

Hamspeak

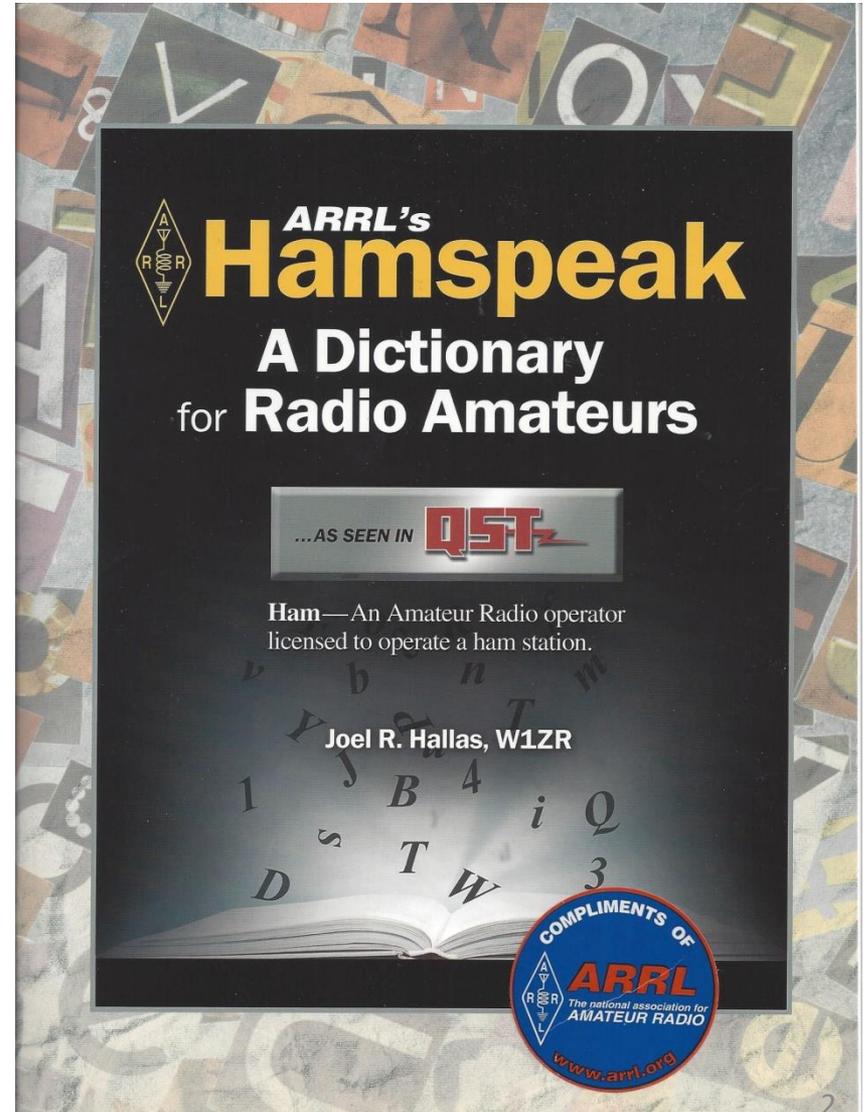
The everyday language of ham radio

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Hamspeak

- Title of a 2011 ARRL publication
- Contains only “real” and official words
- This presentation is about the everyday use of language and slang in ham radio.



Hamspeak

- After more than a century, Ham Radio has developed its own language.
- It is possible to tell long-time amateurs by the way they talk. This is actually part of the allure of ham radio—it is a language that not everyone speaks.
- BUT—anyone can learn it. Hamspeak isn't a secret. You just have to listen carefully.
- Understanding the origins of some of the terms can actually enhance and broaden your understanding of ham radio itself.
- And hamspeak communicates that you're part of ham radio's mainstream.

Evolution of hamspeak

- Reasons for and evolution of “hamspeak”
 - Need to communicate in poor condx (QRN etc.)
 - Communicating with others whose native language is different
 - New modes, new practices
 - FT8, SO2R
 - Need to convey complex ideas
 - *BUT...* individual practice varies

Legacy of Morse era

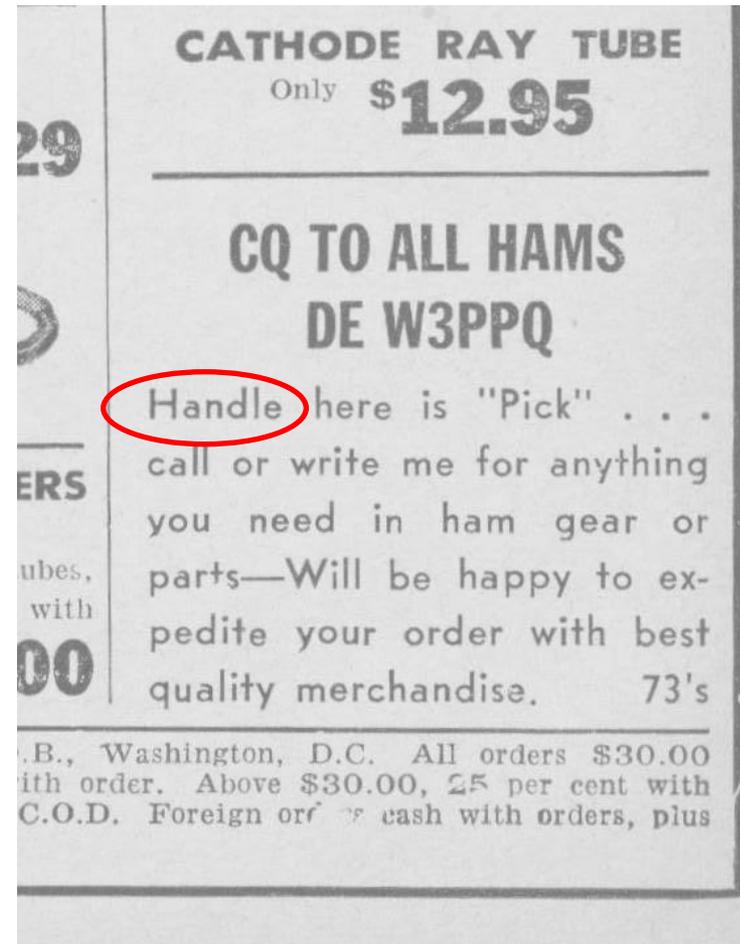
- Ham radio had a past from “Year 1”
- Terms/usage from history including landline telegraphy
 - Lid, ham operator, silent key
- *Three* different dash durations in American Morse Code
 - Long dash for zero—5-dit duration dash
 - Long dash worked on a bug
 - Unable to do with modern keyer
 - Modern “cut numbers” use “T” single dash

History of “Handle”

“Handle” long pre-dates
CB, and even WW2.

Usage copied by CBers
from amateur use

From a 1930’s vintage
advertisement



Note misuse of “73’s”

Example courtesy of KØHB

Non-abbreviations—

- *ham*, not HAM;
 - is an adjective,
 - not a noun except for people
 - substitute for “ham radio operator”
- Not “I love HAM”—but “I love ham radio”
- 73 means “best regards”
 - So 73s means “best regardses”

Abbreviations from CW—1

- Originally to minimize number or duration of characters
 - tt, fer, rcvr, ant, cw, fb
- Other replacements—efficiency
 - sed, sez, hr, nw, u, ur, sigs, n (=“no”), c (=“yes”)
- Especially in contests
 - Signal reports & “cut numbers” 5NN, K, or ATT
- Same motivation in texting today
 - Crossover—FWIW, AFAIK, etc.
- Easy transition from CW to RTTY then digital

Abbreviations from CW—2

- “X” often used to replace pre- and suf-fixes
 - Xtal
 - Xmtr, xcvr, xmsn (X=“trans”)
 - TX, RX, WX, TU/tnx, condx
- *not* an example—XYL

Abbreviations from CW—3

- Procedural
 - AR— end of transmission
 - AS— “wait”
 - BK— text break (“double dash”)
 - de— “from” as in “CQ de K0GW”
 - K— “go ahead”; not “OK”
 - R— “Roger” or “Received”

AR, AS & BK should have line over—meaning send as a single character

Sound of some abbrev from CW

Like...

“SOS”

... _ _ _ ...

73, es, ?

_ _ _ _

. ...

.. _ _ ..

Hi

.... ..

Slang

Normal words with special meanings

- Shack, ticket, sked, wallpaper
- Full gallon, peanut whistle
- rig, bug, mill, cans
- Lid, appliance operator
- FB, Q5, fist
- regardless of age—OM, OB, YL

Family

- OM
 - Never “YM”
- YL, XYL
 - Never “OL”
- Harmonic
 - 1st harmonic, etc.

Usage for clear communication—Q signals

- Developed c. 1909 by British gov't for ships
(see Wikipedia “Q Codes”)
- QN- signals for Net operation
 - examples QNI (not commonly used)
 - also other Q signals—QRU, QRV, QTC, etc.
- QR-, QS-, QT- signals—some common, some not
 - QRG, QRL, QRM, QRN, QRO, QRP, QRT, QRV, QRX
 - QRZ (say “Q R ZED”)
 - QSB, QSK, QSL, QST, QSY
 - QTC, QTH

Usage for clear communication—Q signals

- When to use Q signals—
 - foreign ops
 - bad QRM, QRN or QSB
- Differing views on using Q signals on phone
 - Capture complex concepts—
 - QRM/QRN
 - QSB
 - Some unnecessary use—QSL vs “Roger”
 - International

Usage for clear communication—

- pronunciation matters.
 - varying pron “golf”/“gulf”
 - ITU phonetic alphabet.
<http://www.arrl.org/quick-reference-operating-aids>
 - “cute” phonetics easily mis-understood
- Z is “zed” (like “Q R zed”)
 - not confused with “bee” “cee” “dee” “gee” “pee”
“tee” “vee”
 - used outside U.S. like U.K.—never “zee”
 - faster than “Zulu”

Technical language— *acronyms ahead!*

- Ham radio has borrowed many abbrev's from electronics and computers
- metric prefixes GHz, kHz, nW, pF etc.
- Abbreviations for modes
 - ASCII, RS-232, USB, LSB
 - modes—CW, AM, FM, SSB, PSK
 - APRS, TTY
 - further fueled by digital modes
 - FT8, FT4 and more coming

Common radio & electronic parts

- SO-239, PL-259, SMA, BNC
- #47
- Components
 - cap (but not res/rez or ind)
 - pF = “puff”
 - pot
- Military surplus—ARC-5, J-38, Q5er

Electronics

- Pronouncing acronyms
 - letters—
 - SMD, LED, PCB, CPU, CRT, ADC, TTL
 - word—usually, *if* pronounceable
 - DIP, FET, JFET, IG-FET, DAC, CMOS
 - But notice “LED”
- Contractions
 - Balun = “balanced to un-balanced”
 - Codec = “coder-decoder”

Famous xmtrs, rcvrs, amps & antennas

- Military—ARC-5, SCR-522, BC-610
- Drake—2B, TR4
- National—HRO
- EF Johnson—Valiant, Ranger, 6N2, Matchbox
- Collins—30L1, 75A4
- Dentron—Clipperton L
- Heathkit—Benton Harbor lunchbox, Hot Water 8
- ...and many more

Items identified by callsign

- G5RV
 - OCF antenna
- K9AY flag antenna
- WØOXB special

Miscellaneous

- Concepts
 - Zero-beat
 - full quieting
 - AGC, ALC
- Test equipment
 - Bird, GDO, 'scope
 - VOM, VTVM, DVM
- Organizations
 - ITU, IARU
 - ARRL=NAAR
 - NCDXF
 - QCWA
- Awards
 - DXCC
 - WAS, WAC, WAZ
 - USA-CA

... and the list goes on ...