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ABBREVIATION NOUN PHRASES AT THE INTERSECTION OF ABBREVIATION AND SYNTACTIC MOTIVATIONS¹

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study is to explore various types of noun phrases that contain abbreviations and to describe their functions in communication. Combining the abbreviation and non-abbreviated lexeme into one unit might be driven by different reasons that will be explained later.

1.1. THEORY OF LEXICAL MOTIVATION

The present research is rooted in the theory of lexical motivation introduced to Slovak linguistics by J. Furdík (2008) and later developed by his student, M. Ološtiak (2011) who posthumously published Furdík's conception in a seminal monograph *Teória motivácie v lexikálnej zásobe* ("Theory of Motivation in a Lexicon"; 2008). Hence there is a similarity between Ferdinand de Saussure and his student Charles Bally, who published Saussure's most influential work, on the one hand; and J. Furdík and his student M. Ološtiak on the other. Yet, at the same time there is also a major difference between these two works: while F. de Saussure believed that language sign is arbitrary, according to J. Furdík "a cru-

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cial role in the lexicon is played by motivation and each lexeme can be considered motivated" (Ološtiak 2011: 334).

As a result, "[a]ccording to a theory under discussion, each lexical unit is considered motivated due to its relation to other lexical units as well as to extralinguistic entities such as time, space, evaluation, society, etc." (Ološtiak, 2015: 1015). There exists a **motivation pair** that consists of a **motivating unit** (in Slovak **motivant**) and a **motivated unit** (in Slovak **motivát**). All components of the lexicon can be described by means of the particular type of motivation and its cooperation with other types. The theory works with two types of motivation: basic and pragmatic. For a detailed typology and hierarchy of lexical motivation see Furdík (2008), Ološtiak (2011: 27–52). In our paper, we focus on the cooperation of syntactic motivation that belongs to specific motivations; abbreviation motivation being a contact type of motivation (Furdík 2008).

1.2. ABBREVIATION AND ABBREVIATION MOTIVATION

Our paper concentrates on the participation of abbreviations in noun phrases or multiword units. The aforementioned theory of lexical motivation perceives abbreviations as specific units with the status of a lexeme, being, thus, an integral part of the lexicon. Each abbreviation (regardless of its type²) is, according to this theory, considered an autonomous lexeme (Ološtiak, 2011: 232–234; Gavurová, 2013: 48–51).

It is believed that, in forming an abbreviation, **abbreviation motivation** takes place, which assumes the existence of both a motivating unit as well as a motivated unit, i.e. abbreviation itself. At the same time "the best motivating units for abbreviations are **syntactically motivated** (multiword) units" (Ološtiak 2011: 253, emphasis added); namely a noun phrase (NP) or a multiword unit, e.g. *value added tax* → *VAT*.

Therefore, there is an intersection between the two, abbreviation motivation and syntactic motivations, manifested on four levels:

1. The motivating unit of an abbreviation is very often syntactically motivated, either as a multiword unit or a simple noun phrase: *public relations* → *PR*.

² The most complete and complex typology of abbreviations introduced to Czechoslovak linguistics by J. Hrbáček (1979).

2. Syntactic motivation is present in a congruence of abbreviation in both a genus and numerus in a noun phrase (*úspešná UEFA (f.) – successful UEFA*). In Slovak the abbreviation *UEFA* is perceived as a feminine noun because of the last letter *A* that is reminiscent of the reflexive suffix *-a*, a typical ending of Slovak feminine nouns; hence, following the category of congruence, the adjective (*úspešný – successful*) has a feminine form (*úspešná*).

The same refers to congruence in number and gender in a Slovak predicate phrase (*NATO (n.) prijalo – NATO accepted*) because the abbreviation *NATO* is perceived in Slovak as of neuter gender according to the *o*-ending, typical for Slovak neuters; hence the congruent verb form, *prijalo*.

3. The third facet of cooperation of syntactic and abbreviation motivation is multiword abbreviations consisting of two single abbreviations that reflect the existence of a superordinate and subordinate element (institution, organization) in a motivating unit/referent (Ološtiak 2011: 254), e.g. *FF PU (Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity – Faculty of Arts, University of Prešov)*. In such abbreviations, syntactic motivation is present between the two separate elements (*FF* and *PU*).

4. Abbreviation often becomes a part of a noun phrase (*PIN number, ABS system*) or a multiword unit (*PR agency, UN forces*), the facet of cooperation our paper is focused on.

For the purpose of terminological clarity, it might be useful to quote the classification of abbreviations we work with (Gavurová 2013: 25–27):

1. Graphical abbreviations: occur only in written form, pronounced as a motivating word; *p – pán (Mr. – Mister)*;
2. Graphical-phonological abbreviations: occur in both written and spoken communication;
 - 2.1. Initial abbreviation: formed of initial components of the motivating unit only; pronounced in Slovak as **individual syllables**, e.g. *HDP ← hrubý domáci product – “gross domestic product (GDP)”* pronounced in Slovak as [ha: de: pe:];
 - 2.2. Initial abbreviational word: formed of **initial** components only, pronounced in Slovak as a **word**: *NATO* [nato];
 - 2.3. Abbreviational word: formed of **syllable** components of the motivating unit: *Rajo* (← *racionálny jogurt*); *Osram* (← *Osmium + wolfram*);

- 2.4. Abbreviated³ word (truncation): *repre* (← *reprezentácia* – “national team”);
- 2.5. Derivational abbreviational word: *patanatka* (← *patologická anatómia* – “pathological anatomy”);
- 2.6. Derivational abbreviated word: *počko* (← *počasie* – “weather”).

1.2. COMPOUNDS, MULTIWORD UNITS AND NOUN PHRASES

It has to be stressed at the beginning that Slovak linguistics distinguishes between units formed by word-formation processes, i.e. **compounds**, and syntactically structured **multiword units**. The distinction is based on phonological criterion – one-word units are considered compounds, while units composed of more than one word are perceived as multi-word units (Ološtiak – Ivanová 2015: 155). This strictly formal criterion means that compounds are spelled as one word (e.g. *hifiveža* – ‘hifi tower’), with a hyphen (*hifi-veža*), or with a combining morpheme *o/e/i* (*farb-o-slepý* – “colour-blind”). A multi-word unit is spelled as two or more separate words (*hifi veža*). While in some languages (e.g. German, Hungarian, Finnish and Turkish) there is a tendency towards forming one-word compounds, for Slavonic languages (including Slovak) it is typical to apply lexicalization of syntactic constructions (Furdík 2008: 50). On the other hand, in

English linguistics, a compound consists of one or more elements, including content and/or structure words and [...] it can have the form of one word composed of two one-syllable lexemes (e.g. *bedroom*), two or more separate words (e.g. *peanut butter* [...]), or a hyphenated expression (e.g. *forget-me-not*). Obviously, the structure is multi-word; however, the meaning is always rendered holistically, as a sum of the meanings of the constituents” (Bilá – Kačmárová 2016: 168).

Applying the Slovak linguistic approach to expressions with abbreviation, analytical constructions with abbreviations like *PR manager*, *PPP projekt* are considered to be multi-word units (hereafter also ‘MWU’), while synthetic forms (*PR-manager*, *PPP-projekt*) are compounds. This conception is in opposition to other languages, e.g., Spanish or German gram-

³ The terms *abbreviational* and *abbreviated* are used as the equivalents of the Slovak terms *skratkové* and *skrátené*, respectively.

mar where a criterion for a compound is not its analytical or synthetic form but rather the close relationship between its components (Trup 1999, Kontríková 2010).

Another distinction to be drawn here is between a **multiword unit** and a **noun phrase** that is based on several delimitation criteria elaborated extensively by Ološtiak – Ivanová (2015: 184–199). They include nomination value, statistical indicators, semantic transposition, equivalence with one-word naming units, specific involvement in paradigmatic relations, collocability and terminological value among others (op. cit.: 184). Based on those obligatory, defining criteria as well as non-defining ones, some of the following syntactic structures are considered to be noun phrases (hereafter also NP/NPs; see 2.1, 2.3, 2.4); some are treated as abbreviation multiword units (2.2).

2. ABBREVIATION NOUN PHRASE

When an abbreviation enters syntactic construction, new types of noun phrases are formed with higher cohesion. These range according to the character of their components and as the following table shows, they exist both in Slovak and in English. We distinguish between four types of abbreviation noun phrases (cf. Table 1).

TABLE 1. Abbreviation noun phrases

		English	Slovak
1.	Tautological noun phrases	<i>ISDN service (Integrated Services Digital Network)</i>	<i>služba ISDN</i>
2.	Abbreviation multi-word unit	<i>IT specialist, PR manager</i>	<i>IT špecialista, PR manažér</i>
3.	Semi-tautological noun phrases	<i>PIN code (Personal Identification Number); SIM card (Subscriber Identity Module)</i>	<i>PIN kód; SIM karta</i>
4.	Explicative noun phrase	<i>GPRS platform (General Packet Radio Service)</i>	<i>platforma GPRS</i>

2.1. TAUTOLOGICAL NOUN PHRASE (TAUTOLOGICAL NP)

We have named the first type of the analysed abbreviation NPs **tautological noun phrase** since tautology is defined as a “definition in which the defining contains the aspect of the defined” (*Krátky slovník slovenského jazyka*, 2003). It is because a tautological NP contains a non-abbreviated lexeme that is at the same time part of a motivating unit of abbreviation and is more or less redundant in relation to the abbreviation itself.

A tautological NP is usually formed by an abbreviation and a component (usually a superordinate noun) of the motivating unit, e.g. *PIN number*, *SAT test* (*Scholastic Aptitude Test*), *dohoda NAFTA* (*North American Free Trade Agreement*). We call such a noun phrase tautological because there is redundancy of the components and the information in it; yet the redundant components accompany the abbreviation intentionally.

Let us illustrate the forming of a tautological NP in the construction *PIN number*. In our classification of abbreviations forming a typological underpinning of our analysis, *PIN* is considered to be an initial abbreviational word (similar in nature to an acronym), i.e. it is formed of the initials of the original phrase only, but pronounced as a word [pɪn], not by spelling individual initials *[pɪ-ai-en] as initial abbreviations would be (*IBM* [ai-brɪ-em]). The component *number* in the noun phrase *PIN number* is redundant as far as the economy of expression is concerned; yet its use makes decoding of the speech easier and indicates the meaning of the abbreviation: *PIN* is a *number*. Because of this redundancy, we label the noun phrase tautological.

The same process with the identical intention, function, and similar result occurs in the forming in Slovak of the tautological noun phrases *PIN číslo* or *číslo PIN*⁴. While in English the abbreviation tends to precede a non-abbreviated word in such a noun phrase (*PIN number*), in Slovak it might either precede (*PIN číslo*) or follow it (*číslo PIN*). It is questionable whether Slovak as a target language forms such tautological noun phrases under the influence of the source English from which abbreviations are often imported (*PIN* among them) or whether the formation

⁴ Occurrence in Slovak national corpus: *PIN číslo* (126 hits) – *číslo PIN* (33 hits). Furthermore, a semi-tautological NP (see chapter 2.3) with the abbreviation *PIN* is extensively used: *PIN kód/kód PIN*. Occurrence in the Slovak national corpus: *PIN kód* (1336 hits) – *kód PIN* (39 hits).

of tautological noun phrases is a common language strategy used to describe the meaning of a less known abbreviation⁵. Nevertheless, several equivalent tautological NPs can be found in both English and Slovak, e.g.:

TABLE 2. Equivalent English and Slovak tautological noun-phrases

English tautological NP	Equivalent Slovak tautological NP
<i>OPEC countries</i> (<i>Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries</i>)	<i>krajiny OPEC</i> (<i>Organizácia krajín vyvážajúcich ropu</i>)
<i>ICT technologies</i> (<i>Information and Communication Technologies</i>)	<i>IKT technológie</i> (<i>Informačné a komunikačné technológie</i>)
<i>RPG games</i> (<i>role-playing games</i>)	<i>RPG hry</i>
<i>HTML language</i> (<i>Hypertext Markup Language</i>)	<i>jazyk HTML/HTML jazyk</i>

2.1.1. FUNCTIONS OF A TAUTOLOGICAL NOUN-PHRASE

The analysis of contexts with tautological noun phrases shows that a tautological noun phrase as a means of expression has several functions that are not isolated but cooperate in communication:

a) **Semantic function:** it should be highlighted that a tautological NP decreases the perception effort as it indicates the meaning of an abbreviation and enables its comprehension. It is a certain symbiosis: a redundant, tautological non-abbreviated noun in a noun phrase mediates the meaning of an abbreviation; while the abbreviation enables both the identification of a referent and terminological consistency even if the motivating unit (or its equivalent in the target language) might vary or is unknown. On the other hand, such constructions are counterproductive in terms of the economy of expression which is the impetus of an abbreviation process – because they contain not only the abbreviation but also part of its motivating unit.

From the syntactic point of view, accompanying the abbreviation with the motivating unit is an “equating parenthesis” (Bajžíková 1996) that

⁵ The same strategy is applied in Czech: *MMS zpráva, syndrom AIDS, systém GSM* (Kochová 2003: 163); in English (*GSM system*), French (*langage HTML*), Italian (*sistema GSM*), Polish (*system GSM, język HTML, płyta CD*), Russian (*GSM-сущема*), Spanish (*El sistema GSM*).

is used with less known Slovak or imported abbreviations: “Trojdňové rozhovory medzi predstaviteľmi ozbrojených síl SR a delegáciou NATO s **SHAPE** (Hlavné veliteľstvo spojených síl v Európe)”. As Slovak speakers are well familiar with the abbreviation *NATO* in the quoted construction, it is used without additional explanatory construction. The abbreviation *SHAPE* might not be clear enough, though: therefore, the Slovak equivalent of the motivating unit is quoted in brackets as well.

The highest level of redundancy occurs in contexts where all three participants of the abbreviation process are present, i.e., motivating unit, abbreviation and the Slovak equivalent of the motivating unit, e.g., “Elektronický stabilizačný program (Electronic Stability Programme – ESP) s trakčnou kontrolou a s brzdoým asistentom (Emergency Brake Assist EBA)”. Redundant as it might seem, each component of such an utterance has its role: The Slovak equivalent of the motivating unit should guarantee the identification of the meaning of the abbreviation, while both the original English motivating unit and abbreviation contribute to terminological consistency because the Slovak equivalent might be translated with shifts.

Nevertheless, sometimes even the redundant noun used in a tautological noun phrase might not indicate the meaning of the abbreviation sufficiently, as, e.g., the word *protocol* in the noun phrase *WAP protocol* (Wireless Application Protocol) where, for many language users, the word is not a sufficient clue to the meaning of the abbreviation.

b) **Inflectional function:** a tautological NP is used not only with less frequent, imported, or new abbreviations that language users might not be so familiar with, but also with frequent abbreviations. In that case, the function of such a tautological NP is to incorporate an abbreviation into the syntactic structure of inflectional language. In Slovak, certain types of abbreviations cannot express the grammatical category of case in their forms and therefore they stay indeclinable: *v SMS, s SMS (in an SMS, with an SMS)*.

To integrate such abbreviations into a sentence one option is to use a “**flectivization suffix**”, e.g. *-ka, -ko* (Furdík 1993: 113) that produces **stylistically marked forms** such as *SMS-ka, PINko* (Gavurová 2013: 144–152). Yet such a stylistically marked form is rather colloquial and therefore not suitable for all registers and styles.

Another option is to use a tautological noun with an initial abbreviation, e.g. *SMS + správa → SMS správa* because in contrast to *SMS* the

noun *správa* can be declined: *s SMS správou, od SMS správy*. A tautological noun phrase helps to integrate the initial abbreviation into Slovak syntactic constructions without changing its form: *so správou SMS, v správe SMS*⁶. Again the tautological noun phrase might be as extensive as the motivating unit itself (*vo forme krátkej textovej správy SMS* – “in the form of a short text SMS message”), which is counterproductive to the initial impetus of forming the abbreviation.

A tautological NP is used not only with initial abbreviations but – as in the noun phrase *PIN number* – also with initial abbreviational words and abbreviational words (see taxonomy above) even though they have a structure that enables them to be pronounced as non-abbreviated lexical units and at the same time they may be declined, e.g.:

NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) → *do NAFTy/NAFT-y/Nafty* (“to NAFTA”);

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) → *z UNESCA, UNESCa, UNESC-A* (“from UNESCO”) etc.

The reason why the tautological phrase is used also with such abbreviations that can be pronounced as a word might lie in the fact that their original form can be altered in Slovak declension, in an unwanted way (*UNESCO* → *UNESCA, UNESCa, UNESC-A*). For this very reason the tautological NP is used so the inflection is transferred to the tautological words and the form of abbreviation is untouched: *do organizácie UNESCO (to the UNESCO organization), s dohodou NAFTA* (“with the NAFTA agreement”). As the examples suggest, tautological NP is used in Slovak mostly with abbreviations that have a vowel ending, but not only with these.

c) **Identification and terminological function:** there are several reasons for using both counterparts of the abbreviation motivational pair, i.e. (part of) a motivating unit and abbreviation at once, e.g. *protiblokovací systém ABS*. Abbreviation in tautological NP not only has the function of abbreviating the utterance but also what is mostly an **identification function** – it secures matching the correct referent even if the motivating unit has a variable form: *ABS – antiblokovací systém (Antiblockier-*

⁶ As a matter of fact, with this imported abbreviation, it is not the head noun *service/služba* of the motivating unit (*Short message service – Služba krátkej textovej správy*) which is used in the Slovak tautological NP but a different component: *správa (message)*. The reason for that might lie in the fact that the meaning of “message” is more important and frequent in communication than the meaning of “service”.

system/Antibrake system/Antiskid Brake System/Anti-lock Braking System). Motivating unit, on the other hand, helps to avoid the pause in perception and identification of a potentially unknown abbreviation. Tautological NP as a whole also has a **terminological function** as it widens the register of the particular field.

The identification function of abbreviation is dominant in extensive tautologies as e.g. *bývalí príslušníci Kráľovského anglického letectva RAF* (“ex-members of the Royal Air-force – RAF”) where the abbreviation *RAF* works rather as a “trademark” or “brand”. This is even more so if the abbreviation is placed in the middle of a noun phrase: *Elektrický posilňovač (EPAS) riadenia automobilu*. Manifold functionality makes the tautological NP a valuable means of expression even if with a higher level of redundancy.

2.2. ABBREVIATION MULTI-WORD UNIT (AMWU)

Abbreviation multi-word units such as *SMS notifikácia/SMS notification* or *USB port* represent another type of abbreviation phrase that differs from the tautological noun phrase. The non-abbreviated component of AMWU is neither part of the motivating unit (as it is in a tautological noun phrase) nor it is synonymous with it (as in semi-tautological and explication noun phrases, cf. here chapters 2.3 a 2.4). Sometimes even the lexicalized pronunciation of the abbreviation can become part of the AMWU in Slovak: *PR* [pi:-a:(r)] → *píár manažér*, “PR manager”).

It must be underscored here that AMWU has several functions in communication as well:

- a) **Economic function:** the greater the extent of the motivating unit of the abbreviation, the greater the economy of expression. AMWU is a concise way of expressing complex semantic concepts.
- b) **Terminological function:** AMWU widens up communication registers of a particular field, when an exact abbreviation contributes to the terminological character of an AMWU and makes it much more concise, e.g.: *hifi súprava* (“hi-fi set”), *HD quality*, *GM food*, *IT specialist*, *PR department*.
- c) **Forming of lexical paradigms:** the advantage of the presence of abbreviation in a multiword unit lies in the fact that several similar or analogical terms can be formed using the same abbreviation (see Table 3).

TABLE 3. Lexical paradigms of abbreviation multiword units

abbreviation	English AMWU	Slovak AMWU
<i>USB</i>	<i>USB port, USB slot, USB tuner, USB cable</i>	<i>USB kľúč (USB key), konektor USB/USB konektor, USB kábel</i>
<i>SMS</i>	<i>SMS chat, SMS centre, SMS notification, SMS forum</i>	<i>SMS brána (SMS gateway), SMS paušál (SMS monthly fee), SMS roaming</i>
<i>GSM</i>	<i>GSM telephone, GSM zone, GSM number</i>	<i>GSM telefón, GSM pásmo, GSM číslo, GSM alarm, GSM network</i>
<i>IT</i>	<i>IT manager, IT expert</i>	<i>IT manažér, IT špecialista</i>
<i>CD</i>	<i>CD player, CD burner</i>	<i>CD prehrávač, CD napalovačka</i>

As the above quoted examples show, the imported abbreviations in an AMWU tend to associate with other imported lexemes in noun phrases, e.g. *VIP eventy (VIP events)*. Some abbreviations form synonymous AMWUs, e.g. *DVD* → *DVD vypalovacia mechanika, DVD napalovačka* (“DVD burner”) that differ only in their stylistic value.

In Slovak, there is the option to use abbreviation in such multiword units as a postponed (*karta ISDN, centrum SMS*) or anteposed attribute (*ISDN karta, SMS centrum*). The official recommendation of linguists is to use the word order with postponed abbreviation that is “typical for Slovak”, i.e. *telegram SMS, centrum SMS* (Mislovičová 2000: 207). Nevertheless, language users prefer the anteposed position (*SMS centrum, ISDN karta, IR port, www server*)⁷.

Speaking of the position of abbreviation within an AMWU, there are several reasons for using an anteposed abbreviation:

1. the influence of analytical English is among them (*UK coverage, EMU policy, WAP phone, GPRS bundles*).

2. When the abbreviation is used in the anteposed position it stays undeclined; therefore Czech lexicographic theory⁸ regards it as an abbreviation with the status of an **adjective**. From the noun abbreviation *GPS*¹

⁷ Occurrence in Slovak national corpus, e.g.: *SMS centrum* (104 hits) – *centrum SMS* (4 hits).

⁸ Czech neological dictionary *Nová slova v češtině II* (Martincová et al. 2004).

(*Global Positioning System*) the **adjective** abbreviation GPS² is formed and used in a noun phrase *GPS navigácia* (*GPS navigation*); similarly:

PR¹ (*Public Relations*, **noun**) → PR² (**adj.**): *PR manager*, *PR department*;
 hi-fi¹ (*high fidelity*, **noun**) → hi-fi² (**adj.**): *hifi súprava*, *hifi veža*.

Such conversion of word class presupposes cooperation with another type of motivation – morphological (Ološtiak 2011: 254). However, other concepts and linguists consider the abbreviation only to be a noun with the “function” of an attribute⁹.

3. On top of that, anteposed abbreviation has better predispositions for the transformation to what is called a prefix (Horecký 2001: 269) or prefixoid (Furdík 2004: 106) in a compound: *PR manager* → **PR**-*manager*. Transformation of some types of abbreviation from independent lexical unit into prefix/prefixoid can also be observed in the gradual loss of the hyphen: *sci-fi film* → *scifi-film*/*scififilm*. Later, such a transformed abbreviation (*scifi*, *hifi*) is more liable to enter the word formation process in Slovak (*scifi* → *scifistický*, *scifista*, *scifiový*). Of course such an integration is not possible with initial abbreviation that can form a compound only by means of a hyphen (e.g. *IT-specialist*) in Slovak.

As a matter of fact, integration of the abbreviation into a multiword unit or a compound is a dynamic phenomenon and not a one-way process at all; but rather reciprocal: AMWU ↔ compound. Such fluctuation between both types of expression contradicts the aforementioned opinion that, for Slovak, the postposition of an abbreviation in AMWU is more natural (Mislovičová 2000: 207).

The reason for preference of anteposed abbreviation might also lie in the fact that when the abbreviation is used in a postposition it might resemble the Slovak genitive construction, e.g. in the following pair, *inštalácia ISDN* (“installation of ISDN”) as opposed to *technológia ISDN* (“ISDN technology”), only the second construction is an abbreviation noun phrase, the first one being a genitive construction. Postposition of the abbreviation is less frequent in both the AMWU (*skóre LOD/LOD Score*, *metóda HAT/HAT method*) and tautological noun phrases (*číslo PIN/PIN number*).

Yet another type of Slovak AMWU has an abbreviation as the head noun of a noun phrase, e.g. *komplementárna DNA* – *complementary DNA*, *mediátorová RNA* – *messenger RNA*; here the abbreviation represents

⁹ That is the concept of *Slovník súčasného slovenského jazyka* (2006, 2011).

a generic term (Bujalková 1992: 334) and the AMWU has a strong terminological function.

2.3. SEMI-TAUTOLOGICAL NOUN PHRASE (S-T NOUN PHRASE)

As stated above, the noun phrases *SMS message* on the one hand and *SMS notifikácia/SMS notification* on the other are of a different character. While *SMS message* is a tautological noun phrase, *SMS notification* is an abbreviation multi-word unit, because the noun *notification* is not a part of the motivating unit (*Short message service*). The noun phrase *SIM karta/SIM card* (*SIM – subscriber identity module*) is somewhere in between both types of noun phrase; it is neither a tautological noun phrase because the word *card* does not occur in the motivating unit; nor is it an AMWU because there is a certain semantic relationship between the motivating lexeme *module* and the word *card* accompanying the abbreviation. It is what we call a **semi-tautological noun phrase**. The higher level of semantic similarity between a semi-tautological noun and the head noun of a noun phrase is a criterion when distinguishing this type of noun phrase from explicative noun phrases (*system MARC*; see chapter 2.4). In a semi-tautological NP, the non-abbreviated word is synonymous with one of the words in the construction motivating the abbreviation, yet it is a different word: *SIM card* (*Subscriber Identity Module*). Therefore, we consider these noun phrases to be of semi-tautological nature.

2.3.1. FUNCTIONS OF SEMI-TAUTOLOGICAL NP

There are several reasons for using a semi-tautological NP which are at the same time functions of S-T noun phrases:

a) **Pragmatic function:** implementing the abbreviation to an S-T noun phrase increases communication prestige and gives the impression of the language user's competence, knowledge, and expertise in a particular field.

b) **Terminological function:** forming of specialised professional terminology. The semi-tautological word *card* in the noun phrase *SIM card* has a more narrow meaning than the word *module* of the motivating *Subscriber Identity Module*.

This is also obvious in another frequent Slovak semi-tautological noun phrase *PIN kód*, as the Slovak word *kód* is defined as a "set of

signs designed for the recording of information in an arranged way (letters, numbers etc.) and rules for their use" (*Veľký slovník cudzích slov*, 1997: 624). There is a close semantic relationship between the motivating noun *number* (*personal identification number – osobné identifikačné číslo*) and the semi-tautological noun *kód*.

A similar semi-tautological noun phrase is *PUK code* (*PUK – PIN Unlocking Key*); again there is a great similarity between the motivating word *key* and the semitautological word *code*.

c) **Semantic function**: describing the semantics of the abbreviation and of the motivating unit. In the S-T noun phrase *SIM karta*, the nouns *karta/card* were chosen because of their semantic similarity to the word *module*, as well as resemblance to a small card. The Slovak word *karta* is also present in the equivalent of the motivating unit: *SIM – subscriber identity module – "identifikačná karta zákazníka"*.

2.4. EXPLICATIVE NOUN PHRASE

Along with abbreviation multi-word units, tautological, and semi-tautological noun phrases there is one more type of noun phrase, consisting of an abbreviation and explicative, general word (Horecký 1980: 152), e.g. *platforma GPRS/platform GPRS* (*GPRS – General Packet Radio Service*). We call it an **explicative noun phrase**. It differs from the aforementioned noun phrases in the fact that the abbreviation is usually postponed: *technológia WAP* (*Wireless Application Protocol*). English, on the other hand, tends to follow its analytical tendencies and places the abbreviation in the ante-position in explicative NP, e.g. *WAP technology*. However, the different position of the abbreviation within the explicative noun phrase is just a formal criterion.

From the semantic point of view, an explicative noun phrase is characterized by a greater semantic difference between the noun in a motivating unit and the explicative word. In the explicative noun phrase *WAP technology*, the noun *technology* does not bring any new meaning to the phrase and the explicative noun phrase has, then, similar functions as tautological and semi-tautological noun phrases. The explicative Slovak and English words *technológia/technology*, *platforma/platform* are semantically universal and can be used with several different abbreviations (*prostredníctvom najmodernejších platforiem GPRS, MMS, HSCSD – through GSM/GPRS/GPS platform*). At the same time, with one abbre-

viation several general, explicative lexical units can be used in Slovak: *technológia WAP/prostredie WAP/služba WAP* (*WAP technology, environment, service*) having the same function.

The difference between the explicative noun phrase and the abbreviation multiword unit lies in the fact that in AMWU the word brings new semantic information: *hifi set, PR manager*, unabbreviated lexical units in AMWU – *set* and *manager* – denote a different object than the abbreviation itself. *PR* and *manager*, as well as *hi-fi* and *set* denote separate objects of extra-linguistic reality.

In contrast, in an explicative noun phrase, a non-abbreviated lexeme does not bring any new semantic information – the abbreviation *WAP* and the explicative noun phrase *technológia* in *technológia WAP/WAP technology* denote the same object, the role of the explicative noun phrase is very similar to the functions of tautological and semi-tautological noun phrases.

2.4.1. FUNCTIONS OF EXPLICATIVE NP

Explicative noun phrases also have numerous functions:

a) **Identification function:** to distinguish the abbreviation from the homophonous lexeme, e.g. *system MARC* (*Machine Readable Cataloguing*) vs. proper noun *Marc*; *metóda TITUS* (*Traitement de l'Information Textile Universelle et Sélective*) vs. *Titus* (cf. Horecký 1980: 152). While J. Horecký (ibid.) thinks that an explicative noun phrase is used only with abbreviations that are homophonous with non-abbreviated lexemes (*Marc, Titus*) we have also observed the use of an explicative noun phrase with other abbreviations, though not with a distinguishing but rather a descriptive function).

b) **Semantic function:** to “explain” non-adapted abbreviations that language users are not familiar with: *v prostredí WAP Mail; prostredníctvom technológie SIM Toolkit; CD formát*. The explicative word mediates the basic semantics of the abbreviation and its motivating unit, e.g. though the English abbreviation *MUD* abbreviates the motivating unit *multi-user dimension/dialog/dungeons*, the explicative nouns *hra, systém* are chosen as explicative nouns (*hry MUD – MUD games*) because *MUD* in fact means “virtual games”.

c) **Adaptation function:** to help the abbreviation enter Slovak declension without changing its form (*s technológiou WAP, o technológii WAP*).

2.5. ABBREVIATION NAMES

This is a special type of construction where the abbreviation has a cryptographic function: *Lord T., v meste N. (in town N.), pacient J. Č. (patient J. Č.)*. In some cases, the letter does not have strict abbreviational status – it is just a means to hide the real proper noun: *okres X (district X)*. **Abbreviation names** tend to be used in literature but also in media to hide the identity of the referent though sometimes there might be a hidden irony in their use as these referents are a matter of public record.

The letter in such an abbreviation is sometimes called a “substantivized phoneme” (Blanár, 1998: 193–198) and usually has a noun character. Since abbreviation names occur primarily in written communication we would rather suggest using the term “substantivized grapheme”. When a different word class than a noun is to be expressed, a skeleton-type abbreviation is used: *v S... kej uličke, ku K...ovmu mostu*. The final suffix indicates the word class as well as the grammatical category of congruence with the head noun in a noun phrase, but sometimes the skeleton ending provides more information on the subject (*village P...wce*, not just *village P.*). These cases have to be distinguished from constructions where the letter abbreviates the word used with it – *mesto M. (town T.)*, denoting an important entity among similar entities.

CONCLUSION

The present analysis has shown how a particular abbreviation can become a component of several noun phrase types, e.g. in Slovak, the English abbreviation *CD (Compact Disc)* enters the tautological noun phrase *CD disk (CD disc)*, the abbreviation multi-word unit *CD prehrávač (CD player)*, the explicative noun phrase *formát CD* and the semi-tautological *CD nosič (CD disc)* and *CD platňa (CD disc)*. Particular types of abbreviation noun phrases differ in the level of tautology of the information expressed but they also prove that a certain level of redundancy in communication is genuinely necessary. At the same time, abbreviation present in a noun phrase proves cooperation of individual types of lexical motivation. The research was carried out first on Slovak abbreviation noun phrases, but as examples show, the same types of noun constructions might occur in other languages, too, namely English.

The presence of abbreviations in different types of NPs and different languages confirms their productivity and their indispensable role within the lexicon.

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Abstract

The paper focuses on acronym-based noun phrases, i.e. noun phrases consisting of an abbreviation and a non-abbreviated lexeme. The author works with the theory of lexical motivation which presumes the existence of several types of motivation, including abbreviation and syntactic motivation. While abbreviations are formed by means of abbreviation motivation, syntactic constructions such as noun phrases are formed by means of syntactic motivation. Both types of motivation are dominant in the forming of abbreviation noun phrases. The author distinguishes and explains the differences between tautological (*PIN number*), semi-tautological (*SIM card*) and explicative noun phrases (*GPRS platforms*) as well as abbreviation multi-word units (*USB port*). The paper points out manifold functionality of each type of abbreviation noun phrase/multiword unit and presents abbreviations as productive means of forming new constructions and lexemes. Their versatile character makes abbreviations universal forms for coining new expressions of terminological character and thus contributing to multiple terminological databases of languages.

Key words: abbreviation, motivation, theory of lexical motivation, noun phrase, tautology, redundancy, multiword unit

FRAZY RZECZOWNIKOWE OPARTE NA AKRONIMACH POWSTAŁE W WYNIKU ABREWIACJI I MOTYWACJI SKŁADNIOWEJ

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest opis fraz rzeczownikowych mających w swojej strukturze akronim oraz pełen (nie będący skrótowcem) człon rzeczownikowy. Autorka artykułu bazuje na teorii motywacji z jej postulatem o zróżnicowanych typach motywowania. O ile powstawanie skrótowców motywowane jest abrewiacją, struktury składniowe takie jak nominaty powstają w drodze motywacji syntaktycznej. W artykule wyróżnia się i omawia osobliwe cechy fraz rzeczownikowych tautologicznych (numer PIN), semi-tautologicznych (karta SIM) i objaśniających (platforma GPRS) czy skrótowców wieloczłonowych (port USB). Wskazuje się też na wielofunkcjonalność każdego z wymienionych typów oraz produktywność skrótowców w tworzeniu nowych jednostek leksykalnych. Ta cecha sprawia, że skrótowce postrzegane są jako uniwersalne środki formułowania nowych terminów specjalistycznych, a tym samym jako jednostki wybitnie przydatne w budowaniu baz terminologicznych danego języka.

Słowa kluczowe: skrótowce, abrewiacja, motywacja, teoria motywacji leksykalnej, tautologia, redundancja, fraza rzeczownikowa, wyrażenie wieloczłonowe