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Sigles graphiques en langue de spécialité : typologie, variabilité, enjeux

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- **Authors:** Lemaire (Nathalie), Muraille (Paul)
- **Abstract:** What could be called graphic acronyms are becoming more common in specialised subject fields. In this article the question of the effects that the marked instability of written forms may engender in specialised communication and thus in the understanding and transmission of specialized knowledge. The forms observed in specialized discourse —in a wide range of subject areas— are categorized in view to identifying those graphic elements liable to variation in use. The focus is then put on a sample of acronyms from the field of biomedicine, in order to observe and compare variation in French and English. Those cases of graphic variation which imply some form of potential ambiguity are identified so as to test how they are understood by subject specialists in a future study. The aim is to determine where the risk of confusion is strong or where it can be avoided in a situation of communication or in the framework of natural language processing.
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