

A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF
ENGLISH SHORTENED FORMS

A thesis presented to the English Department of
IKIP Sanata Dharma

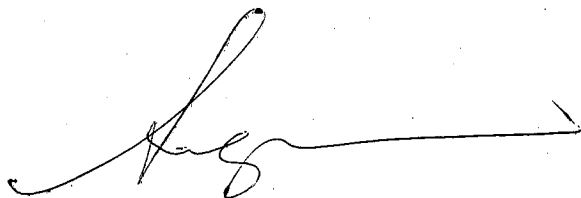
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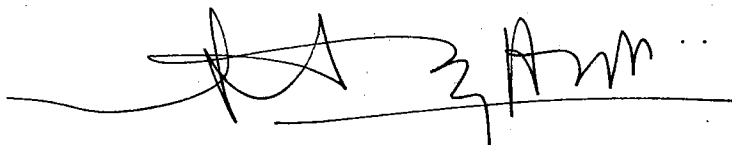
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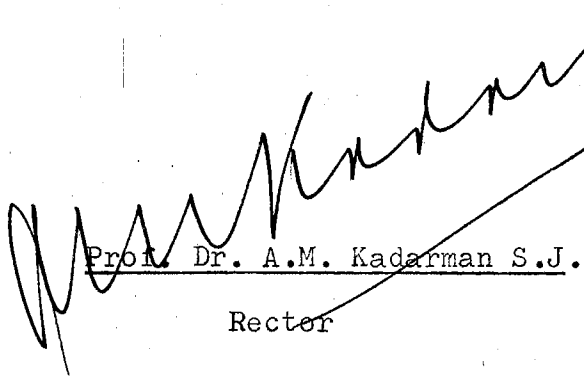
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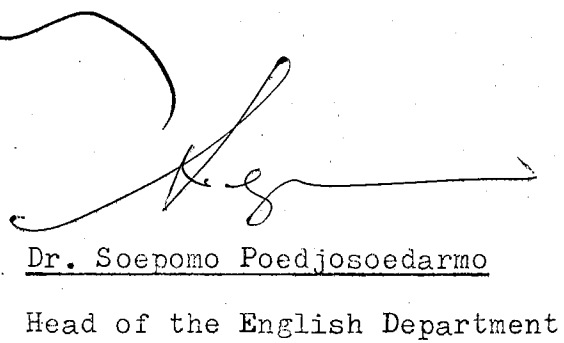


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Introduction

English shortened forms are rarely discussed profoundly in the books of English grammar in spite of the fact that many of them occur in high frequency both in oral and written English. In the case of shortenings*, some of them have been established so fully that they seem to take the place of their originals whereas others remain slangy and adapted only to particular audiences.¹

The most important reason for this language phenomenon is that shortened forms save much time and space.² Some words find their way in shortened forms for the sake of politeness which is the case for example with the shortened forms VD or WC. In another case, shortened forms are created for the sake of practicality of forming a new word which is the case with blend* namely a kind of compound word formed by blending the sounds and the meanings of two or more words.

This paper is intended to be an analysis of all types of shortened forms in English. In this paper, the term "shortened form" is used instead of "abbreviation". The reason is that this term is somewhat more flexible since a blend is usually not included in abbreviation whereas with the term "shortened form" it can be well included.

* See Chapter I

¹ E.W. Fowler, Modern English Usage, E.L.B.S. and Oxford University Press, London, 1972, pp. 116 - 7

² N.S. Mager, S.E. Mager, Encyclopedic Dictionary of Applied Linguistics, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1971, pp. 116 - 7

From the linguistic point of view, shortened forms can be regarded as a phenomenon in word formation which refers to English morphology. The reason that makes the analysis of shortened forms difficult is the inconsistency of some of the rules which is discussed a little bit in chapter V. However, shortened forms are worth analysing for the sake of the better understanding of their nature.

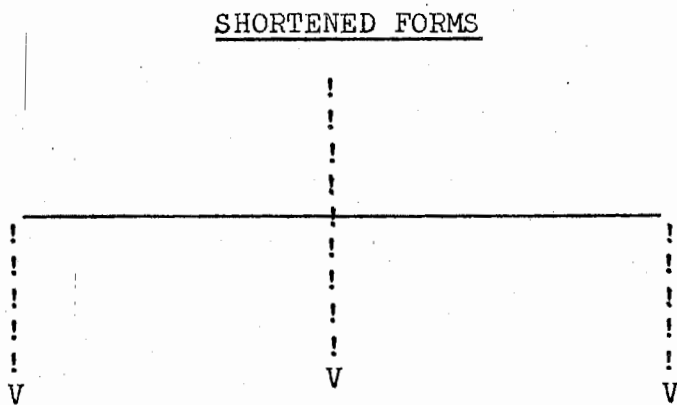
As a way of collecting data, the writer has consulted a lot of dictionaries with abbreviation lists and many books on English usage. This is done also to solve the problems of making classification and to sum up some recommendations on the usage of English shortened forms.

There is an additional chapter of some teaching methods which is presented as an attempt to help teachers in case they want to teach shortened forms separately.

Chapter I : Three types of shortened forms in English

I.

Shortened forms in English can be divided into three types according to the way they are formed.



1. ACRONYMS

2. SHORTENINGS

3. BLENDS

(or Portmanteau Words)

examples:

1. p.c.
2. a.m.
3. B.C.
4. B.B.C.
5. p.t.o.
6. WAC
7. radar
8. ABM
9. NASA
10. M.A.

examples:

1. A (chemical)
2. g.
3. exam
4. Prof.
5. isn't
6. aren't
7. won't
8. Fred
9. tummy
10. nighty

examples:

1. teleporter
2. motel
3. brunch
4. smog
5. Eurasian

Notes:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|---|
| 1. | 1. p.c. | per cent; petty cash;
<u>post cibum</u> (L.), after meals;
post card; price current |
| | 2. a.m. | <u>ante meridiem</u> (L.), before noon |
| | 3. B.C. | Before Christ; Bachelor of Chemistry |
| | 4. B.B.C. | British Broadcasting Corporation |
| | 5. p.t.o. | please turn over |
| | 6. WAC | Women's Army Corps |
| | 7. radar | radio detecting and ranging |
| | 8. ABM | Anti Ballistic Missile |
| | 9. NASA | National Aeronautics and Space
Administration |
| | 10. M.A. | Master of Arts;
Military Academy |
| 2. | 1. A (chemical) | Argon |
| | 2. g. | gram; guinea; genitive |
| | 3. exam | examination |
| | 4. Prof. | Professor |
| | 5. isn't | is not |
| | 6. aren't | are not |
| | 7. won't | will not |
| | 8. Fred | Frederick |
| | 9. tummy | stomach |
| | 10. nighty | night gown |

- | | | |
|----|---------------|---------------------|
| 3. | 1. teleporter | television reporter |
| | 2. motel | motorists' hotel |
| | 3. brunch | breakfast and lunch |
| | 4. smog | smoke and fog |
| | 5. Eurasian | European and Asian |

II. 1. Acronyms

An acronym is a word formed from the initial letters of a name, as WAC for Women's Army Corps, or by combining initial letters or parts of a series of words, as radar for radio detecting and ranging.¹

This method of forming acronyms can be traced back to the first world war which produced a few examples:²

ANZAS	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
DORA	Defence of the Realm Act
WRENS	Women's Royal Naval Service

The end of the second world war saw the formation of a great many which are mostly military words. Among them are the followings:

ASDIC	Allied Submarine Detection Investigation Committee
CEMA	Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts

¹ The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, American Heritage Publishing Co. Ltd., New York, 1975, p. 12

² See H.W. Fowler, Modern English Usage, E.L.B.S. and Oxford University Press, London, 1972, pp. 116 - 7

ENSA	Entertainments National Service Association
FANY	First Aid Nursing Yeomanry
FIDO	Fog Investigation Dispersal Operation
radar	radio detecting and ranging
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force
WRACS	Women's Royal Army Corps
WRAFS	Women's Royal Air Force
NAAFI	Navy Army and Air Force Institutes

The process of forming acronyms has then continued with some more recent examples:

UNO	United Nation Organization
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organization
EFTA	European Free Trade Area
ASEAN	Association of South East Asia Nations
BENELUX	Belgium Netherlands and Luxembourg

There are acronyms of a somewhat different type as in the following examples. Here the interpenetration of the elements is somewhat weaker compared to the previously mentioned acronyms.*

A.A.A.	Agricultural Adjustment Administration; Amateur Athletic Association; American Automobile Association
--------	---

* See Chapter II. A.3.

a.c.	account current; alternating current; <u>ante cibum</u> (L.), before meals (in prescriptions)
A.C.	<u>ante Christum</u> (L.), before Christ; Army Corps; Athletic Club; Automobile Club
B.E.	Bachelor of Education; Bachelor of Engineering; Bank of England; Board of Education; Buddhist Era
B.A.	Bachelor of Arts
C.G.	Captain of the Guard; Centre of Gravity
C.I.A.	Central Intelligence Agency
C.O.D.	Cash on Delivery
c.o.	care of
C.P.I.	Consumer Price Index
e.g.	<u>exempli gratia</u> (L.), for example
E.S.T.	Eastern Standard Time
e.s.p.	extra sensory perception
F.B.I.	Federal Bureau Investigation
GNP	Gross National Product
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
G.P.	General Practitioner; Grand Prix
H.P.	high pressure; hire purchase; horse power; House of Parliament
H.Q.	headquarters
i.e.	<u>id est</u> (L.), that is
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
i.q.	<u>indem quod</u> (L.), the same as
I.R.A.	Irish Republican Army
K.K.K.	Ku klux Klan
k.o.	knock out

L.G.	Life Guard
Lit. D.	<u>Litterarum Doctor</u> (L.), Doctor of Letters, Doctor of Literature
LSD	lysergic acid die thylamide (U.S.Navy), landing ship deck
M.C.	Master of Ceremonies; Marine Corps; Master Commandant; Medical Corps; Member of Congress; Military Cross (Britain)
M.D.	<u>Medicinae Doctor</u> (L.), Doctor of Medicine
M.Ph.	Master of Philosophy
m.p.h.	miles per hour
M.Sc.	Master of Science
M.T.	Metric Ton
MVA	megavolt ampere
NB	<u>nota bene</u> (L.), note well, take notice
N.E.	New England; north east; north eastern
N.Y.	New York
Ph. D.	<u>Philosophiae Doctor</u> (L.), Doctor of Philosophy
R.S.V.P.	<u>repondez s'il vous plait</u> (French), reply if you please
SAM	Surface to Air Missile
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SOS	Save Our Souls
UFO	Unidentified Flying Objects
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S.A.	United States of America
U.S.S.R.	United of Soviet Socialist Republics

V.D.	Venereal Disease
(or V.D.)	
VOA	Voice Of America
Y.M.C.A.	Young Men's Christian Association

2. Shortenings

2.1.

Shortening has something to do with decreasing the number of syllables or letters of a word. Usually what is left is the first or the first and the second syllable of the word such as lab for laboratory or exam for examination. Sometimes, the word is decreased into the first letter only such as in A for Argon (Chemical) and g. for gram.

Other examples:

a.	ampere; acre
A	Argon
ad.	advertisement
Ala.	Alabama
Amb.	Ambassador
bx.	box
bra	brassiere
c.	centimeter; carat; cent; chapter; cathode
Col.	Colonel
Capt.	Captain
cab.	cabriolet
Dec.	December

dbl	double
deb	debutante
demob	demobilize
econ.	economy; economics; economical; economic
ed.	edition; editor
enl.	enlarged
encyc. or	encyclopaedia
ency.	
esp.	especially
Feb.	February
fem.	feminine
fig	figurative
gram.	grammar; grammatical
gen	general information
gent	gentleman
gymn	gymnasium
gloss.	glossary
gov.	government
Gov.	Governor
Hon.	Honorable; honorary
hosp.	hospital
hort.	horticultural; horticulture
Ibid. or	<u>Ibidem</u> (L.), in the same place
Idem	
incog.	incognito
incor.	incorporated
indef.	indefinite
in loc. cit.	<u>in loco citato</u> (L.), in the place cited

insp.	inspector
Inst.	institute(ion)
intro. or	introduction
introd.	
in trans.	<u>in transitu</u> (L.), on the way, in transit
inv.	invoice
Jun.	June; Junior
Jap.	Japanese; Japan
kil.	kilogram; kilometer
Kr (chemical)	krypton
kw.	kilowatt
kg.	kilogram
lat.	latitude
Lat. or L.	Latin
log.	logarithm
Lond.	London
Ltd.	Limited
Mass.	Massachussetts
Matt.	Matthew
max.	maximum
min.	minimum
obs.	obselete
Oxf.	Oxford
op	opus
p.	page
part.	participle
phil.	philosophy
Pac.	Pacific
Pres.	president

pant	pantaloons
para	paragraph
polio	poliomyelitis
pop	popular
pram	perambulator
prefab	prefabricated house
prep	preparation
prof	professional
prom	promenade concert
pub	public house
ref	reference
Rev.	Reverend
Scot	Scotch; Scottish; Scotland
spec.	speculation
Script	Scripture
St.	street; Saint; strait
stereo	stereotype
super	superfine
tech.	technical
Test.	Testament
taxi	taximeter cab
vocab.	vocabulary
vulg.	vulgar; vulgarly
vet.	veterinary; veterinarian
Wed.	Wednesday
zoo	zoological garden

2.2. Other types of shortenings:

2. 2a. Nursery Words

Shortenings include childish words most often used in nursery rhymes such as:

mum	mummy
sis	sister
hanky	handkerchief
pinny	pinfore
tummy	stomach
dad	daddy
grandma	grandmother
grandpa	grandfather

There are shortenings of a similar type which are also common in everyday speech:

telly	television
undies	underwear

2.2b. Contracted Forms

Shortenings also include contracted forms of to be and auxiliaries and a rather different type of contracted form such as gds for goods. The contracted forms of to be and auxiliaries are normally used in informal writing and in spoken English.

examples:

isn't	is not
I'd	I would; I had; I should
aren't	are not
he'll	he will; he shall
let's	let us
I'm	I am
she's	she is
they've	they have
shan't	shall not
won't	will not
rpt.	report
lv.	leave

2.2c. Nicknames can be categorized as shortenings as well:

Fred	Frederick
Will	William
Tom	Thomas
Dan	Daniel
Jim	James
Vic	Victoria
Doll	Dorothy

Often, the ending y is added

Fred	Freddy	Tom	Tommy
Will	Willy	Jim	Jimmy
Dan	Danny	Vic	Vicky

2.2d.

There are shortenings with apostrophes which are most often used in songs, poetry and conversational written English.

fishin'	fishing
see 'im	see him
doin'	doing

3. Blends

A blend is a new word formed by blending the sounds and combining the meanings of two or more words. A blend or portmanteau word is a kind of compound which is commonly formed (in the case of two words) by combining the initial part of the first word and the last part of the second word.

Blends are not found in great number in English, some of the most common are in the examples below:

brunch	breakfast and lunch
motel	motorists' hotel
transistor	transfer resistor
smog	smoke and fog
teleporter	television reporter
Eurasian	European and Asian
Americanadian	American and Canadian

Chapter II : Analysis of acronyms

A. The Formation

A.1.

Acronyms are normally formed from the first letters of the words.

Examples:	SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organization
	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
	NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
	P.M.	Prime Minister
	M.A.	Master of Arts
	p.t.o.	please turn over

A.2.

There are, however, some acronyms which are formed by combining the initial letters or parts of a series of words.

BENELUX	Belgium Netherlands and Luxembourg
radar	radio detecting and ranging
DORA	Defence of the Realm Act

A.3.

Attention may be called to the sequence of initials. If the sequence of initials does not run counter to the principles of syllable construction in English and hence the combination of initials can be pronounced as words, the acronyms resulted will tend to have a strong interpenetration of elements. (i.e., UNESCO, SEATO, NASA, ASEAN, UNO etc).

In other cases, the initials are given their alphabetic values such as in B.B.C., D.D.T., P.M., I.Q., TV., etc.¹ If this is the case, the interpenetration of the elements will tend to be somewhat weaker.

B. The use of periods and capitalization

B.1.

There are variations in the use of periods and capitalization of acronyms. In the case of well known organizations which are usually recognized by their initials rather than by their full names, there is a wide practice of omitting the periods especially in informal writing. In formal writing, the periods are normally inserted.²

BBC	or	B.B.C.
GPO		G.P.O.
FBI		F.B.I.

In the case of the acronyms of well known organizations where it has become the common practice to pronounce the initials as a word (see A.3.), no periods are normally used.³

¹ See R.W. Zandvoort, A Handbook of English Grammar, E.L.B.S. and Longman, London, 1972, pp. 324 - 5

² F.T. Wood, Current English Usage, E.L.B.S. and Macmillan, London, 1976, p. 3

³ Ibid., p. 3

In the case of capitalization, there are variations in the use of capital letters for some acronyms as well. The following acronyms can be used in both ways:

p.t.o.	or	P.T.O.	
a.m.		A.M.	<u>ante meridiem</u> (L.), before noon
p.m.		P.M.	<u>post meridiem</u> (L.), after noon
c.o.d.		C.O.D.	cash on delivery

Acronyms of academic degrees, however, should always be written in capital letters and are used with periods.

B.A.	Bachelor of Arts
M.A.	Master of Arts
M.D.	Medical Doctor
Ph. D.	<u>Philosophiae Doctor</u> (L.), Doctor of Philosophy

B.2.

Some acronyms may appear even in more than two forms with regards to their capitalization and the use of periods. For example, miles per hour may appear in the following ways: ⁴

- a. Mph
- b. mph
- c. m.p.h.
- d. MPH

⁴ See Webster Collegiate Dictionary, G & C Merriam Company, Springfield, Massachusetts, p. 19 a

B.3.

Periods, when they are used, should be placed after each letter that stands for a full word, such as P.T.O., R.S.V.P. However, with combinations like MS. (manuscript), TV. (television), the period is required after the last letter only. ⁵ The first does not represent a separate word.

B.4.

Sometimes, the use of periods and capitalization is meant only as a distinguisher of one acronym to another which is similar to it.

Examples:	a.a.	author's alteration
	A.A.	Anticraft Artillery
	ABC	Atomic Biologic and Chemical; American Broadcasting Corporation; Australian Broadcasting Corporation
	A.B.C.	Alcoholic Beverage Control; Argentina, Brazil and Chile
	a.c.	account current
	A.C.	<u>ante cibum</u> (L.), before meals (in prescriptions); Army Corps
	b.p.	bills payable; boiling point
	B.P.	Bachelor of Pharmacy; Bachelor of Philosophy; blood pressure

⁵ F.T. Wood, op. cit., pp. 2 - 3

CSC Civil Service Commission

C.S.C. Conspicuous Service Corps

c.w.o. cash with order

C.W.O. Chief Warrant Officer

d.o. delivery order

D.O. district officer;
 Doctor of Optometry;
 Doctor of Osteopathy;
 duty officer

i.q. indem quod (L.), the same as

I.Q. intelligence quotient (Psychology)

j.a. joint account

J.A. Joint Agent; Judge Advocate

l.c. letter of credit;
loco citato (L.), in the place cited

L.C. Library of Congress;
 Lord Chamberlain;
 Lord Chancellor

m.p. melting point

M.P. Member of Parliament;
 Military Police

n.s.f. not sufficient funds

NSF National Service Foundation

s.g. specific gravity

S.G. Solicitor General

p.a.	participle adjective; <u>per annum</u> (L.), by the year
PA	public address system
P.A.	power of attorney; press agent; purchasing agent
t.b.	torpedo boat; trial balance
T.B. (or TB)	tuberculosis
v.d.	various dates
V.D. (or VD)	Venereal Disease

B.5. Sometimes, a virgule is used instead:

a.c.	alternating current
a/c	account current
a.p.	additional premium; author's proof
a/p	account paid; account payable
B.F.	Bachelor of Finance; Bachelor of Forestry
B/F	brought forward (accounting)
C.A.	Central America; Chief Accountant; Commercial Agent; Consular Agent
C/A	capital account; cash account; current account
L.C.	Library of Congress
L/C	letter of credit

C. Variations with placement and choice of letters

There are variations which deal with placement and choice of letters in the case of several acronyms.

Examples:	KWH	kilowatt hour
	Kw. - hr.	
	kw - hr	
	Ph. D.	Doctor of Philosophy
	D. Ph.	
	M.A.	Master of Arts
	A.M. ⁶	
	B.A.	Bachelor of Arts
	A.B. ⁷	

D. Multi meanings of acronyms

Many acronyms stand for more than one name or expression.

A.A.A.	1. Agricultural Adjustment Administration
	2. Amateur Athletic Association
	3. American Automobile Association
A.B.A.	1. American Bar Association
	2. American Booksellers Association
	3. Associate in Business Administration

⁶ From Latin Artium Magister

⁷ From Latin Artium Baccalaureus

- B.C. 1. Bachelor of Chemistry
 2. Before Christ
- B.P. 1. Bachelor of Pharmacy
 2. Bachelor of Philosophy
 3. blood pressure
- C.G. 1. Captain of the Guard
 2. Centre of Gravity
 3. Coast Guard
 4. Consul General
- d.d. 1. days after date
 2. days after delivery
 3. delayed delivery
 4. demand draft
- G.D. 1. Grand Duchess
 2. Grand Duke
- G.O. 1. General Office
 2. General Order
- IPA 1. International Phonetic Alphabet
 2. International Phonetic Association
 3. International Press Association
- M.C. 1. Marine Corps
 2. Master Commandant
 3. Master of Ceremonies
 4. Medical Corps

- P.P. 1. past participle
 2. post paid
 3. pre paid
- R.C. 1. Reserve Corps
 2. Red Cross
 3. Roman Catholic
- T.D. 1. Territorial Decoration
 2. Traffic Director
 3. Treasury Department
- V.C. 1. Veterinary Corps
 2. Vice Chairman
 3. Vice Chancellor
 4. Vice Consul
 5. Viet Cong

E. Plurality of initials

E.1.

For the plurality of initials, the addition of a small s is advised.⁸

For example:

M.P.	M.P.s	Member of Parliament
J.P.	J.P.s	Justice of the Peace

⁸ F.T. Wood, op. cit., p. 3

E.2.

In the case of the genitive, for plural initials, only the apostrophe is added but not the s.⁹

an M.P.'s duties (singular)

J.P.s' qualifications (plural)



⁹ Ibid., p. 3

Chapter III : Analysis of shortenings

A. The Formation

Shortenings can be formed from:

A.1.

The initial parts of the words. This is most often the case and usually it is the first syllable although it can be the first and the second.

bra	brassiere
pub	public house
cab	cabriolet
deb	debutante
gymn	gymnasium
pram	perambulator
prep	preparation
demob	demobilize
homo	homosexual
para	paragraph
taxi	taximeter
incog	incognito
polio	poliomyelitis
prefab	prefabricated house
recap	recapitulate
pop	popular
tape	tape recorder
prof	professional
zoo	zoological garden

marg	margarine
mod	moderations
spec	speculation
op	opus
gen	general information
cox	coxswain

Those shortenings previously mentioned have been established so fully that some of them have become more widely used than their originals. For this reason, they are not written with periods. Many others, however, have not attained this status and they are normally used with periods:

Prof.	professor
Pres.	president
abbr.	abbreviation
abbrev.	
Bib.	Biblical
Bibl.	
Jan.	January
Capt.	Captain
Rep.	Republic
Rev.	Reverend
Subj.	Subject
Supp.	supplement
syn.	synonym
Univ.	University
corp.	corporation

A.2.

Some shortenings consist of one letter only, the initial letter of the word. A period is sometimes used except for shortenings of chemical symbols and Roman numerals.¹

a	<u>ante</u> (L.), before
a.	about; accepted; acre; ampere
A.	Academician; Academy; America; American; Artillery
A (chemical)	Argon
d.	dollar; dose
D	deuterium (chemical) 500 (Roman numeral)
D.	Deacon; Democrat; Duke; Dutch; Duchess
m.	meter; mile; minute; morning
M	1000 (Roman numeral)
M.	Master; Mark; Monday; Mountain

A.3.

Instead of the initial parts, some shortenings are formed from the medial parts of the words. Only a few words have their shortenings this way.

flu	influenza
Lisa	Elizabeth
fridge	refrigerator

¹ See N.H. Mager, S.K. Mager, Encyclopedic Dictionary of English Usage, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.Y., 1974. p. 3

A.4.

Some shortenings are formed from the last parts of the words.

cello	violoncello
phone	telephone
plane	airplane
bus	omnibus
Tina	Christina

A.5.

There are shortenings which undergo a change in spelling and some others may have the "hypocoristic" ending y affixed to them.

mike	microphone	telly	television
fridge	refrigerator	hanky	handkerchief
Lisa	Elizabeth	nighty	night gown
viz.	<u>videlicet</u> (L.), namely; that is to say		

A.6.

Nursery words which deal mostly with kinship and familiar terms for children can be included as shortenings as well.

mum	mummy	dad	daddy
pinny	pinfore		
tummy	stomach		
sis	sister		
grandpa	grandfather		
grandma	grandmother		

A.7.

Some shortenings have a free choice of letters. Although it cannot be generalized, shortenings of this kind usually consist of consonants:

rm.	room
rct.	recruit
Mgr.	<u>Monseigneur</u> (French)
mgr.	manager
Ltd.	Limited
sd.	sound
bbl.	barrel
dbl.	double
oz.	ounce

A.8.

Contracted forms of to be and auxiliaries can be regarded as shortenings as well. The apostrophe is used to replace the part of the word which is omitted. Some shortenings of this kind undergo a change in spelling.

I'm	I am
he's	he is
she's	she is
they're	they are; they were
you're	you are; you were.
he'd	he had; he would
they'll	they will; they shall
won't	will not
can't	cannot
shan't	shall not

A.9.

Some shortenings are created with apostrophes to indicate the omission of letters from the end or the beginning of the words indicating slovenly or affected pronunciation.

This is common in songs, poems and written colloquial conversations.

at 'ome	at home
fishin'	fishing
shootin'	shooting
huntin'	hunting
doin'	doing
o'er	over

A.10.

Nicknames which are the shortened forms of some forenames in English can be included as shortenings. In the case of some, the ending y is added to make them sound more affectionate.

Alex	Alexander
Bert	Albert
	Gilbert
	Herbert
	Hubert
Bart	Bartholomew
Cliff	Clifford
Greg	Gregory
Ken	Kenneth
Vic	Victoria
Vicky	
Jim / Jimmy	James

Dol	Dorothy
Dolly	
Fred	Freddy
Freddy	
Dan	Daniel
Danny	
Tom	Thomas
Tommy	
Gwen	Gwendolen
Mike	Michael
Mick	
Nick	Nicholas
Nicky	
Pat	Patrick; Patricia
Phil	Phillip
Ray	Raymond
Reg	Reginald
Sam	Samuel
Stan	Stanley
Steve	Stephen
Joe	Joseph
Matt	Matthew

Note:

Some nicknames undergo a significant change of spelling that in the case of some, the originals are difficult to trace.

Examples: Ted Edward
 Teddy

Meg Margaret

Madge

Maggie

Peg

Dick Richard

Bill William

B. The use of periods and capitalization

B.1.

Some shortenings have come to be accepted as colloquial words in their own right. With such shortenings, periods are normally omitted.

bra	brassiere
prep	preparatory school
demob	demobilize
prof	professional
incog	incognito
marg	margarine
mod	moderation
prefab	prefabricated house
spec	speculation
gen	general information
cox	coxswain

Among the most acceptable of this type of shortenings are the followings:

pub public house

taxi	taximeter cab
gymn	gymnasium
zoo	zoological garden
pop	popular
polio	poliomyelitis
lab	laboratory
phone	telephone
math	mathematics
photo	photograph
plane	airplane
exam	examination
homo	homosexual
pram	perambulator
bus	omnibus

B.2.

Some others have not yet attained this status and consequently they are used with periods.

Prof.	Professor
Pres.	President
abbr.	abbreviation
abbrev.	
Bib.	Biblical
Bibl.	
Capt.	Captain
Rev.	Reverend

B. 3.

Familiar names or nicknames are not used with periods except some where the full names are pronounced though the shortened forms are written must have the periods.²

Jim	James	Dol	Dorothy
Tom	Thomas	Vic	Victoria
<u>But:</u>			
Eliz.	Elizabeth	Wm.	William
Geo.	George	Thos.	Thomas

B.4.

Ordinal numbers are not written with any period.

1 st	first
2 nd	second
3 rd	third
4 th	fourth
13 th	thirteenth
8 th	eighth

B.5.

Shortenings of Roman numerals and chemical symbols are not used with any period. However, they should be written in capital letters. In the case of shortenings of chemical symbols which consist of more than one letter, only the first letter is capitalized.

² F.T. Wood, Current English Usage, E.L.B.S. and Macmillan, London, 1975, p. 2

I	1
V	5
X	10
C	100
D	500
L	50
M	1000

A	Argon
Ac	Actinium
Ba	Barium
Cr	Chromium
Di	Didymium
Fe	Ferrum
Os	Osmium

B.6.

Shortenings which consist of one letter may be used with or without a period except those of Roman numerals and chemical symbols which do not take any period and are capitalized. There is no rule over when the period should be used for this type of shortenings. It seems that there is no conviction upon this matter and that the period and capitalization in the case of some is meant as a distinguisher.

a	<u>ante</u> (L.), before
a.	about; acre; ampere
A.	Academy; A merica; Artillery
c	<u>circa</u> ; <u>circum</u> (L.), about; circle
c.	carat; cent; chapter
C	calorie; carbon

B.7.

In those rare cases where a genitive of a shortening has to be written, no period is used. Thus T.J. Jones & Co. will have the period after Co., but it will be omitted in Jones & Co's sausages. The apostrophe has already served to denote both the genitive and the omission.³

C. Variations in appearance

C.1.

Just like acronyms, some shortenings may have two or more variations in appearance:

abbreviation	abbr.	abbrev.
certificate	cert.	certif.
editor;	ed.	edit.
edition		
especially	esp.	espec.
possesive	pos.	poss.
technology	tech.	technol.
Susanna	Sue	
	Susy	
	Susie	

C.2.

Sometimes variations in shortenings deal with the choice of syllables.

Example: Ibidem 1. Ibid.
 2. Idem.

³ Ibid., p. 2

D. Shortenings of Latin borrowings

With regards to shortenings of Latin borrowings, when they consist of two words, care must be taken as to whether both of the words are shortened or only one.

D.1.

Both words are shortened:

<u>dram. pers.</u>	dramatis personae
<u>sec. art.</u>	secundum artem, according to the rule
<u>op. cit.</u>	opere citato, in the place cited
<u>abs. re.</u>	absente reo, the defendant being absent
<u>hab. corp.</u>	habeas corpus, you may have the body
<u>loc. cit.</u>	loco citato, in the place cited

D.2.

Only one of the words is actually shortened:

ad <u>lib.</u>	ad libitum, at pleasure
infra <u>dig.</u>	infra dignitum, beneath one's dignity
ad <u>init.</u>	ad initium, to or at the beginning
ad <u>fin.</u>	ad finem, to or at the end
ad <u>inf.</u>	ad infinitum, to infinity
et <u>al.</u>	et alibi, elsewhere
et <u>seq.</u>	et sequens, and the following
in <u>mem.</u>	in memoriam, in memory of
in <u>pr.</u>	in principio, in or at the beginning
per <u>pro.</u>	per procuracionem, by procuracion, by the agency of another

D.3.

Sometimes neither word is actually shortened and in this case they are not shortenings at all.

pro rata

sine die

E. Multi meanings of shortenings

As in the case of acronyms, some shortenings may have more than one meaning.

bar.	1. barometer
	2. barometric
	3. barrel
	4. barrister
bot.	1. botanical
	2. botanist
	3. botany
	4. bought
cat.	1. catalogue
	2. catechism
conj.	1. conjugation
	2. conjunction
	3. conjunctive
contr.	1. contracted
	2. contraction
	3. contractor
	4. contrary
	5. control

fem.	1. female
	2. feminine
hyp.	1. hypotenuse
	2. hypothesis
	3. hypothetical
intr.	1. intransitive
	2. introduce
	3. introductory
Jap.	1. Japan
	2. Japanese
lit.	1. liter
	2. literal
	3. literally
	4. literature
M.	1. Majesty
	2. Mark (German money)
	3. Master
	4. Marquis
	5. Marquess
	6. Monday
mon.	1. monastery
	2. monetary
pref.	1. preface
	2. prefatory
	3. preference
	4. preferred
	5. prefix

pres.	1. present
	2. pressure
	3. presumptive
sub.	1. subscription
	2. substitute
	3. suburb
	4. suburban
	5. subway
tel.	1. telegram
	2. telegraph
	3. telephone
trans.	1. transactions
	2. transfer
	3. transformer
	4. transitive
	5. translation
	6. transparent
	7. transportation

F. Plurality of shortenings

We can distinguish three ways of pluralizing shortenings:

F.1.

Most shortenings are pluralized with an addition of s to the last letter.

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
Examples:	bbl.	bbls.	barrel/s
	bk.	bks.	book/s
	bldg.	bldgs.	building/s

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
bx.	bxs.	box/es
ct.	cts.	cent/s; carat/s; certificate/s
dbl.	dbls.	double/s
doc.	docs.	document/s
ed.	eds.	edition/s
hr.	hrs.	hour/s
lb.	lbs.	pound/s (L. <u>libra</u>)
Mlle	Mlles	Mademoiselle/s (F.)
pc.	pcs.	piece/s; price/s
pk.	pks.	pack/s; park/s; peak/s; peck/s
pr.	prs.	pair/s; priest/s; pronoun/s
qr.	qrs.	quarter/s
qt.	qts.	quart/s
rm.	rms.	room/s
wk.	wks.	week/s
yr.	yrs.	year/s

F.2.

A few shortenings find their way of pluralization by doubling the letter.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
c.	cc.	chapter/s
p.	pp.	page/s
gt.	gtt.	drop/s (L. <u>guttae</u>)
l.	ll.	line/s

F.3.

Some shortenings have the same form in the plural; others may have an _s ending or have the same form in the plural.

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
tbs.	tbs.	tablespoon/s
bus.	bus.	bushel/s
in.	in. or ins.	inch/es
oz.	oz. or ozs.	ounce/s
fr.	fr. or frs.	franc/s; fragment/s

Note:

Exception is the case with the shortening Mr., which has the plural form of a new form altogether. It seems, however, that this is the only one in English.

Mr.	Mesrrs.	Mister/s
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Chapter IV : Analysis of blends

A.

A blend or portmanteau word ¹ is a new word formed by blending the sounds and combining the meanings of two or more words. A blend is a kind of compound in which two or more meanings are packed up into one word and which is usually formed, in the case of the combination of two words, by combining the initial part of the first word and the final part of the second word.

Blends can be divided into three categories:

A.1.

Some blends are made purely for the sake of forming a new word by packing up the meanings of two words.

Examples:

brunch	breakfast and lunch
motel	motorists' hotel
smog	smoke and fog
transistor	transfer resistor
trafficator	traffic indicator (a contrivance by which a motorist can indicate his intentions to other traffic)
subtopia	suburb utopia (a utopia consisting entirely of suburbs; suburban paradise, spread of small houses over countryside)

1

See H.W. Fowler, Modern English Usage, E.L.B.S. and Oxford University Press, London, 1974, p. 462

A.2.

Some words are deliberately coined for humorous effect. However, such words rarely become very common,² and consequently they have a low frequency of occurrence.

<u>Examples:</u>	mingy	mean and stingy
	slithy	lithe and slimy
	squarson	square and parson (a clergyman who is squire of his parish)
	Oxbridge	Oxford and Cambridge (the name of a fictitious university for a fictitious character)
	galumph	gallop triumphant
	chortle	snort chuckle

A.3.

Of a rather different type are formations like Americanadian (American and Canadian), Eurasian (European and Asian), Bakerloo (Baker Street and Waterloo Underground Railway). Here the interpenetration of the elements is less complete and they are made mostly for the sake of practical convenience only, not for humorous effect.³

B. The Formation

B.1.

Normally, a blend which is combined from two words is made by the combination of the initial part of the first word and the final part of the second word.

² R.W. Zandvoort, A Handbook of English Grammar, E.L.B.S. and Longman Group Ltd., London, 1972, p. 324

³ Ibid., p. 324

Examples:

brunch	breakfast and lunch
smog	smoke and fog
motel	motorists' hotel
transistor	transfer resistor
trafficator	traffic indicator
subtopia	suburb utopia
mingy	mean and stingy
squarson	square and parson
Oxbridge	Oxford and Cambridge
Americanadian	American Canadian
Eurasian	European and Asian

B.2.

Some blends, however, have a free choice of the parts of the words which are combined. There are only a few blends that belong to this category.

Examples:

galumph	gallop triumphant
moped	motor assisted pedal bicycle
chortle	snort and chuckle

B.3.

Blends are mostly nouns. However, there are blends which are adjectives and verbs as the followings:

mingy	mean and stingy	adjectives
slithy	lithe and slimy	
galumph	gallop triumphant	Verbs
chortle	snort chuckle	

Chapter V : Rules of English shortened forms

A. Some problems with the rules

A.1.

There is a recommendation in H.W. Fowler's Modern English Usage that no period should be used if the last letter of a shortening is written.¹ According to this recommendation, the shortening weight, for example should be written as wt not wt. (because the last letter is written); whereas botany should be written as bot. and not bot. In the same way, Captain should be written as Capt., but Corporal is written as Cpl (not Cpl.)

It seems, however, that common usage does not conform to this recommendation in most cases. As a matter of fact, the Oxford University Press which publishes Fowler's books does not follow it.²

A.2.

The application of the recommendation will give rise to a number of difficulties. For example, because most plural shortenings have the final s, if this rule is applied it will mean that periods will have to be used after log., prefab., mac., but not after their plurals (logs, prefabs, macs). This will then be very difficult to follow.

¹ H.W. Fowler, Modern English Usage, E.L.B.S. and Oxford University Press, London, 1972, p. 445

² F.T. Wood, Current English Usage, E.L.B.S. and Macmillan, London, 1976, p. 2

³ Ibid., p. 2

A.3.

With shortenings such as pub, pram, cab, taxi, zoo etc (which have come to be accepted as colloquial words in their own right) this rule is certainly not valid for otherwise they will have to be written with periods.

A.4.

In F.T. Wood's Current English Usage it is recommended that the shortenings exam and maths should be written with periods (viz. exam., maths.). However, it seems that those shortenings have recently become more and more accepted as words in their own right and are seldom written with a period. As a matter of fact, the shortening exam is much more widely used than its original examination especially in spoken English and informal writing.

B. Informal shortenings

Some shortenings are considered to be very informal and as such they are permissible in conversational English but are better not used in writing except of the informal kind. Among those are the followings: ⁴

fridge	refrigerator
meth	methyated spirit
vet	veterinary
chrysanth	chrysanthemum

⁴ Ibid., p.2

C.

The following shortenings, on the other hand, are considered as vulgarisms and they are better not used in either speech or writing. ⁵

advert	advertisement
on appro	on approval
Jap	Japanese
an invite	an invitation
a reccomend	a recommendation

⁵ Ibid., p. 2

Chapter VI : The teaching of English shortened forms

A. The aim of the teaching

A.1.

The aim of the teaching is mainly to make the students able to recognize the meaning of an English shortened form once the form is presented. Since the number of English shortened forms is undoubtedly large, the teacher has to make a list of shortened forms which are important for the students to know and exclude those which are not.

For Indonesian students, for example, the shortened form ASEAN is more important to know than ASDIC (Allied Submarine Detection Investigation Committee) and for that reason it is worth teaching; the shortened form brunch (breakfast and lunch) is more important to know than Oxbridge (Oxford and Cambridge). And in the case of some shortened forms which have multi meanings, only the necessary ones should be taught.

At the higher level, it is also expected that the students will be able to use some English shortened forms such as c/o (care of), a.m. (ante meridiem), N.B. (Nota Bene), p.m. (post meridiem), P.S., R.S.V.P., cc., etc which often appear in letter writing.

A.2.

When teaching almost any item of English grammar, the teacher usually starts his teaching with an explanation about the rules of formation. For example, the teaching of present continuous tense normally starts with the explanation of the formation:

S + TO BE + VERB ING

Similarly, the teaching of if clause starts with an explanation of the types and the formation of each.



Teaching shortened forms, on the other hand, should be done in a different way. If we follow the usual procedure of teaching a grammatical item, then the first thing that the teacher should do will be to explain the types of English shortened forms followed by an explanation of the "rules" of formation for each type. We will not, however, do this for the reason that the main aim is not so much as to make the students able to produce new shortened forms by themselves but only to make them able to recognize what the shortened forms stand for (or are composed of in the case of blends), or in other words, to know the meanings. In real communication, shortened forms appear without their meanings since they are used with a pre assumption that people who read them know the meanings. The aim of the teaching is therefore to make the students able to recognize the meanings immediately when they see the forms.

B. The form and the meaning

Teaching a word includes three things which have to go together. First, the teaching of the shape or form of the word. Then the teaching of the meaning, and the last step is the teaching of the association between the form and the meaning.¹

Teaching a shortened form in a way can also be seen in the same perspective. First, the teacher should teach the form of the shortened form, then the meaning (in this case what the shortened form stands for or is composed of in the case of a blend) and the association between the form and the meaning.

¹ ISP Nation, "Techniques for Teaching Vocabulary" in Forum, Elizabeth Sadler ed., Volume XII, Number 3, July - September 1974, p. 18

So, as the first step of teaching a shortened form, the teacher should make the students see the form. The form is best presented in a context viz., by using a defining sentence, a picture or a diagram. Once the students get familiar with the form, the teacher may then teach the meaning which he can do in many ways, for example by explanation, by asking the students to guess the meaning, etc.

The teaching of the association between the form and the meaning is given through exercises. The exercises can be given in several ways among which are multiple choice, unscrambling letters, completing and definition.

Since understanding some English shortened forms may require a high proficiency of vocabulary, the teaching is best presented at the advanced level, presumably at the S.M.A.

C. The presentation of the forms and the teaching of the meanings

The presentation of the form may be given by using a defining sentence, a picture or a diagram. Once the students see the form, the teaching of the meaning follows.

C.1. Giving contexts

The presentation of the forms of shortened forms by giving contexts is both effective and natural. A very common is that a foreign language learner may understand what a new word means without being told or looking it up in the dictionary but simply for the reason that he often sees the word presented in context,² i.e., a sentence.

Understanding shortened forms can also happen this way and as a matter of fact the teacher can make effective use of this way of learning in his teaching by presenting the shortened forms in contexts and then asks the students to guess the meanings.

² Mary Finocchario, Michael Bonomo, The Foreign Language Learner: A Guide for Teachers, Regent Publishing Co.Inc., New York, 1973, pp. 2 - 3

For advanced learners only, taking sentences from original written sources is recommended. Otherwise, the teacher has to pay attention on the level of the students and gives the sentences within the vocabulary level which is appropriate and with the complexity of the grammatical structure which is not too great.

The followings are several examples of the sentences which can be used for the presentation of shortened forms in contexts.

1. Watching telly is what she does every day.
2. At present a language lab become gradually more and more popular as an effective equipment for teaching a foreign language.
3. The U.S. has shown a strong reaction against the Soviet's military intervention in Afghanistan.
4. I do not like listening to VOA because of the programmes. I prefer BBC as a matter of fact.
5. I really do not think that you can compete with him.
He is a prof.
6. "Fred", she said. "Would you like a cig?"
7. Grandma may arrive at any time today.
8. Up to now there is still uncertainty over the existence of UFO.
9. I am not against pop music, but as a matter of fact I prefer classical music.
10. Richard Nation
c/o Jalan Gereja 3
Bandung
11. The Buddha was born in the capital city of Kapilavastu in the year of 623 B.C.

12. I got up very late this morning. I was late for breakfast already, so I had a brunch.
13. Would you be so kind as to pay cash? We could not send you the books on C.O.D. term anymore.
14. N.B. : Please remember me to your father.
15. There will be a meeting between ASEAN and Vietnam later this month.
16. Borobudur was built in the year of 800 A.D.
17. What about having some beer? There is a pub nearby.
18. I can't hear anything. The mike does not work.
19. "Dad", he asked, "Can I use the car?"
20. He is in the gymn now.

The procedure of teaching

First of all, the teacher writes the shortened form in a sentence as in the examples above. Only one sentence is presented every time in order to enable the students concentrate on one item only. Once the students see the sentence, the teacher may then asks one of them to guess the meaning. If the first student fails to give the correct answer, the teacher may then ask another student.

Meanwhile, the teacher may give some "hints" of the meaning which he can do by giving some explanatory sentences. For example, explaining the meaning of the shortened form "telly", the teacher may say:

It is a kind of a radio.

It normally has an antenna.

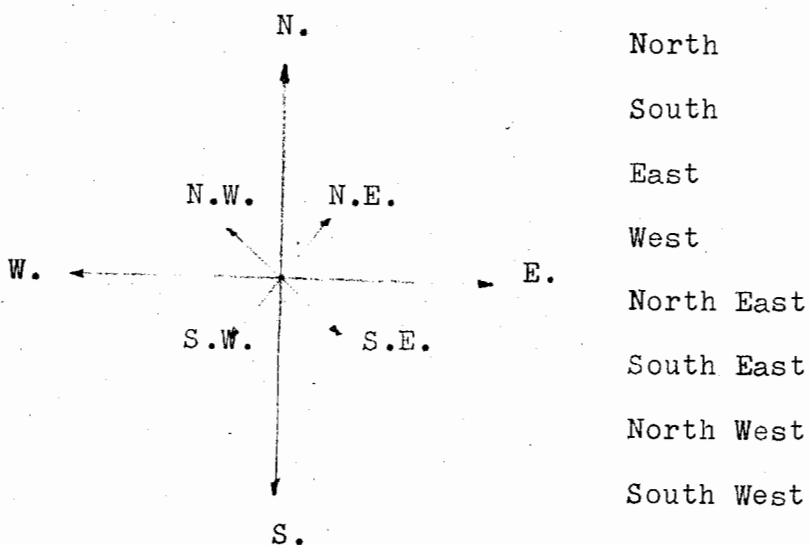
etc.

C.2. Giving pictures and diagrams

The presentation of the forms can also be given by using a picture or a diagram. Advanced learners may not find it difficult to get the meanings of abstract concepts. However, for teaching students of lower level, the presentation of pictures or diagrams may prove to be very helpful and it may interest the students to find the meanings of the shortened forms which are presented.

2.1.

The presentation of the forms of shortened forms of direction, for example, can be done by using the diagram below:



N. =

S. =

E. =

W. =

N.E. =

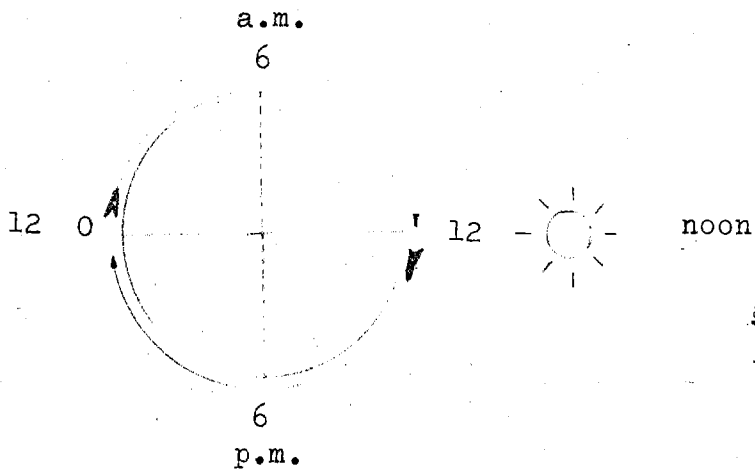
S.E. =

N.W. =

S.W. =

2.2.

The presentation of the forms of shortened forms of time can be done by these diagrams :



ante meridiem

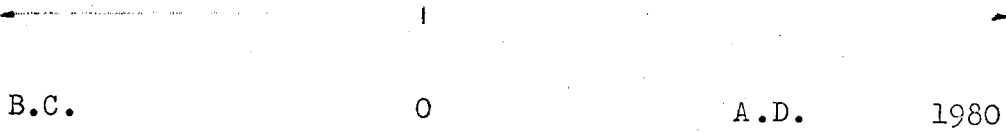
before noon

post meridiem

after noon

a.m. =

p.m. =



B.C. =

B.C. Before Christ

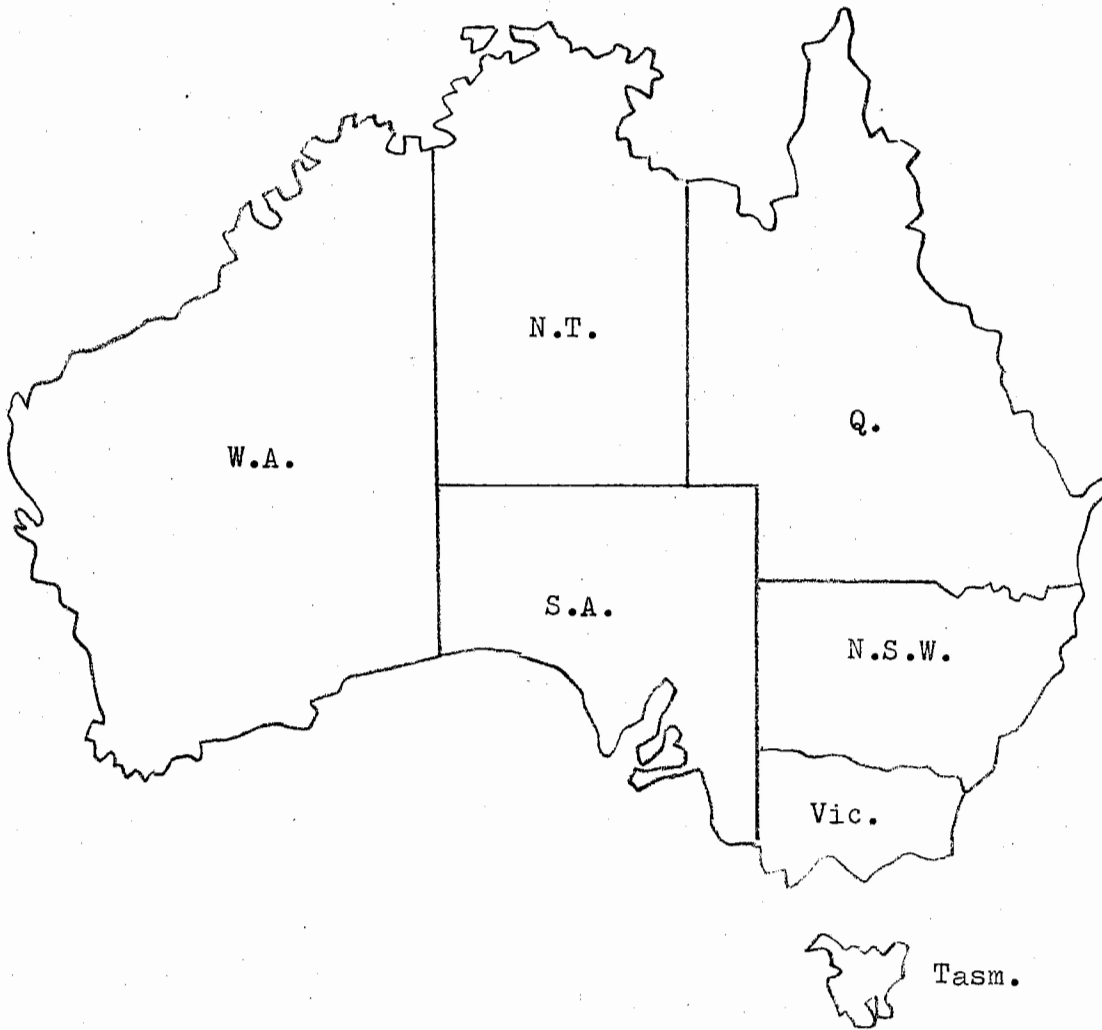
A.D. =

A.D. Anno Domini, After Christ

2.3.

A map can be used for presenting the forms of shortened forms of states or countries.

Austral.



Austral.

Australia

Tasm.

Tasmania

W.A.

Western Australia

N.T.

Northern Territory

Q.

Queensland

S.A.

South Australia

N.S.W.

New South Wales

Vic.

Victoria

D. The teaching of the association between the form and the meaning

The teaching of the association between the form and the meaning is given mainly through exercises. The exercises can be presented in several types such as the followings.

D.1. Multiple Choice

1. Could I order the books on C.O.D. term?
 - a. Cash On Date
 - b. Cash On Delivery
 - c. Cash On Due time
2. P.T.O. to the next page.
 - a. Please Turn Over
 - b. Please Take Over
 - c. Please Try Over
3. What about having something to drink? There is a pub nearby.
 - a. public meeting
 - b. public house
 - c. public entertainment
4. What kind of pop music do you like?
 - a. population
 - b. popular
 - c. populace
5. You cannot compete with him. He is a prof.
 - a. profession
 - b. professional
 - c. Professor
6. He is working in the lab now.
 - a. labour
 - b. laboratory
 - c. label

D.2. Completing

1. I was late for breakfast already, so I had a (b r - n - h).
(breakfast and lunch)
2. Are you going to stay at a (m - t - l) during your trip?
(motorists' hotel)
3. What about some drink? There is a (p - -) nearby.
(public house)
4. Do you believe in the existence of (- - O)?
(Unidentified Flying Objects)
5. Language (l - -) has become increasingly popular these days.
(laboratory)
6. Could I subscribe the newspaper on (- O -) term?
(Cash On Delivery)
7. What about having something to eat in the (- - - e)?
(cafeteria)
8. There will be an open discussion between (- - E - -) and Vietnam
later this month.
(Association of South East Asian Nations)

D.3. Unscrambling letters

1. I was late for breakfast this morning, so I had a (n u b r h c).
(breakfast and lunch)
2. Are you going to stay at a (t l m o e) during your trip?
(motorists' hotel)
3. What about having something to drink? There is a (b p u) nearby.
(public house)
4. Do you believe in the existence of (F O U)?
(Unidentified Flying Objects)

5. Language (l b a) has become increasingly popular.
(laboratory)
6. What about having something to eat in the (e c a f)?
(cafeteria)
7. There will be an open discussion between (N S A N E) and Vietnam
later this month.
(Association of South East Asian Nations)
8. He hates watching (t l l e y).
(television)

D.4. Definition

There is a more "direct" type of exercise which is suitable for advanced learners only. This is given in the form of definition. When it is possible, the students may be asked to make a sample sentence for each of the shortened forms.

Give the meanings of these shortened forms (and make a sample sentence using each of them):

1. C.O.D.
2. c/o
3. brunch
4. ASEAN
5. N.B.
6. telly
7. cig
8. UFO
9. p.m.
10. motel

11. B.C.
12. pub
13. e.g.
14. a.m.
15. mike
16. lab
17. gymn
18. P.S.
19. esq.
20. pop

Conclusion

The analysis in this paper is preliminary in nature and hence it is open for further investigation and observation. The irony of shortened forms is that in spite of the fact that many of them have a high frequency of occurrence, they are very rarely discussed in the books of English grammar. This paper is intended to present a clearer picture on the nature of English shortened forms and it is hopefully expected that it might be of some help for the better understanding of their formation.

To understand the formation of English shortened forms should not be too difficult for Indonesian learners. The reason is that in Indonesian too the formation of shortened forms is not an unusual language phenomenon. We may trace, for example, the formation of acronyms in the Indonesian expressions such as KTP, WTS, STNK, PKI, SIM, ABRI, PDI, PPPK, RAPBN, KONI, KKN, NKK, BKK, BBM, PMI, PWI, TST, ALRI, AURI and a great many others. Shortenings can perhaps be traced in a few expressions such as P (pelacur) and M (mensturasi). Blends are best recognized in expressions such as wadam (wanita adam), or more recently waria (wanita pria), gongli (bagong lieur), gali (gerombolan anak liar), Golkar (Golongan Karya), pungli (pungutan liar), opstib (operasi tertib) and still many others. And just like in English, shortened forms in Indonesian appear in high frequency both in oral and written Indonesian.

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