

I. O. Либа

The Peculiarities of Translating the Words ‘компанія’
and ‘фірма’ into English and Using Abbreviations
for British and American Business Companies
in English Business Correspondence

There can appear some difficulties in choosing the appropriate English equivalents to the Ukrainian words ‘компанія’ and ‘фірма’ when writing

business letters in English. Here the following synonymic row can be considered: company, firm, business and house. ‘Company’ is a business organization that produces and sells goods or provides services in order to make a profit, e.g. *an insurance company, an oil company*. ‘Firm’ is a company, especially one that provides services (financial or legal) rather than producing goods, e.g. *an electronics firm, an advertising firm, a law firm, a building firm*. ‘Business’ is a company that sells or produces goods or provides services, especially one that employs only a small number of people or only one person, e.g. *a small family business*. ‘House’ is a company, especially one involved in a particular area of business, e.g. *a publishing house, a small independent software house, an auction house, a fashion house*.

There are several types of big companies: multinational companies (very large companies that have offices or factories in many different countries), corporations (large companies that employ a lot of people, especially ones that include several smaller companies) and conglomerates (very large business organizations that consist of several different companies which have joined together). Subsidiaries and affiliates are companies that are owned by larger companies.

There is also a special name for companies that sell their goods and services on the Internet. They are called dotcoms in English (the Ukrainian equivalent is ‘Інтернет-компанії’). Small companies that have just been started, often those concerned with computing or the Internet, are called start-ups (the Ukrainian ‘нові фірми’).

The following abbreviations for business companies are used in English correspondence:

- *Ltd* for ‘Limited’ (British English) or *Inc.* for ‘Incorporated’ (American English) – legally established companies whose owners are legally responsible for only a limited amount of money if the companies get into debt, e.g. *Stevenson Securities Ltd, Syquest Technology Inc.*;

- *Co.* for ‘Company’, e.g. *Imperial Life Assurance Co. of Canada*;

- *Corp.* for ‘Corporation’ is used after the name of a large company, especially in the US, e.g. *Federal Express Corp.*;

- *PLC* (also *plc*) for ‘Public Limited Company’ (British English) – a type of British company, usually large, that issues shares to the public, and allows the public to examine its accounts, e.g. *Marks & Spencer plc*;

- *Pty.* for ‘Proprietary’ – the abbreviation used in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa after the name of a business company, e.g. *Australian Wine Growers Pty.*