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Original scientific paper
UDC: 801.18

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ABBREVIATIONS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDENTS' ESSAYS

Summary: In this work, based on relevant methodology and current literature in the field of normativity, errors in writing abbreviations in secondary education students' essays are reviewed. The research covered 500 students (1594 essays in the Serbian language and literature) one classical and one specialized grammar school students, as well as two secondary technical schools. The work aimed to determine whether the students and in which way incorporated orthographic rules and, in connection with abbreviating words and expressions, when their orthographic knowledge is not the focus (unlike tests aimed at testing and evaluation achievements in the field orthography). Survey research has shown that students rarely use abbreviations in their writing tasks (at the random sample of 100 essays there was a total of 42 abbreviations), so that there is a small number of errors (only 35 errors were recorded in the use of abbreviations), what is undoubtedly influenced by a type of written text, lack of knowledge of orthographic norms when it comes to abbreviations, which has been confirmed by a short test given after the research.

Key words: orthographic norm, an essay, abbreviations.

1. Introduction

Words and expressions are used to shorten¹ in order to save the space in writing, and when the time in speaking (Dešić, 1995: Him (art. 113). Abbreviating is not performed on free evaluation and will be individual, but for that there are clear rules, which should be applied in the written

¹ Abbreviation which will be applied in this work:

P 2010 – Spelling in Serbian (amended and supplemented edition), edited by: Mitar Peškin, Jovan Jerković, Mato Pižurica; As well as their literary as amended and revised editions: Mato Pižurica (the main redaktor), Milorad Dešić, Branislav Ostojic, Zivojin Stanojčić, the new US: Matica Srpska.

expression (Brborić, 2002: 55–69). Rules words and expressions are provided by a linguistic manual, Orthography by Matica Srpska.²

According to the current curriculum³ abbreviations should be revised and tested in the second grade of secondary school⁴, but it is not provided in how many school classes that should be done; Instructions and explanations are lacking in connection with it. Teachers therefore, this important part of teaching carry it out according to their own favorite order (Brborić, 2004: 48). In addition, the current high school textbooks do not pay sufficient attention to orthography. So, for example, in current Grammar of the Serbian Language, for I, II, III and IV grade of secondary school, f. Stanojčića and Popović (Popović, Stanojčić, 1995) there are no sections of cultural expression, as well as in one of the many Releases Grammar of the Serbian Language for secondary schools by Stevanović (Stevanović, 1998). This issue is the matter, it seems, of belief that high school students regularly use and possess school orthography books, which is in practice often not the case.

Finally, in the previous examinations of writing abbreviations by students of elementary and secondary schools (Brborić, 2002: 55–69), performed based on testing (the students had a task to shorten selected words and expressions), it was concluded that the number of correct answers to

²As well as Matica Srpska project and in the organization committee for standardisation of the Serbian language, Orthography Matica Srpska from 1993. G. (Approved by the Ministry of Education for use in the educational process 1995.g., in The Serbian Language Orthography Milorad Dešić) suffered substantial changes and amendments (more on this see in the text amended and supplemented edition of Matica "Serbian Language Orthography" which precede Foreword P 2010; Author: Mato Pižurica).

From the point of teaching practice (especially natural sciences) interesting are measuring abbreviations written in small letters, the P 2010 (t.180 (A) written originally or changed, and only extremely rarely translated (with a full stop or without it): g, kg, l, dl, m, km, cm and g (g.), kg (and kg.), l (l.), dl (and dl.), m and (m.), km (and km.), cm (and cm.). In Orthography of the Serbian Language (school edition), I. Rules and their relations, and I. Dictionary with orthography (presented by: Mitar Peškin, Jovan Jerković, Mato Pižurica, Matica Srpska, Novi Sad), in the observed 10.edition - School 2010 edition, proposed that the full stop is not used in measuring units abbreviations meter, gram, a liter (in t. 103 (C).

³ High school and secondary school curriculums were consulted, Sluzbeni Glasnik RS- Prosvetni Glasnik, 31st May 1991. In amendments and additions to this basic document, which are subsequently offered, (the last in the Sluzbeni Glasnik RS - nb. 72/09 And 52/11) guidelines on spelling were not changed.

⁴ Revision of the acquired students' knowledge of cultural expression as well as one of the important segments of language teaching certainly should be carried out at the end of secondary education, in the fourth grade, if not in regular classes then as then in additional hours because at that time students prepare for final examinations and entrance exams.

questions about abbreviations is less than half⁵ the number of the required response. Also, it was pointed out (not being researched) that the students rarely use abbreviations in their written works (Brborić, 2004: 219).

According to the latter, the teachers have a serious task to independently see the possible shortcomings in the knowledge of this important segments of the language (in this case in the written expression of secondary education students) and, according to their observations, bringing on the possible ways to continue improving orthography relevant methodical models and applications, especially in this transitional period (since the orthographic norm was amended by current P 2010).

2. Norm in Orthographic legislation shortening words and expressions in writing tasks students in secondary education (subject, method, the aim and research corpus)

The subject of research of this work are mistakes in writing abbreviation in writing tasks students in secondary education. The school a written tasks is a representative form which periodically evaluates the success in teaching cultural expression, and in particular teaching of literacy (Ilic, 1998: 616). In addition to being the indicator of a degree of the acquired knowledge in the language and literature, the written tasks clearly indicate the values⁶, but the certain shortcomings in methodological solutions in teaching the language (official written tasks have - unlike the other student compositions, which are predominantly used for systematic training - predominantly controlling aim /Nikolic, 2010: 716/).

Research is aimed at highly visible display of all recorded violation of orthographic norm in writing abbreviations in secondary education students' essays as well as the proposal to eliminate observed shortcomings, according to orthographic norms prescribed by a current P 2010.

⁵ High School students gave 46.2 % accurate answers to the questions related to abbreviation of words and expressions, primary school students 44.6 % of accurate answers which points to one stagnation in student knowledge in this field (Brborić, 2011: An 87).

⁶ On writing tasks, as an especially significant pedagogical element, P. Ilic writes in his *Metodika nastave srpskog jezika i knjizevnosti* (Ilic, 1998: 616–658), and – beside election and schedule material, syntax and stylistic quality of sentences, with an appearance of a composition – he distinguishes orthography as one of the important elements in assessment. In *Metodika nastave srpskog jezika i knjizevnosti* written tasks are considered a "crown of systematic work on developing written culture" (Marinkovic, 2000: 128).

Examined corpus makes 500 essay notebooks of high school students from different educational backgrounds, courses. The research method was the one of samples (methodological overall, represented by the incomplete induction), where is the basic group is final (known the exact number of those polled written tasks). Sample has been systematic-the choice of the schools in which the research has been conducted was determined by education profile ie.the courses⁷students attended. The results are analyzed and described with methodical point of view in a normative mirror.

2.1. Results of research

On the elected corps of 500 essay notebooks for secondary education students written tasks the 35 incorrectly abbreviated words and expressions were recorded.

- a) B.P.B (3 times)
- b) gđin.
- c) gimn /gim /Gimn
- d) dr. Zoran Djindjic
- e) id (idea)
- f) isl.
- g) itd
- h) jed.
- i) Кк. „Hemofarm“/fk „Partizan“
- j) tkz. (so-called)
- k) т.ј./ тој.
- l) O.Š./ T. Š./ TŠ./ Š. C./ š. c./ “ŠC“ (17 times)
- m) T. work
- n) ul

2.2. Analysis of the recorded errors with the relevant corrections:⁸

A) Abbreviations for single names make up a special group. In the above example full stop is missing at the end recorded abbreviation – orthographically correct it would be B. P. B. (Borislav Petrov Braca) according to T. P183 in P 2010. Full stop with the capital letter should indicate the omitted part of words, in this case a nickname. That means

⁷ This survey included written tasks of students of the following schools:

High School "Borislav Petrov Braca " Vrsac (all courses);

SC "Nikola Tesla", Vrsac.

Filoloska Grammar School, Belgrade;

Technical school "Sava Muncan" Bela Crkva.

⁸ Orthography of the Serbian Language, 2010. Matica Srpska was consulted. (P 2010 : 144–151).

that since this represents the school name, in the administrative style and to the public expression this abbreviation (and in an orderly form) should be avoided by students - on the front pages of essay notebooks for written tasks it is advisable to write the Grammar School "Borislav Petrov Braca," and not Grammar School "B. P. B." in order to achieve full clarity of expression;

B) In some abbreviations (as well as in t. over 179 b, P 2010) the first letter of the word is taken and the last syllables and are written in a small letter without full stops (up. Gca, gđica.). In the above example the abbreviation Mr.is incorrect – orthographic norm prescribes only abbreviation g. for gospodin (mister) (the same abbreviation is applied and to reduce very frequently used word godina (year); up. T.179 a);

C) When the first syllables is written with one or more consonants in front of the second vowel an abbreviation full stop is used to indicate the omission of the part of a word (according to t. 179/ 3/). All the three ways in which the students abbreviated the name their school (Gimnazija) gimn/ gim /Gimn orthographically is incorrect since there is no necessary full stop in the first example, the choice of letters and size in the other two mentioned examples; The P 2010 (abbreviation gimn. is used to reduce these words ;

D) Abbreviation *dr* is written without a full stop in the meaning the title doctor (up. T. 179B /1/);

E) In the above example a full stop is missing to mark that there is a omitted part (according to T.179) ie. If there is a need to abbreviate the already short word *idea* an abbreviating full stop should be used. *id.*;

F) The abbreviation for the term *slično* (similar) is written *sl.* (T.179 a/ 2/). The error is probably the result of wrong analogy with the abbreviation of the word *itd.* (etc.) which in shortened form has also three letters;

G) Abbreviation for *i tako dalje* (and so on) is written (etc.) and full stop is used only at the end of the term (according to T.179B / 3/);

H) Some abbreviations are written so that the first syllable with one or more other consonants in front of the second vowel after which there is a full stop. Properly would therefore be: *jedn.*(jednina). In P 2010 *jd.*is also allowed (In t. 179B/ 2/);

I) Abbreviation for basketball club "Hemofarm" is a KK "Hemofarm" since that is a name composed of initial letters. These acronyms are used without a full stop (according to T.181). Likewise, it is incorrect to write them in small letters acronyms as the name of a football club has been abbreviated in the example.

J) Abbreviations of the words starting with a characteristic letter(s) are written with a full stop for *takozvani* short is *tzv.*(in t. 179B/ 2/);

K) Abbreviation for *to jest* is written *tj.* with a full stop at the end. (t. 179B / 3/). Likewise, *ti* is incorrect to use *toj.* to abbreviate this term.

L) All six ways in which the students abbreviated the school name (primary and secondary) are incorrect. Since the words are unchangeable or abbreviated multi part names are written without full stops after each of the initial letters or at the end (T.181/1/). Fixed abbreviation for primary school is *OŠ* and read as a full word;

M) Abbreviation *T. work* is insufficiently clear; in a wider context it is assumed that it is the *Tolstoy work*, that the abbreviation *T.* is used to reduce the surname of this great Russian writer. This should be avoided in any public expression except in the case where the context in which a special abbreviation will be used is previously explained or a list of specific abbreviations given.

N) Abbreviations with a full stop at the end are formed so that they contain the first syllables with one or more other consonants in front of the second vowel. *Ulica* is thus abbreviated with *ul.* (according to t. 179A/ 3/, P 2010).


2.2.1. *Comment:* Based on the review of the recorded mistakes it was found that the students in their written tasks make most mistakes in the use of abbreviations in writing school names that they abbreviate with a full stop although the orthography advises otherwise (there are 17 errors of this type or the total recorded 35, 50% of all errors). In nine different forms (26 %) they did not use the full stop where it should be, and the three times (8.6 %) where it has no place. The other six examples (17 %) errors are mainly based on the ignorance of the rules in writing certain abbreviations so that the first syllable with one or more other consonants in front of the second vowel after which there is a full stop. In one word, the students in their secondary education writing tasks rarely use abbreviations (on the random sample of 100 tasks 42 abbreviations were recorded. According to that it is assumed that the students used around 210 abbreviations on the total observed corpus). A reason may be that in their essays the students pay greater attention to the visual form of the text when the abbreviating is avoided or minimized or the lack of knowledge about abbreviating in the Serbian language. Because of that, they make a small number of mistakes; in 500 of those polled essay notebooks 35 mistakes were found (about 0.05 % per one essay⁹). Based on inspection, the most frequently made mistake is made on the front

⁹ The number of mistakes in writing abbreviations with secondary education students in writing tasks falls behind other detected mistakes (in the framework of a broader research orthographic norms in writing tasks /proposed for ph.d. dissertation/, in the current corpus of 500 essay notebooks, 1351 errors in use punctuation signs was detected, 462 errors in linking and a separating words, 414 mistakes in the use of capital letters.

page of essay notebooks in abbreviating the name of a school that a student attends.

3. Second grade secondary school students' knowledge of the abbreviations

The curriculum proposes that in the second grade secondary school students revise and expand knowledge of abbreviations, in order to evaluate the work on this topic as well as to get an insight in how the students, whose essay notebooks - among others – were used in the survey, are familiar with the mechanism of word and terms abbreviation in the Serbian language, a test worksheet was given. Classical high school second grade students had the task to fill in the following, writing on their own worksheet, where in the focus (in contrast to the written tasks) was on the orthographic knowledge on abbreviations. The worksheet¹⁰ (picture 1) was filled in by 50 students (two classes) at the end of the school year 2010/2011 in the final part of the lesson where they summarized the topics in language and cultural expression which were covered in the second grade.



Worksheet – Write the meaning of the following abbreviations taken from the Serbian Language Orthography by Matica Srpska :

о. –	Н. Д. –
об. –	Импекс –
стсл. –	беомал –
Т –	Л –
М. П. –	СI –
р. –	ОЗН –
Н –	Л. –
БИГЗ –	

➤ If you wish with a few abbreviations (and their meaning) that you use in communication with your friends.

¹⁰ Worksheet papers are appropriate for teaching evaluation work of almost all topics in the language and culture expression. A teacher should make evaluation of more times in the school year by dedicating in the first, last part of the class or the whole school class. In this way it may be determined what was good, what should be changed and what is the level of acquired knowledge after folded teaching units in the stage of preparation and planning as well as performance of methodical model or its application. Likewise, it can be recognized in which topics students are weaker learners, and then the teacher can design, using a modern literature, the ways the possible deficiencies in the educational process are to be corrected.

Display 1 - worksheet where the students were required to determine the meaning of the elected abbreviations as well as that, if they wish, write down abbreviations that are used in the informal communication with their peers.

3.1. Results:

The results of the research on the acquired knowledge of the abbreviating words and expressions of second grade secondary school students are shown in Table 1 (for each abbreviation whose meaning students determined by filling up the worksheets - up. A column was a selected abbreviation – the number of correct and incorrect answers is shown the amount in percentages. At the bottom of the table 1 it is summarized - Total – the total of accurate and inaccurate answers

Table 1

The selected abbreviation	Correct answers	Percentage of correct answers	Incorrect answers	Percentage of incorrect answers
о.	15	30%	35	70%
об.	14	28%	36	72%
стсл.	24	48%	26	52%
Т	25	50%	25	50%
М. П.	9	18%	41	82%
р.	26	52%	24	48%
N	34	68%	16	32%
БИГЗ	12	24%	38	76%
н. д.	7	14%	43	86%
Импекс	17	34%	23	66%
беомал	20	40%	30	60%
л	5	10%	45	90%
СІ	36	72%	14	28%
ОЗН	7	14%	23	86%
л.	14	28%	36	72%
Укупно	265	–	455	–

3.2. Result analysis

According to the research based on the answers given by the interviewed students in the worksheet¹¹ (Figure 1) the following can be established: even 45 students (90% of all students who have completed worksheets) do not know the exact meaning of abbreviation L (hunter in chess); the same amount of ignorance (86% incorrect answer) the students have shown in decoding the abbreviation OZN (the Department for people

¹¹Since the number of interviewees was small, only two classes, the students were asked to give answers to all requirements. There were no tasks without an answer. This is, of course, not recommended (and impossible) when it comes to great research; Some tasks and questions remain without answers, it can be noticed, in tests, tasks, entrance exams, and in competitions.

protection) and N. D. (the work mentioned). That M.P. shortens *place stamp* is 82% students were not familiar with, 76% students what the BIGZ meant, and the 72% incorrect answers have been given on questions about abbreviations ob. (obično) (Usually) and l. (lice, list 1 litra) (Person, the newspaper, and a liter by P 2010). That is the abbreviation Impeks is for import+export even the 66% students did not know and similarly, 60% was not aware what beomal means (beocin mortar). To the question "what is shortened by stsl. an incorrect answer gave 52% students, and even 50% incorrect answers to the question of the meaning of abbreviation T (Tesla). That razred (grade) may be shortened by r. 48% students did not know. The students were, on the basis of answers given on their worksheets, best performing in the set of abbreviations from natural sciences: there was only 32% negative answers for determining the meaning of abbreviations N (nitrogen) and 28% incorrect answers for cl (chlor).

On the basis of the screened student responses, it was concluded that the students in the second grade secondary schools have a low level of knowledge when it comes to abbreviations prescribed by Orthography of the Serbian Language¹² (of the total possible 720 responses, 455 was the incorrect ie. 63 %, almost twice less accurate answers: 265 ie. 37 %). They showed the best knowledge on abbreviations which mark chemical elements, and the lowest level of knowledge when it comes to abbreviations typical for a certain profession (eg. OZN), which is not that much surprising. The most concerning is the high percentage of incorrect answers (even 86 %) on the issue of abbreviation n.d. as well as the meaning of abbreviation l. that are the general (domestic) abbreviations. In the second task on the worksheet the students recorded their examples that they use in their everyday free communication through the internet and mobile phones¹³, as well as an example of text expanding¹⁴, but it remains outside the subjects of interest of this work.

¹² In order to fully outlined data, selected examples of incorrect student responses were given: Stsl. – With this similar; T – topic; M. P. – The Ministry of Justice; R. – Repriza; N – Nemanja; BIGZ – Beogradski insitut i graficki zavod; Beomal – Beogradski malter; L – litar; OZN – oznaka, Odeljenje za narkotike; N. D. – nemam domaci (zadatak) etc.

¹³ The second task did the students who wanted to. It has been a large number of informal abbreviation typical of student communication, but text expanding as well (not abbreviating having in mind economical side of language terms) popular among the youth. I quoted the original expressions (students predominantly write abbreviations in Latin letters, disregarding small and capital letter and do not use full point). This could be a motivation or a starting point to some new work that would deal with abbreviations which students use in their free communication, and not in writing tasks that the students write in schools and are given grades for.

Recorded Abbreviations: BRT/BRT - brate; BRV – bravo; Check sec- sačekaj sekundu; Defka – definition; dop – dopisivanje (correspondence); kont – kontrolni

4. Conclusion:

In this work, on the basis of relevant methodology and current literature in the field normativity, errors in writing abbreviations in writing tasks of secondary education students are reviewed. The research which included 500 essay notebooks of elected classical and one specialized grammar school students as well as two secondary technical schools, as far as the 35 mistakes in shortening words and expression of ie. 0.05 per a writing task. An insignificant presence of errors is not surprising since the students rarely use abbreviations in their written tasks (on a random sample of 100 tasks only 42 abbreviations ie. 2.4 per one task were recorded).

On the basis of the screening results of research, it was found that the students in secondary education make mistakes in the use of abbreviations of capital letters and this is when write name their school names that are shortened with the full stop, although the Orthography prescribes otherwise (50% of all errors).

In total 26% of all errors is based on non-use of a full stop point where is prescribed, and 8.6 % errors is based on use of a full stop where it is not prescribed; 17% Errors is based on the lack of knowledge of a rule about abbreviating by taking the first syllable with one or more other consonants in front of the second vowel followed by a full stop.

In order to determine how much the students, whose essays notebooks were used and research, are familiar with the meaning of abbreviations

(Test); In – laku noc (good night); NMG – ne mogu (I can not); nmp – nemam pojma (I have no idea); nnc – nema na cemu (you're welcome); NOOB - vice versa from the professional; Nope – ne (not); NZM/nzm – ne znam (I do not know); O5 – opet (again); PRO – the professional ("Dobio si peticu iz srpskog! Al' si pro! " /You got an A in the Serbian al're a pro!); VRV – verovatno (probably); vtncs – volim te najviše na svetu (I love the most in the world); VTP/vtp – volim te puno (I love you so much.); ZZ/pozz – pozdrav (Regards).

¹⁴ Instead of a text (in order to achieve cost-effectiveness of terms) individual students in their text conversations expanded the text, among other things, doubling the letters. According to students, it is a privilege to write as a *pussy cat* that whenever he or she writes changes certain letters in the following way: V - W, H - X, C - TZ, O - o (number), Š - SH, Č - CH, U - OO.

An example of *pussy cat* text was reported in one worksheet paper:

Dobroweche profesorka ... Ew as an RAIDo i hotju i as an RAIDo to wam is javim, and weedeem how are you, sxta you do, and when the pissmenee ... I Razmeeshljala o - Tome mozhda prwee time pixedem o nexxemoo from gradiwa, but I think that tju but odabratee sloBohopoo theme ... The NEK Treballo mee as an RAIDo wreme to wam napishem owaj mail, werujte mee, Nia Vardalos movie to be filmed easily write toward as an RAIDo * MaChklzZa * ... Bash the bill as an RAIDo OMG and badocommu-nities..xD Mwaaah : **

prescribed by P 2010, the students did a worksheet that asked them to determine the meaning of 15 different abbreviations. On the basis of the answers, it was concluded that the students (second grade students of classical high school whose essay notebooks are a part of the research corps) have a considerable lack of knowledge (63% incorrect answers, 37% accurate) when it comes to abbreviations proposed by the P 2010. The best knowledge they showed with abbreviations that mark chemical elements (the meaning of abbreviation Cl 72% accurate answers, only 28% incorrect), and the lowest level of knowledge when it comes to abbreviations typical for a certain profession or styles (90% of all students who have completed worksheet did not know the meaning of abbreviation L). The most concerning is the high percentage of incorrect answers (even 86 %) on the question on abbreviation n.d. as well as the meaning of abbreviation I. that are the general (domestic) abbreviations.

Since the results of research have shown that high school students are insufficiently familiar with orthographic norm for abbreviating words and expressions in our language (when they are used, they are often used in incorrect or inappropriate way). Secondary school teachers, primarily, thus have an obligation to correct the detected flaws in teaching orthography. It can be achieved by properly thought out methodical models, development and applications of these and other topics in the field of normativity which would be applied in practice so to follow the changes and additions to the current orthography. Finally, it would be useful to pay orthography enough attention in classes, if not regular, then compulsory extra and additional classes.

Gratitude

Thanks to the teaching staff of the following schools: High School "Borislav Petrov Braca" (Vrsac), SC "Nikola Tesla" (Vrsac), Filoloska Grammar School (Belgrade) and Technical schools "Sava Muncan" (Bela Crkva) for her generous co-operation in collecting students' essay notebooks in the Serbian language and literature.

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Biographical note

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