

# Study on the Formation and Application of English Initialisms in the News Headlines Based on the Analysis of China Daily

Xue Bi

School of Foreign Languages, North China University of Water Resources and Electric Power, Henan, China

## Abstract

With the development of society, the use and spread of English Initialisms has become one of the fastest growing linguistic phenomena in English. At the same time, English Initialisms are increasingly used in news headlines. This paper mainly uses the sample method, and calculates the number of English initialisms appeared in the news headlines of 2021 November's China Daily to illustrate that news headlines use numerous English initialisms in every sheet and every field. Then this paper summarizes four ways of forming English initialisms. In the end, the paper analyses the reasons for the huge application of English initialisms, so as to help readers better understand English news headlines and provide reference for learning English initialisms in the future.

## Keywords

English initialisms; News headlines; Word formation; Principle of economy.

## 1. Introduction

With the development of Chinese social economy and the frequent international exchanges, English initialisms begin to increase. As a way of word formation, English initialisms are an effective way to simplify long words or phrases. Many English initialisms, such as NBA (National Basketball Association), WHO (World Health Organization), and COVID-19(Corona Virus Disease 2019), have been popularized by the media. At the same time, English initialisms often appear in English news headlines. It is worth noting that news headlines are different from other forms of expression in that they are concise and comprehensive, which coincides with the word-formation characteristics of English acronyms.

## 2. The Use of English Initialisms in News Headlines

English initialisms are emerging and spreading at an unprecedented speed and have become one of the fastest developing linguistic phenomena in English. In order to provide basic data support for this study, the author has established a database containing all news headlines on China Daily from November 1st to 30th ,2021. The examples mentioned in this paper are all taken from this database. In China, China Daily is the most representative and comprehensive official newspaper which is widely loved by the public. Therefore, it is typical and authoritative to analyze the formation and the reasons for the huge application of of English initialisms in news headlines of China Daily.

This study manually extracts English initialisms appearing in all news articles in all editions of China Daily from November 1st to 30th, 2021, converts the collected English acronyms into numbers, and then, through statistics, sorting and analysis, it is found that there are 108 English initialisms in nearly 700 English news headlines in November 2021 edition of China Daily. If the same English initialisms repeatedly appeared are counted, the number reaches 132 words, with an average of 5.5 words appearing every day. It shows that these English initialisms have become very common in news titles.

### 3. The Formation of English Initialisms

#### 3.1. English Initialisms Is Pronounced Vowels in Turn

Pronouncing vowels in turn may be called "letter marked words", such as IPR(Intellectual Property Rights), CIIE (China International Import Expo), WHO (World Health Organization), GRE (Graduate Record Examination), CPC(the Communist Party of China), WTO (World Trade Organization) and so on.

#### 3.2. Compound the First Letter and Pronounce It as An English Word

When these English initialisms are used, the meaning of the individual letters is often ignored. The BRIC acronym, for example, is not pronounced as [bi:,a:,ai,si:], but according to the rules of English, say it as a word ['brik], which is the same pronunciation as brick. The four letters represent four countries: Brazil, Russia, India and China. Another example is AsiaPacific Economic Cooperation, the acronym of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation as [ei,paik]. Similarly, NATO [' Neitou]

(North Atlantic Treaty Organization), AIDS [eidz] (AIDS), etc.

It is important to point out when English initialisms are read in alphabetical order sound, according to the pronunciation of English words to read, is based on whether the combination of letters can form English syllables.

#### 3.3. An Acronym at the Beginning Plus A Full Word

This kind of word can also be called "half English initials initialisms", used in English compound words or word groups. The English translation of electronic mail is: electronic mail, because the first word electronic is polysyllabic word, is not convenient for writing and oral communication, so people conventionally put "electronic mail" is shortened to e-mail. As you can see, most of these acronyms use the first letter of a word with another common word with a hyphen to separate. And there are many scholars will see "-" before the letter as a prefix. These acronyms are very productive. For example, e-bank and e-learning are derived from E-mail. And v-Day (Victory Day) derived from V-Sign (Victory Sign). Such aggregation of acronyms not only greatly enrich the vocabulary, but also can express different things with limited symbols, which conforms to the economic principle of language. Such acronyms are clear in meaning, easy to understand and widely recognized and accepted by the society.

#### 3.4. Compound the First Letter with A Number

These acronyms are most commonly used in sports, science and technology. Compared with F1(FIA Formula One World Championship), MP3 (Moving Picture Experts Group Audio Layer 3, dynamic image expert compression standard Audio Layer 3) and so on.

Because the full English name of some terms is composed of more than one English word, even if it is abbreviated by the initials, it is also lengthy and not easy to remember and communicate, so people simply prefixed numbers after the initials to avoid complexity. This kind of word formation is suitable for the electronic technology products and sports events with more levels. For example, people can understand the meanings of MP4 and MP5 by means of MP3. Through the meaning of F1, understand F3 (world formula 3 car race, according to the number of car cylinder is different from F1), F3000 (engine volume of 3000 liters of formula car race) also belong to motor sports.

## 4. The Reasons for the Huge Application of English Initialisms in the News Headlines

### 4.1. English Initialisms Conform to the Principle of Economy in Language

The principle of economy in language is also called the economy of language, or the economic law of language. Modern society has entered the era of information explosion, people emphasize fast rhythm and high efficiency and more concise. Acronyms are the best choice. Especially in recent years, the rapid development and wide application of computer technology, coupled with the international network to millions of households, with English abbreviations as the main body of computer language, almost dominated the world. Initialisms are easy to adopt in all languages because of their simplicity. With the rapid development of modern science and technology, a large number of words reflecting new things and new ideas have been produced. It is common in Chinese newspapers, and people with common sense understand what is going on. In order to save time and space, the media also adopted a large number of English abbreviations, which contributed to their popularization in Chinese society. It was Martin, a famous French linguist, who first put forward this term. He pointed out that people will intentionally or unintentionally arrange the consumption of power in speech activities in accordance with the economic law on the premise of ensuring the fulfillment of language communication functions. Martinez goes on to point out that, in addition to the principle of saving effort, the two main factors that make up language economy are the need for communication, which forces speakers to convey their own information while minimizing their mental and physical efforts. Other things being equal, language users tend to "simplify as much as possible" in order to reduce the "cost" and get the "best benefit". Some English initialisms than its Chinese translation term in the expression more in line with the economic principle of language, such as the RCEP than its Chinese translation term "regional comprehensive economic partnership agreements" short, then, to his own side of the province of the save Labour when the province space, some reporters in the Chinese newspapers directly using the source term, English initialisms.

Language has a tendency to simplify gradually. English initialisms are concise and easy to read because they can reduce the number of syllables in the word meaning. Although English initialisms are very simple in form, they contain rich connotations. Therefore, from the point of view of information transmission, it is better to convey people's thoughts and feelings quickly by using fewer English letters to convey complex prototype words than complex and cumbersome expressions. Many English initialisms have become popular words by convention. Their messages are not only accurate, but also fast and labor-saving, which further embodies the principle of economy.

### 4.2. The Characteristics of English Initialisms Meet the Needs of News Headlines

News headlines are the concentration and essence of news reports. As we all know, English news headlines have special linguistic features. An initialism is a shortened form of a word or phrase used to represent the form of a whole word or phrase. From the aspect of psychology and physiology, people are often inert when expressing their thoughts and feelings. The inclination is toward ellipsis. With the acceleration of the pace of life, people are more concise, convenient, fast, in terms of language expression, also shows a fast-paced style, there is an urgent need to shorten the expression and writing time. Therefore, the use of abbreviations and so on is particularly necessary. Because newspaper space is limited, English initialisms are often used in news headlines. Initialisms save space for news, attract attention and are easy to remember. As a form of word formation, English initialisms are an effective way to simplify long

words or phrases. It often appears in English news headlines. It has the advantages of saving space, reducing reading time and beautifying titles.

### 4.3. Meet the Communicative Needs of Language

Language is the most important tool for human communication. The need for communication is the root cause of language development. In the information society, the emergence of new areas of life brings forward new communication needs, which will lead to the "variant" of language. It is this "variant" of language that promotes language to play a broader communicative role. Moreover, from the perspective of the continuous development of language, many new expressions in language are the embodiment of the vitality and vitality of language.

### 4.4. China Has Actively Integrated Itself into Globalization

In order to realize the rapid development of the country, China has adopted the policy of opening to the outside world, strengthened its ties with other countries and integrated itself into the process of economic globalization. In the tide of economic globalization, China in many fields is in line with international standards, production technology, specifications, quality certification. For example, trade rules are in line with international gradually, in the process of China in various fields of production and life of increasing in the number of English loanwords, as the world's science and technology, economic exchange carrier of English words and English acronyms in the middle of Chinese mass media.

## 5. Conclusion

At present, it is an indisputable fact that English initialisms are widely used in news headlines. The reasons why English initialisms are used in news headlines are as follows. First, English initialisms conform to the "economic principles" of language. Second, the characteristics of English initialisms meet the needs of news headlines. Third, initialisms meet the communicative needs of language. Fourth, China has actively integrated itself into globalization. It is helpful for us to better understand English news headlines, and also provides reference for learning English acronyms in the future.

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