acronym must come from a source with at least three constituents, where a combining form can be a constituent (ASP ‘Anglo-Saxon Protestant’). Not more than two initial letters/sounds of some or all of the constituents can be retained, though an exception of three or even four is permitted if the majority of the reduction typifies acronymy.”

The submorphemic elements used in the formation of acronyms are these initial letters which are used to represent each word of the whole longer phrase, even though sometimes some initials are ignored, for example in *ESPRIT* (“European Strategic Programme for Research

and Development in Information Technology”), and occasionally even vocals are added to the initials in order to make acronyms easier to pronounce, as in *Soweto* (“South-Western Townships”) (Fandrych, 2008, p. 109). Although function words are most frequently omitted, in some three-letter acronyms they are kept, for example in MIA (“missing in action”) or OTC (“over-the-counter”) (Cannon, 1989, p.110).

Even though in most cases acronyms are created by taking the initial letters of each word of a phrase to make a single word, sometimes the process is reversed, in order to make the acronym more memorable or easier to pronounce. As López Rúa (2002, p. 42) described:

“[...] instead of starting with a phrase which is reduced to initials, the coiners of the acronym look first for a word which allows the establishment of convenient semantic connections with the future acronym, and then build the phrase using the letters as initials ([...] PUSH: “People United to Save Humanity”).

### **6.1.1. Acronyms vs. alphabetisms**

If most authors do not agree on the terminology concerning this particular group of initialisms, at least they agree on their differences. The most important difference between these two types of initialisms is the fact that alphabetisms are pronounced as a sequence of letters rather than a full word, while acronyms are pronounced as every other word in the English lexicon. They can be spelled either in capital letters or in lower case letters, but the pronunciation does not depend on that, which can be seen from the examples of *FBI* and *NATO*: the former is pronounced as individual letters (/ˌef.bi:ˈaɪ/), and the latter as a single word (/ˈneɪ.təʊ/). The same thing applies also to the abbreviations *radar*, which is pronounced as a regular word (/ˈreɪ.dɑːr/), and *a.s.a.p.*, which is pronounced as a sequence of letters (/ˌeɪ.es.eɪˈpiː/). But there are also some exceptions, which are pronounced not as an abbreviation, but as the full word for which that abbreviation stands. Those are mainly the

ones written in lower case letters with dots, such as *etc.*, which is not shortened in pronunciation, but is pronounced just like *et cetera* (Plag, 2003, pp. 160-163).

## 6.2. Blends and splinters

Blending is a submorphemic word formation process which mixes two words into one, which makes it similar to compounding, but the biggest difference is that compounds consist of two full morphemes, and blends (or portmanteau-words – from French *portmanteau* – “suitcase”, “coatcarrier”) consist of random parts of lexemes, called splinters (Fandrych, 2008, p. 111).

Plag (2003, p. 125) described blends in the following way:

“[...]blends behave semantically and syntactically like copulative compounds and their phonological make-up is characterized by three restrictions. The first is that the initial part of the first word is combined with the final part of the second word. Secondly, blends only combine syllable constituents (onsets, nuclei, codas, rimes, or complete syllables), and thirdly, the size of blends (measured in terms of syllables) is determined by the second element.”

The term “splinter” has been used by various authors to describe these irregular constituents of this kind of word formation. López Rúa (2002, p. 37) defined them as follows:

“I [...] regard as splinters those graphic and phonemic sequences (not only in blends but also in peripheral initialisms) which are neither inflectional nor derivational morphemes, nor combining forms (electro-, -scope), and whose length generally allows their identification as belonging to a previous word. Consequently, splinters tend to be syllables or units larger than syllables in their sources, as Ox- and -bridge in Oxbridge (‘Oxford and CamBRIDGE), or Digi- and -alt in Digiralt (‘DIGItal radar ALTimeter’). When they are shorter than syllables, their constituents are the syllable onset (i.e. the prevocalic consonant or consonants); the onset and the nucleus (prevocalic consonants + vowel); or the rhyme (vowel + postvocalic consonants or coda).”

The most common type of blends is the combination of an initial splinter at the beginning of the word and a final splinter at the end of the word, with an overlap, as in the word *motel* (“motor” + “hotel”), but there are other types of blends as well, for example the combination

of two initial splinters with an overlap, as in *modem* (“modulate” + “demodulate”) or the combination of an initial splinter with a full word with an overlap, as in *emoticon* (“emotion” + “icon”) (Fandrych, 2008, pp. 112-113).

Blends became more popular in the 1980s, especially in advertising and journalism because of their catchiness and creativity, but many of them are not long-lived and are used only for a period of time for this exact reason (Ibid, p. 111).

### 6.3. Clippings and free splinters

Clipping is not considered a part of morphology by many authors since neither the words formed in this way nor the clipped part are morphemes, but Fandrych disagrees and thinks of this process as a word formation process despite the fact an element which is not a part of morphology has to be used in it. The words that go through this process are longer words consisting of at least two or three syllables, for instance *photographer* which becomes *photog*, or *telephone* which turns into *phone* (Ibid, p. 114). These two words are examples of the two most common types of clipping, fore-clipping (*photog*) and back-clipping (*phone*), but there is also back- and fore- clipping, as in *flu* from *influenza* or *fridge* from *refrigerator*. In some cases, rather than just a part of a word being deleted, even the spelling of the derived word changes (*loony* < *lunatic*), or the pronunciation and stress (‘*Aussie* [-z-] < *Aus’tralian* [-st-]) (Ibid, p. 114).

Clipping is in a way similar to blending, because both of these processes do not respect syllable or morpheme structure or stress, and since the elements that form blends are called splinters, the result of clipping is called a free splinter, since it can stand on its own, without being attached to another word or another splinter. Fandrych defined free splinters as “independent elements which remain after a radical shortening process” (2008, p. 114). Some clippings have emancipated themselves so much that some speaker are not even aware that

they are not full but shortened words, for instance *pub*, *bus*, *pants* or *blog* (Fandrych, 2008, p. 115). That is the major difference between clipping and the other two processes; clipping consists purely of shortening of words, whereas in blending and acronymy the shortened words are being expanded, that is to say connected to other words, or initials, later.

## 7. Types of abbreviation in the medieval Latin

In the medieval times obviously a typing machine still was not invented, and everything had to be written by hand, so words were shortened to make writing easier as well as to save time and paper. In those times there were 6 types of abbreviations: truncation, contraction, abbreviation with marks which are significant in themselves, abbreviation with marks which are significant in the context, abbreviation which contains superscript letters and the one which contains conventional signs (Capelli, 1982, p. 1). Truncation implies that the missing part of the word is at the end, for example *s.p.d.* for *sentur primam dicit*, or *sum* for *sumus* (Ibid, pp. 2-3). Words that were contracted were missing one or more letters from the middle of the word, with the initial and final letters remaining, for instance *dno* for *domino* or *ops* for *omnipotens* (Ibid, pp. 7-8).

The third type refers to symbols that always substituted a certain letter, for example & always stood instead of *et* (“and”) and – always replaced either *m* or *n*, so if it was written *cōmūe* people knew it was supposed to say *commune* (Ibid, pp. 13-14). On the other hand, there were symbols which could mean replace different letters in different contexts, so for instance a point above the letter *h* meant *hoc*, but if the point was found above *u*, then it signified *ut* (Ibid, pp. 20).

Another type of abbreviation were superscript vowels, which would usually stand for themselves and another consonant, like for example in *m<sup>a</sup>tis* (*martis*) the superscript *a* stands

for *ar* (Ibid, p. 30). Superscript consonants were much rarer, but there are examples even for this, such as the word *ob<sup>c</sup>to* (*obiecto*), where the superscript *c* substitutes *iec* (Ibid, p. 33).

Finally, some conventional signs were used which did not stand for a single letter, but for an entire word or phrase. One such example are the signs *9* and *∩* which always meant *con* or *cum* (“with”) when they occurred alone (Ibid, p. 39).

Of all the possible types of abbreviation of Latin words in the medieval ages, the abbreviations that are kept and used in the English and other international languages are limited to truncation, for instance *i. e.*, which is short for *id est* (“that is”), and to a smaller degree contraction, such as *ips.* for *imprimis* (“in the first place, above all”). An average English book or article definitely will not contain all those marks ancient Romans used in their inscriptions.

## 8. Orthographic analysis

For the purpose of this analysis, I will adopt the division made by Fabijanić and Malenica (2013a) into initialisms in narrower and broader sense, since I have noticed that this division is very useful for my own research as well. In their work they defined these two concepts in the following way:

“The narrower sense of understanding the formation of alphabetisms and acronyms refers to those that are formed according to their orthographic norms, i.e. “[...] using the initial letters of the words of an expression, pronounced by the alphabethical names of the letters [...]” (Algeo 1993: 9). The broader sense is understood as the ways and processes of their formation, more or less different from the orthographic norms, in consequence of which, one or more initials for various smaller elements of the source phrase (smaller than words), are used.” (2013a, p. 76)

Further distinction can be made between abbreviations which consist of capital letters or lower case letters. We can also differ from those which contain dots and those that do not. All

of this will be shown in the following chapters, especially in the tables containing all examples of abbreviation and the full phrases they substitute.

### 8.1. Initialisms in narrower sense

The classification of initialisms in the narrower sense starts with those that consist of two or more initial capital letters, each of which represents its own word from the source phrase.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
N. B.	<i>Nota bene</i>	“Note well”
P. S.	<i>Post scriptum</i>	“after what has been written”
A.D.	<i>Anno Domini</i>	“In the Year of the Lord”
A.B.	<i>Artium Baccalaureus</i>	“Bachelor of Arts”
Q. E. D.	<i>quod erat demonstrandum</i>	“which was to be demonstrated”
S. J. D.	<i>Scientiae Juridicae Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Juridical Science”
S. O. S.	<i>si opus sit</i>	“if necessary”

**Table 2. Initialisms in narrower sense in capitals**

The second group of abbreviations in the narrower sense are those formed by lower case initial letters, each of which represents one word from the source phrase.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
r.	<i>rexit; regnavit</i>	“ruled”
e. g.	<i>exempli gratia</i>	“for example”
q. v.	<i>quod vide</i>	“which see”
q. p. m.	<i>quaque anti meridiem</i>	“every morning; every day before noon”
i. a.	<i>in absentia</i>	“in absence”



a. a.	<i>ad acta</i>	“to the archives”
-------	----------------	-------------------

**Table 3. Initialisms in narrower sense in lower case letters**

Another group in this category are abbreviations consisting of both upper case and lower case letters, but both of them are initial letters.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRASLATION
B. i. d.	<i>bis in die</i>	“twice a day”
a. C. n.	<i>ante Christum natum</i>	“before Christ”

**Table 4. Initialisms in narrower sense in both capitals and lower case letters**

Some of the abbreviations of the narrower sense I found written in different ways in different sources, so I decided to dedicate a separate category to those that can be spelled in more than one way.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRASLATION
a. d., ad	<i>auris dextra</i>	“right ear”
prn, p. r. n., PRN	<i>pro re nata</i>	“as needed”
CV, C. V., cv	<i>curriculum vitae</i>	“course of life”

**Table 5. Initialisms in narrower sense spelled in more than one way**

The final group in this type of initialisms contains numbers as well as initial letters, and can be written with or without dots. Only the abbreviations found in medical prescriptions contain numbers, as can be seen from the following table.

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
q1d, q. 1. D.	<i>quaque die</i>	“every day”

q2h, q. 2. H.	<i>quaque secunda hora</i>	“every two hours”
q8h, q. 8. H.	<i>quaque octava hora</i>	“every eight hours”

**Table 6. Initialisms in narrower sense containing numbers**

### 8.2. Initialisms in broader sense

As I have already explained, abbreviations that belong to this category contain more than one letter representing each word from the original phrase. The first subgroup of this are the abbreviations whose source phrase is only one word, but the abbreviation itself has more than one letter to replace it.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
Applic.	<i>Applicandus</i>	“to be applied”
Ibid.	<i>Ibidem</i>	“in the same place”
MS.	<i>Manuscriptum</i>	“by hand”
Cap.	<i>Capitulus</i>	“chapter”

**Table 7. Initialisms in broader sense consisting of one word**

The second group in this category contains the abbreviations which have more than one word and more than one letter to replace each word.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
op.cit.	<i>opera citato</i>	“in the work cited”
pro per	<i>propria persona</i>	“proper person”
nem. con.	<i>nemine contradicente</i>	“with no one speaking against”
fil. pop.	<i>filius/-a populi</i>	“bastard son or daughter”

**Table 8. Initialisms in broader sense consisting of more than one word**

The initialisms in the following group are formed of more than one word, but not all of those words are represented by more than one letter, that is to say, some are represented by one, and some by more than one letter. This group refers to abbreviations related to educational certificates.

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
Phil. D.	<i>Philosophiae Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Philosophy”
B. Se.	<i>Baccalaureus Scientiarum</i>	“Bachelor of Sciences”

**Table 9. Initialisms in broader sense with different length of constituents**

Some Latin phrases were constructed from a function word and a content word, whether it is a noun, an adjective or some other word. The abbreviation process could shorten only the second word, so abbreviations formed this way consist of one whole, unabbreviated word, and one abbreviated word.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
et al.	<i>et alii</i>	“and other people”
pro tem.	<i>pro tempore</i>	“for the time being”
et seq.	<i>et sequens</i>	“and the following”
in litt.	<i>in litteris</i>	“in a letter”
sub nom.	<i>sub nomine</i>	“under the name”

**Table 10. Initialisms in broader sense with one unabbreviated word**

The following group of abbreviations consists of Latin phrases which are substituted with only one word, that is to say, one word within the phrase stands for the entire phrase.

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
sic	<i>sic erat scriptum</i>	“thus as it was written”

nocte	<i>omne nocte</i>	“every night”
-------	-------------------	---------------

**Table 11. Initialisms in broader sense where one word replaces the source phrase**

In the final group in this category I placed the abbreviations whose source phrase is just one word, but the abbreviation is formed by letters from the middle and the end of the word, rather than by the initial ones only.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
ips.	<i>imprimis</i>	“in the first place, above all”
cf.	<i>conferre</i>	“compare with”
Pb	<i>Plumbum</i>	“lead”

**Table 12. Initialisms in broader sense not formed by the initials only**

But there is also a hybrid category, as there always is, which comprises those abbreviations which can be written both as an abbreviation in narrower sense and in broader sense: the same Latin phrase can be abbreviated to the first initial letters only, or to two or three initial letters.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
p. p., per pro.	<i>per procuracionem</i>	“through the agency of”
v., vs.	<i>versus</i>	“against”
u. d., ut dict.	<i>ut dictum</i>	“as directed”
c., ca, ca., cca.	<i>circa</i>	“approximately”

**Table 13. Hybrid category**

## 9. Lexical analysis

As I have stated in the introduction and in the corpus analysis, besides grouping Latin abbreviations according to their orthographical features, I have also classified them according to the lexical fields and contexts in which they are being used in contemporary English. I have

grouped them into eight categories: medical and pharmacy abbreviations, or abbreviations used in prescriptions, abbreviations in chemistry, that is to say chemical elements, abbreviations used in academic or scholarly writing, abbreviations used in legal practises, in genealogy, in biology, ecclesiastic abbreviations and those used in educational certificates, mostly those related to college.

Now I am going to explain and provide examples for each of the categories I have just introduced, in the form of tables, since I find this time and space consuming, and at the same time clear and understandable. They will be presented from the most to the least numerous category, and the abbreviations from each category will be further classified as abbreviations in the narrower or broader sense, and divided according to their orthographic characteristics, as shown in the previous chapter.

### 9.1. Medical abbreviations and abbreviations used in prescription

The greatest number of Latin abbreviations I have managed to find are related to medicine and pharmacology, with 52 abbreviations of all belonging to this category, which is almost a third of the total number of Latin abbreviations that consist my corpus. They can be divided in those in narrower and those in broader sense. There is only one abbreviation in narrower sense that is written in capital letters – S. O. S. (*si opus sit*; “if necessary”), and 26 which are written in the lower case letters.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRASLATION
a. c.	<i>ante cibum</i>	“before meals”
a. d.	<i>aurio dextra</i>	“right ear”
a. m.	<i>ante meridiem</i>	“before noon”
a. l., a. s.	<i>aurio laeva, aurio sinister</i>	“left ear”

a. u.	<i>aurio utrae</i>	“both ears”
b. i. d.	<i>bis in die</i>	“twice a day”
c	<i>cum</i>	“with”
c	<i>cibos</i>	“food”
cc	<i>cum cibos</i>	“with food”
d. t. d.	<i>denture tales doses</i>	“give such doses”
e. m. p.	<i>ex modo prescripto</i>	“as directed”
h. s.	<i>hora somni</i>	“at bedtime”
o. d.	<i>oculus dexter</i>	“right eye”
o. s.	<i>oculus sinister</i>	“left eye”
o. u.	<i>oculus uterque</i>	“both eyes”
p. c.	<i>post cibum</i>	“after meals”
p. m.	<i>post meridiem</i>	“evening or afternoon”
p. o.	<i>per os</i>	“by mouth” or “orally”
p. r.	<i>per rectum</i>	“rectally”
p. v.	<i>per vaginam</i>	“vaginally”
q. a. d.	<i>quoque alternis die</i>	“every other day”
q. d.	<i>quaque die</i>	“every day”
q. h.	<i>quaque hora</i>	“every hour”
q. s.	<i>quantum sufficiat</i>	“a sufficient quantity”
s.	<i>sine</i>	“without”
s. a.	<i>secundum artum</i>	“use your judgement”

**Table 14. Medical abbreviations in narrower sense in lower case letters**

It should also be noted that the abbreviations *a. m.* and *p. m.* listed in the previous table are not used only in the medical domain, but also in everyday conversations regarding hours of the day.

Five abbreviations from this category can be written in more than one way.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
b.d.s, bds, BDS	<i>bis die sumendum</i>	“twice a day“
n.p.o., npo, NPO	<i>nil per os</i>	“not by oral administration“
p.r.n., prn, PRN	<i>pro re nata</i>	“as needed”
q.d.s, qds, QDS	<i>quater die sumendum</i>	“4 times a day”
t.i.d., tid	<i>ter in die</i>	“3 times a day”

**Table 15. Medical abbreviations in narrower sense spelled in more than one way**

I chose only 3 abbreviations that contain numbers so as not to be too repetitive, since this type of prescription abbreviation can be used with a variety of numbers.

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
q1d, q. 1. D.	<i>quaque die</i>	“every day”
q2h, q. 2. H.	<i>quaque secunda hora</i>	“every two hours”
q8h, q. 8. H.	<i>quaque octava hora</i>	“every eight hours”

**Table 16. Medical abbreviations in narrower sense containing numbers**

The first group of abbreviations in broader sense are those that are written in lower case letters and are formed of one word only. There are 10 such examples in my corpus.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
aa	<i>ana</i>	“of each”
admov.	<i>admove</i>	“apply”
aq	<i>aqua</i>	“water”
bol.	<i>bolus</i>	“as a large single dose (usually intravenously)”
emuls.	<i>emulsum</i>	“emulsion”
gtt(s)	<i>guttal</i>	“drop(s)”
inj.	<i>injectio</i>	“injection”
troch.	<i>trochiscus</i>	“lozenge”
stat.	<i>statim</i>	“immediately”, “now”
ung.	<i>unguentum</i>	“ointment”

**Table 17. Medical abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word**

There are only two instances of abbreviations whose each word is replaced with more than one initial in my corpus.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
alt. h.	alternis horis	“every other hour”
dieb. Alt	diebus alternis	“every other day”

**Table 18. Medical abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word**



Three abbreviations in this category have only one word of the source phrase replaced and the other one stays as it is since it happens to be a function word, more specifically, a conjunction or a negation, in other words, they are short words and there is no need to shorten them even more.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
ad lib.	<i>ad libitum</i>	“freely”
ex aq	<i>ex aqua</i>	“in water”
non rep.	<i>non repetatur</i>	“no repeats”

**Table 19. Medical abbreviations in broader sense with one unabbreviated word**

This lexical field contains one hybrid abbreviation which can be spelled in to different ways, as an abbreviation in both narrower and broader sense – u. d. or ut. dict. (*ut dictum*; “as directed”) and one abbreviation which has a single word from the source phrase standing for the entire phrase – nocte (*omne nocte*; “every night”).

## 9.2. Chemical elements

The second most numerous lexical field are chemical elements (48), but this group can be divided into two subgroups. The first one comprises chemical elements whose names have come from Latin, but the names remained the same or slightly changed in English, so the abbreviations are intelligible right away. It can be divided into abbreviations in narrower (9) and broader sense (30).

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
B	<i>Borium</i>	Boron

C	<i>Carboneum</i>	Carbon
F	<i>Fluorum</i>	Fluorine
H	<i>Hydrogenium</i>	Hydrogen
I	<i>Iodium</i>	Iodine
N	<i>Nitrogenium</i>	Nitrogen
O	<i>Oxygenium</i>	Oxygen
P	<i>Phosphorus</i>	Phosphorus
S	<i>Sulphur</i>	Sulphur

**Table 20. Chemical elements in narrower sense**

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
Al	<i>Aluminium</i>	Aluminium
Ar	<i>Argon</i>	Argon
As	<i>Arsenicum</i>	Arsenic
At	<i>Astatinum</i>	Astatine
Ba	<i>Barium</i>	Barium
Be	<i>Beryllium</i>	Beryllium
Bi	<i>Bismuthum</i>	Bismuth
Br	<i>Bromum</i>	Bromine
Ca	<i>Calcium</i>	Calcium
Cl	<i>Chlorum</i>	Chlorine

Cs	<i>Caesium</i>	Cesium
Fr	<i>Francium</i>	Francium
Ga	<i>Gallium</i>	Gallium
Ge	<i>Germanium</i>	Germanium
He	<i>Helium</i>	Helium
In	<i>Indium</i>	Indium
Kr	<i>Kryptonum</i>	Krypton
Li	<i>Lithium</i>	Lithium
Ne	<i>Neon</i>	Neon
Mg	<i>Magnesium</i>	Magnesium
Po	<i>Polonium</i>	Polonium
Ra	<i>Radium</i>	Radium
Rb	<i>Rubidium</i>	Rubidium
Rd	<i>Rad</i>	Radon
Se	<i>Selenium</i>	Selenium
Si	<i>Sillicium</i>	Silicon
Sr	<i>Stronium</i>	Stronium
Te	<i>Tellurium</i>	Tellurium

Tl	<i>Thalium</i>	Thalium
Xe	<i>Xenon</i>	Xenon

**Table 21. Chemical elements in broader sense**

The second group are those elements which kept the Latin name as a basis for their element abbreviation, but their English name has developed into a completely diverse word from the original Latin word. These are all abbreviations in broader sense, and there are 9 of them.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
Ag	<i>Argentum</i>	Silver
Au	<i>Aurum</i>	Gold
Fe	<i>Ferrum</i>	Iron
Hg	<i>Hydragyrum</i>	Mercury
K	<i>Kalium</i>	Potassium
Na	<i>Natrium</i>	Sodium
Pb	<i>Plumbum</i>	Lead
Sb	<i>Stibium</i>	Antimony
Sn	<i>Stannum</i>	Tin

**Table 22. Latin-based chemical elements with different English translation**

### 9.3. Abbreviations used in academic or scholarly writing

The following richest category contains 26 abbreviations, which are used in academic and scholarly writing. Ten of them belong to the abbreviations in narrower sense, two of which are spelled with capital letters (table 23), and eight in lower case letters (table 24).

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
--------------------	---------------	-------------

N. B.	<i>nota bene</i>	“note well”
P. S.	<i>post scriptum</i>	“after what has been written”

**Table 23. Academic writing abbreviations in narrower sense in capitals**

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
e. g.	<i>exempli gratia</i>	“for example”
i. a.	<i>inter alia</i>	“among other things”
i. e.	<i>id est</i>	“that is”
p. m. a.	<i>post mortem auctoris</i>	“after the author’s death”
q. v.	<i>quod vide</i>	“which see”
s. v.	<i>sub verbo</i>	“under the word”
v. i.	<i>vide infra</i>	“see below”
v. s.	<i>vide supra</i>	“see above”

**Table 24. Academic writing abbreviations in narrower sense in lower case letters**

Twelve members in this group are abbreviations in broader sense, seven of which are formed of one word spelled in lower case letters, as shown in the table 25. The remaining four abbreviations are formed of two words, but out of those, two have both constituents abbreviated, and two have one abbreviated element and one unabbreviated. There is only one abbreviation in this group that is spelled in capital letters: *MS.* (*Manuscriptum*, which is translated in English as “by hand”).

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
cap.	<i>capitolio</i>	“chapter”
cf.	<i>conferre</i>	“compare”
etc.	<i>et cetera</i>	“and so forth”

ibid.	<i>ibidem</i>	“in the same place”
ips.	<i>imprimis</i>	“in the first place, above all”
sc.	<i>scilicet</i>	“namely”
viz.	<i>videlicet; videre licet</i>	“namely”, “in other words”

**Table 25. Academic writing abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word**

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
et al.	<i>et alii</i>	“and other people”
et pass.	<i>et passim</i>	“and in the following”
loc. Cit.	<i>loco citato</i>	“in the place cited”
op. cit.	<i>opera citato</i>	“in the work cited”

**Table 26. Academic writing abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word**

Three of the abbreviations which belong to this category have more than one possible spelling.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
CV, C. V., cv	<i>curriculum vitae</i>	“course of life”
c., ca., ca, cca.	<i>circa</i>	“approximately”
v., vs.	<i>versus</i>	“against”

**Table 27. Academic writing abbreviations spelled in more than one way**

There is also one exception, which belongs to the category in which one element, or one word, of the source phrase stands for the entire phrase – *sic* (*sic erat scriptum*; “thus as it was written”).

#### 9.4.Ecclesiastic abbreviations

After them there are ecclesiastic abbreviations, which occupy 23 members of my corpus. In the past there were many more abbreviations belonging to this group, but a large number of them are not used any longer, but can be found only in Roman or medieval inscriptions.

The majority (17) of them are abbreviations in narrower sense written with capital letters (table 28), although there is one written in both capital and lower case letters – *a. C. n. ante Christum natum*; “before the birth of Christ”). There are a few (6) of those in broader sense consisting of one word and written in lower case letters (table 29).

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
A. C.	<i>Ante Christum; Anno Christi</i>	“Before Christ”
A. D.	<i>Anno Domini</i>	“In the Year of the Lord”
A. M.	<i>Anno Mundi</i>	“In the Year of the World”
A. M. D. G.	<i>Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam</i>	“For the greater glory of God“
A. Q. I. C.	<i>Anima Quiescat In Christo</i>	“May his [or her] Soul Repose in Christ”
B. F.	<i>Bona Fide</i>	“In Good Faith”
D., DN, DNS	<i>Dominus</i>	“Lord”
D. G.	<i>Dei Gratia</i>	“By the Grace of God”
D. V.	<i>Deo Volente</i>	“God willing”
J. C.	<i>Jesus Christus</i>	“Jesus Christ”
N. N.	<i>nomen nescio</i>	“I do not know the name”
O. M. I.	<i>Oblati Mariae Immaculatae</i>	“Oblate Fathers of Mary

		Immaculate”
O. S. B.	<i>Ordo Sancti Benedicti</i>	“Benedictines”
O. S. F. C.	<i>Ordinis Sancti Francisci Capuccini</i>	“Franciscan Capuchins”
R. I. P.	<i>requiescat in pace</i>	“rest in peace”
S. T. T. L.	<i>sit tibi terra levis</i>	“May the earth rest lightly on you“

**Table 28. Ecclesiastic abbreviations in narrower sense**

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
Archiepus.	<i>Archiepiscopus</i>	“Archbishop”
Card.	<i>Cardinalis</i>	“Cardinal”
Episc.	<i>Episcopus</i>	“Bishop”
Fr.	<i>Frater</i>	“Brother”
Pbr.	<i>Presbyter</i>	“Priest”
Theol.	<i>Theologia</i>	“Theology”

**Table 29. Ecclesiastic abbreviations in broader sense**

### 9.5. Abbreviations used in genealogy

There are 17 abbreviations related to genealogy in my corpus. Half of them belong to the abbreviations in narrower sense (table 30), and half to those in broader sense (table 31). Those in narrower sense are all spelled in lower case letters, except for one, *D. b. n.*, which has a capital initial letters. Out of those in broader sense, there is only one formed by more than one word, while the others contain just one word. One of the abbreviations in this category is an exception among the others – *d. s. p. leg.* (*decessit sine prole legitima*; “died without



legitimate children”) since it is the only one that has three elements of the source phrase represented by one initial, and the last one by three.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
D. b. n.	<i>De bonis non administratis</i>	“of goods unadministered”
d. s. p.	<i>decessit sine prole</i>	“died without children”
d. s. p. f.	<i>decessit sine prole femina</i>	“died without female children”
d. s. p. m.	<i>decessit sine prole mascula</i>	“died without male children”
d. s. p. m. s.	<i>decessit sine prole mascula supersita</i>	“died without surviving male children”
d. s. p. s.	<i>decessit sine prole superstia</i>	“died without surviving children”
d. v. m.	<i>decessit vita matris</i>	“died in mother’s lifetime”
d. v. p.	<i>decessit vita patris</i>	“died in father’s lifetime”

**Table 30. Genealogy abbreviations in narrower sense**

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
fil.	<i>filius/-a</i>	“son”/“daughter”
fil. Pop.	<i>filius/-a populi</i>	“bastard son or daughter”
lic.	<i>per licentiam</i>	“by licence”
nupt.	<i>nupti fuerunt</i>	“were married”
ob.	<i>obiit</i>	“died”
par.	<i>parochie</i>	“of the parish of...”
sep.	<i>sepuliebatur or sepultus/-a erat</i>	“was buried”
vid.	<i>viduus/-a</i>	“widower/widow”

**Table 31. Genealogy abbreviations in broader sense**

### 9.6. Abbreviations used in educational certificates

As far as educational certificates are concerned, my corpus contains 17 of them, but in reality there are a lot more of them, I just did not use all of them. They can be divided into two groups, as shown in the tables below: abbreviations in narrower sense spelled in all capital letters (table 32), and those in broader sense, whose constituents are not of the same length – one word of the source phrase is substituted with only one initial, and the other with more than one initial (table 33).

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRNSLATION
A. B.	<i>Artium Baccalaureus</i>	“Bachelor of Arts”
A. M.	<i>Artium Magister</i>	“Master of Arts”
D. D.	<i>Divinitatis Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Divinity”
D. M.	<i>Doctor Medicinae</i>	“Doctor of Medicine”
D. M. D.	<i>Dentae Medicinae Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Dental Medicine”
L. H. D.	<i>Litterarum Humanorum Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Humane Letters”
S. D.	<i>Scietiae Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Science”
S. J. D.	<i>Scientiae Juridicae Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Juridical Science”

**Table 32. Educational certificate abbreviations in narrower sense**

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRNSLATION
Art. D.	<i>Artium Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Arts”
B. Se.	<i>Baccalaureus Scientiarum</i>	“Bachelor of Sciences”
D. Phil.	<i>Doctor Philosophiae</i>	“Doctor of Philosophy”
Ed. D.	<i>Educationae Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Education”

Mus. D.	<i>Musicae Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Music”
Litt. D.	<i>Litterarum Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Letters”; “Doctor of Literature”

**Table 33. Education certificate abbreviations in broader sense**

There is a special category for educational certificates regarding law, since in the Latin titles the word law is always in plural, which is abbreviated with double letter in the Latin language. Therefore these titles belong to abbreviations in narrower sense, whose one element of the source phrase is replaced with a double capital initial letter LL.

LATIN ABBREVIATIONS	SOURCE PHRASE	TRNSLATION
LL. B.	<i>Legum Baccalaureus</i>	“Bachelor of Laws”
LL. D.	<i>Legum Doctor</i>	“Doctor of Laws”
LL. M.	<i>Legum Magister</i>	“Master of Laws”

**Table 34. Educational certificate abbreviations with double initials**

### 9.7. Abbreviations used in legal practises

I managed to find only 15 Latin abbreviations which are used in legal practises, but I found a large number of entire Latin phrases which are used unabbreviated, thus I suppose that is the reason why I was not able to find more abbreviations. There are a total of 4 abbreviations in narrower sense, two written in capital and two written in lower case letters, as can be seen in the following table.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
a. a.	<i>ad acta</i>	“to the archives”

i. a.	<i>in absentia</i>	“in absence”
M. O.	<i>modus operandi</i>	“method of operating”
Q.E.D.	<i>quod erat demonstrandum</i>	„which was to be demonstrated“

**Table 35. Legal abbreviations in narrower sense**

Eleven of them belong to the category of abbreviations in broader sense. More specifically, two of them consist only of one word, and seven of them belong to the group in which the first word is a function word, more specifically a conjunction or a preposition, so only the second word is abbreviated.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
Id.	<i>Idem</i>	“in the same place”
viz., videlicet	<i>videre licet</i>	“namely”

**Table 36. Legal abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word**

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
et seq.	<i>et sequens</i>	“and the following”
et ux.	<i>et uxor</i>	“and wife”
in litt.	<i>in litteris</i>	“in a letter (or other document)”
per cur.	<i>per curiam</i>	“by the court”
per pro.	<i>per procuracionem</i>	“through the agency of”
pro tem.	<i>pro tempore</i>	“for the time being”
sub nom.	<i>sub nomine</i>	“under the name”

**Table 37. Legal abbreviations in broader sense with one unabbreviated word**

There are two instances of abbreviations in this category which have both of the constituents shortened.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
nem. con.	<i>nemine contradicente</i>	„with no one speaking against“
pro. per.	<i>propria persona</i>	“proper person“

**Table 38. Legal abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word**

### 9.8. Abbreviations used in biology

The least numerous category in my work are abbreviations used in biology, of which my corpus contains 12. All of them belong to the category of abbreviations in broader sense, which can be divided into two groups: those composed of one word and those composed of two, which is shown in the following tables.

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
aff.	<i>affinis</i>	“having affinity with”
auct.	<i>auctorum</i>	“of the authors”
Ca.	<i>candidatus</i>	“candidate” (for names of organisms that have not been accepted yet)
ex.	<i>exemplar</i>	“example”; “specimen”
indet.	<i>indeterminans</i>	“undetermined”, “unidentified”
leg.	<i>legit</i>	“collected”, followed by the name of the collector
nob.	<i>nobis</i>	“by us”

sp.	<i>species</i>	“species”
ssp.	<i>subspecies</i>	“subspecies”

**Table 39. Biology abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word**

LATIN ABBREVIATION	SOURCE PHRASE	TRANSLATION
f. sp.	<i>forma specialis</i>	“special form”
in coll.	<i>in collectionem</i>	“in the collection”
sp. Nov.	<i>species nova</i>	“new species”

**Table 40. Biology abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word**

## 10. Conclusion

To sum up, through this research I have explored the ways in which the former “lingua franca”, Latin, had influenced the development of the English language as we know it today. I have seen the ways in which Latin speakers had abbreviated Latin in the medieval times, and noted that in the Contemporary English there are not all types of those abbreviation methods. I have studied the submorphemic word formation processes in which English abbreviations come to exist in the modern world, using submorphemic elements as their building blocks. Latin abbreviations, which are in majority initialisms, also use those elements, that is to say, initials, in their creation process.

In my corpus I had 211 Latin abbreviations which, as has been the aim of my study, I have analysed on two levels: orthographical and lexical. I have divided them into eight lexical fields in which they are used in the Contemporary English. The most numerous field from my paper are abbreviations used in prescriptions (52), the majority of them (26) are abbreviations in narrower sense written in lower case letters. Also a larger number (10) of them belongs to abbreviations in broader sense which are formed of just one word. This is the only category

which comprises abbreviations whose constituents are numbers as well as letters, used in prescribing how often a certain medicine should be consumed.

Chemical elements form the second most numerous category (48). The most important division within this category is on the elements which kept the Latin-based abbreviation but not the Latin-based name, which are in minority (9), and those that kept both and are thus intelligible right away for an English speaker. The diversity that marks these abbreviations in the fact that they are the only ones spelled without dots.

The abbreviations used in academic writing (26) are the ones with which I have been the most familiar before writing this paper. They have representatives for both narrower and broader sense. Orthographically speaking, there are only three abbreviations spelled with capital letters, two of which belong to the narrower sense and one to two broader sense. Three of them have more than one possible spelling, one of which can even be spelled as either an abbreviation in narrower or broader sense.

Ecclesiastic abbreviations (23) are in majority (17) those in narrower sense and written in capital letters. The remaining six from my corpus are abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word. These denote different kinds of titles in the ecclesiastic hierarchy.

The abbreviations used in genealogy can also be divided into two simple, and almost equal in quantity, groups: those in narrower and broader sense. The ones in narrower sense (9) are all written in lower case letters and none of them contains less than three constituents in the source phrase. Those in broader sense (8) consist of one word, except for a single abbreviation that has two constituents.

The abbreviations used in educational certificates can generally be divided into two subgroups: those in narrower sense and written in all capitals (8), and those in broader sense

which have one constituent formed by more than one initial (6). But there is also one special feature in comparison to the other categories: the certificates involving law have double initial in the abbreviation, since in the Latin language a double letter in the abbreviation denoted plural in the source phrase.

Regarding the abbreviations used in legal practices from my corpus (15), the majority (7) are those in the broader sense, formed of a function word and a content word, so one word within each (a function word) is unabbreviated.

The abbreviations used in biology in my corpus (12) are all the ones in broader sense, they can only be divided depending whether they are formed of only one or more words, but the majority contains one (9).

In conclusion, it was interesting for me to discover all of these pieces of information, most of which I probably would not have encountered if it was not for this work. Nonetheless, I believe much more research could be done in this field in the future, since Latin abbreviations have established themselves in the English language a long time ago, and they are certainly here to stay.



## 11. Works cited

- Algeo, John (2009). *The Origins and Development of the English Language*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed.,  
Wadsworth Publishing
- Baugh, Albert C., and Thomas Cable (2005). *A History of the English Language*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed.,  
Pearson Education, Inc.
- Cannon, Garland (1989). “Abbreviations and Acronyms in English Word-Formation“.  
*American Speech*, Vol.64, No. 2, pp. 99-127
- Capelli, Adriano (1982). *The elements of abbreviation in medieval Latin palaeography* (D.  
Heimann, and R. Kay, Trans.). University of Kansas Publications
- Fabijanić, Ivo, and Frane Malenica (2013<sup>o</sup>). “Abbreviations in English medical terminology  
and their adaptation to Croatian“. *JAHHR*, Vol. 4, No. 7, pp. 71-105
- Fandrych, Ingrid (2008). “Submorphemic elements in the formation of acronyms, blends and  
clippings“. *Lexis*, pp. 103-121
- Kent, Roland G (1923). *Language and Philology*. Marshall Jones Company
- López Rúa, Paula (2004). “Acronyms & Co.: A typology of typologies“. *Estudios Ingleses de  
la Universidad Complutense*. Vol. 12, pp. 109-129, Madrid
- López Rúa, Paula (2002). “On the Structure of Acronyms and Neighbouring Categories: a  
Prototype-based Account“, *English Language and Linguistics*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 31- 60
- Malenica, Frane, and Ivo Fabijanić (2013b). “Abbreviations in English Military  
Terminology“. *Brno Studies in English*, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 59-88
- PLAG, Ingo (2003). *Word-formation in English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

**Internet sources**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_medical\\_abbreviations: Latin\\_abbreviations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_medical_abbreviations: Latin_abbreviations)

<https://www.pharmacytimes.com/technician-news/a-technicians-guide-to-pharmacy-abbreviations>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Latin\\_abbreviations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Latin_abbreviations)

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/latin-terms-and-abbreviations/>

<https://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/latin.html>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Latin\\_legal\\_terms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Latin_legal_terms)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2557507/>

<https://www.everypatientsadvocate.com/columns/prescriptionabbreviations.pdf>

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Abbreviations\\_Found\\_in\\_Genealogy\\_Records](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Abbreviations_Found_in_Genealogy_Records)

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Genealogical\\_Abbreviations\\_and\\_Latin\\_Terms\\_A\\_to](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Genealogical_Abbreviations_and_Latin_Terms_A_to)

[Fhttp://sites.psu.edu/pubhub/wp-content/uploads/sites/36309/2016/04/Latin-Words-in-Scholarly-Writing.pdf\\_\(National\\_Institute\)](Fhttp://sites.psu.edu/pubhub/wp-content/uploads/sites/36309/2016/04/Latin-Words-in-Scholarly-Writing.pdf_(National_Institute))

[https://www.cn.edu/libraries/tiny\\_mce/tiny\\_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/library/writing/3-common-latin-abbreviations.pdf](https://www.cn.edu/libraries/tiny_mce/tiny_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/library/writing/3-common-latin-abbreviations.pdf)

<https://www.quora.com/What-are-the-Latin-names-of-all-of-the-elements-in-the-periodic-table>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_chemical\\_element\\_name\\_etymologies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_chemical_element_name_etymologies)

[https://www.constitution.org/us\\_doi.pdf](https://www.constitution.org/us_doi.pdf)

## **12. LATIN ABBREVIATIONS IN ENGLISH: Summary and key words**

This work analyses the Latin influence on the English language from the Old English period up to its present state, and the formation of Latin abbreviations in the medieval Latin. The non-morphological word formation processes and the elements of creation are discussed. Latin abbreviations are analysed on the lexical and orthographical level. On the lexical level they are divided into eight lexical fields, and on the orthographical level they are classified according to the narrower and broader sense, spelling, the number of elements of which they are formed.

Key words: *history, abbreviations, initials, Latin, morphology, lexicology, orthography*

## **13. LATINSKE KRATICE U ENGLESKOM: Sadržaj i ključne riječi**

Ovaj rad analizira utjecaj latinskog jezika na engleski od doba starogengleskog sve do suvremenog jezika, i tvorbe latinskih kratica u srednjovjekovnom latinskom. Govori se o nemorfološkim procesima tvorbe riječi i elementima njihova nastanka. Latinske kratice se analiziraju na leksikološkoj i ortografskoj razini. Na leksikološkoj razini podjeljene su na osam leksičkih polja, a na ortografskom su razvrstane prema užem i širem smislu, načinu na kojem se pišu, broju elemenata od kojih se tvore.

Ključne riječi: *povijest, kratice, inicijali, latinski, morfologija, leksikologija, ortografija*

## 14. Tables

1. Table 1. Taxonomy of abbreviations by López Rúa used in this work.....	16
2. Table 2. Initialisms in narrower sense in capitals .....	23
3. Table 3. Initialisms in narrower sense in lower case letters .....	23
4. Table 4. Initialisms in narrower sense in both capitals and lower case letters .....	24
5. Table 5. Initialisms in narrower sense spelled in more than one way .....	24
6. Table 6. Initialisms in narrower sense containing numbers .....	24
7. Table 7. Table 7. Initialisms in broader sense consisting of one word .....	25
8. Table 8. Initialisms in broader sense consisting of more than one word .....	25
9. Table 9. Initialisms in broader sense with different length of constituents .....	26
10. Table 10. Initialisms in broader sense with one unabbreviated word .....	26
11. Table 11. Initialisms in broader sense where one word replaces the source phrase .....	26
12. Table 12. Initialisms in broader sense not formed by the initials only .....	27
13. Table 13. Hybrid category .....	27
14. Table 14. Medical abbreviations in narrower sense in lower case letters .....	28
15. Table 15. Medical abbreviations in narrower sense spelled in more than one way .....	30
16. Table 16. Medical abbreviations in narrower sense containing numbers .....	30
17. Table 17. Medical abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word .....	30
18. Table 18. Medical abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word ...	31
19. Table 19. Medical abbreviations in broader sense with one unabbreviated word .....	32
20. Table 20. Chemical elements in narrower sense .....	32
21. Table 21. Chemical elements in broader sense .....	33
22. Table 22. Latin-based chemical elements with different English translation .....	35
23. Table 23. Academic writing abbreviations in narrower sense in capitals .....	35
24. Table 24. Academic writing abbreviations in narrower sense in lower case letters .....	36
25. Table 25. Academic writing abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word .....	36
26. Table 26. Academic writing abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word .....	37
27. Table 27. Academic writing abbreviations spelled in more than one way .....	37
28. Table 28. Ecclesiastic abbreviations in narrower sense .....	38
29. Table 29. Ecclesiastic abbreviations in broader sense .....	39
30. Table 30. Genealogy abbreviations in narrower sense .....	40
31. Table 31. Genealogy abbreviations in broader sense .....	40

32. Table 32. Educational certificate abbreviations in narrower sense .....	41
33. Table 33. Education certificate abbreviations in broader sense .....	41
34. Table 34. Educational certificate abbreviations with double initials .....	42
35. Table 35. Legal abbreviations in narrower sense .....	42
36. Table 36. Legal abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word .....	43
37. Table 37. Legal abbreviations in broader sense with one unabbreviated word .....	43
38. Table 38. Legal abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word .....	44
39. Table 39. Biology abbreviations in broader sense consisting of one word .....	44
40. Table 40. Biology abbreviations in broader sense consisting of more than one word ...	45