

UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPTS OF "TERMINOSYSTEM," "TERMINOLOGY," AND "TERMINOFIELD"

Ayaqulov Nurbek Abdug'appor o'g'li

Gulistan State Pedagogical Institute, Vice-rector for Scientific Affairs and Innovations,
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Philological Sciences, Associate Professor
nurbek.ayaqulov.1992@gmail.com, +998915022325

ABSTRACT

The article focuses on defining the functional sphere of terms in modern linguistic science, specifically "terminology," "terminosystem," and "terminofield." The relevance of the research lies in the concurrent use of these three terms to describe a systematically organized set of terms within a specific knowledge domain. To determine whether these terms are synonyms or represent different concepts, their definitions are analyzed. The article also reviews the perspectives of prominent linguists on the distinctions between "terminology," "terminosystem," and "terminofield."

Keywords: special vocabulary; term; terminology; terminosystem; terminofield.

Introduction

The relevance of the proposed research topic stems from the increased use of the term "terminosystem" alongside "terminology" in recent decades in works that examine sets of terminological units within specific branches of science and/or technology. This raises a legitimate question: are these terms synonyms, or do they refer to entirely different concepts? Additionally, the term "terminofield" is used less frequently in terminological publications compared to "terminology" and "terminosystem."

The purpose of this article is to examine the definitions of terminology, term systems, and term fields, and to establish their areas of application.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a qualitative approach focusing on a comprehensive literature review of scholarly works discussing "terminology," "terminosystem," and "terminofield." 1. Literature Review: Systematic analysis of academic articles, books, and dissertations to gather diverse perspectives on the definitions, classifications, and theoretical frameworks of terminology-related concepts. 2. Conceptual Analysis: Examination of key characteristics and theoretical underpinnings to elucidate distinctions and overlaps between terminology, terminosystem, and term field as articulated by prominent scholars. 3. Comparative Study: Comparative analysis across different linguistic and terminological traditions to identify common trends and divergences in the conceptualizations of these terms. 4. Synthesis of Findings: Integration

of findings to construct a coherent understanding of how these concepts are defined and applied in contemporary terminological research.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In any specific field of science, technology, or activity, the primary linguistic unit of terminology, term systems, and term fields is the industry term. Today, various aspects of term study, including linguistic, cognitive, ontological, discursive, textual, and others, are well represented in linguistic literature. This has resulted in a multitude of term definitions, each based on different study aspects. To address the problem discussed in this article, it is essential to consider the main features of terms that distinguish them from commonly used words in literary language and other categories of industrial vocabulary. Within industry vocabulary, we differentiate between terms, professionalisms, nomenclature names, pragmonyms (trademarks), and terminoids [21, p. 175]

Modern terminological studies highlight various properties of terms, and linguists agree that terms correlate with scientific concepts. However, they differ on other characteristics. According to our research, the essential and permanent features of an industry term are: 1) a strong connection to the scientific and technical concept within a specific field of knowledge; 2) systematicity, which is shown through synonymous, antonymic, generic, and whole-part relationships with other terms within the same terminology or terminological system; and 3) the necessity of a definition.

A term's connection to the subject of scientific and technical thought is a key feature distinguishing it from commonly used words and other special lexical units. Each term, whether a single word or a compound, is intrinsically linked to a scientific concept. The relationship between the outcome of scientific and technological development (artifact or process) and its name (term) is mediated solely through the concept. The term acts as the name for a scientific concept. Researchers of a particular science or technology sublanguage identify new terms in texts, not yet documented in industry dictionaries or reference books, based on their function of naming a specific concept within that field of knowledge.

Terms differ from commonly used words due to their high degree of systematic organization, evidenced by semantic relationships like generic relations and the "part-whole" connection that permeate all industry terminology. In other words, a terminological unit does not exist in isolation but functions within a system and has close lexical-semantic relationships with other lexemes within the terminology, such as synonymous, antonymic, generic, and whole-particular relations. This systematic nature of a term helps to establish its place within the industry term system, marking the second distinctive feature of a term.

The third essential feature of a term is the necessity for a definition. A definition allows for an accurate representation of the term's content and serves to clarify its meaning. In practice, the term effectively replaces its required definition. The definition of a scientific and technical term (e.g., the aviation term "wing") in any aviation dictionary differs from the definition of a commonly used word ("wing") in an explanatory dictionary through its logical rigor and completeness, providing a precise and detailed description of all characteristics and

boundaries of the scientific and technical concept. The definition of a technical term usually spans one to two pages. This definition allows the differentiation of a concept from all other concepts within the same industry, providing complete information about the concept.

As evident from the above, all the primary features of a term are closely interrelated and complement each other.

Due to their systematic nature, terms within a specific field of science, technology, or activity are closely connected and form a structured organization. Until recently, this structured organization of terms in a particular branch of knowledge was referred to as "terminology." Prominent terminologists such as K. Ya. Averbukh [1], S. G. Kazarina [5], R. Yu. Kobrin [6], V. F. Novodranova [12], and V. N. Prokhorova [14] used the term "terminology" in their dissertation research. However, in recent decades, domestic linguists have increasingly used the term "terminosystem" more actively than "terminology." This trend is reflected in dissertation topics by N.V. Vinogradova [4], M.N. Ozolina [13], I.A. Pushkareva [15], A.K. Suleymanova [17], and I.B. Tikhonova [20].

Linguists have not reached a consensus on the distinction between the concepts of "terminology" and "terminosystem." One reason for this is the lack of a clear definition of the terminology system. N.V. Vinogradova suggests differentiating these terms based on system theory classification, which distinguishes between two types of systems: summative (mechanistic) and organic, functional (dynamic) [4]. Mechanistic systems have qualities equal to the sum of their elements' properties, with each element existing independently. Dynamic systems involve holistic interaction among all elements during their functioning. According to this classification, terminology is a mechanistic system, representing a set of terms from a specific field of knowledge or its fragment, outside its practical use, thereby performing a nominative function. In operational conditions, terminology transitions to the level of a terminological system.

In her dissertation titled "The terminological system of the oil industry and its functioning in the professional discourse of a specialist" [17], A.K. Suleymanova argues that the terminological system aligns with the system of concepts within a specific field of knowledge and comprises terms shaped by the cultural context and national mentality.

From our perspective, both terminology and the terminological system of any field embody national identity. Terms are developed and operate within the framework of a particular natural language, making them integral components of terminology and the terminological system, albeit distinct. Consequently, discussions have recently expanded to encompass not only the professional worldview but also the national scientific worldview. The national scientific worldview reflects a national perspective "embodied in the terminological systems (language of science) of a given national language" [8, p. 44].

V. M. Leichik explores the differentiation between "terminology" and a terminological system from various perspectives. He asserts that a scientific theory or concept serves as a key criterion for distinguishing between the two. According to Leichik, terminology consists of a collection of terms that are not unified by any single theory or concept and thus do not encompass all the concepts within a given science or technological field. In contrast, a

terminological system is characterized by a set of terms unified under a single theory or concept, reflecting the interconnections among all concepts within a specific field of knowledge [9, p. 64-65].

A. N. Baranov shares a similar viewpoint, maintaining that within the framework of a single theory, the terms within a specific scientific discipline coalesce to form a terminological system [3, p. 89].

Another distinctive feature of the term system, as highlighted by several linguists such as V. M. Leichik [10, p. 106-116] and R. Yu. Kobrin [7, p. 38-39], is its systematic organization. According to these scholars, terminology arises spontaneously, whereas a term system is deliberately constructed through the organization of terminology into a structured array of terms, complete with their interrelationships documented in industry dictionaries and classification models.

Contrarily, well-known researchers of terminology like A.V. Superanskaya, N.V. Podolskaya, and N.V. Vasilyeva argue that modern terminology is also intentionally crafted. They state, "The terminology of modern science is a consciously formed lexical layer, where each unit is subject to specific usage restrictions and optimal conditions for its development" [18, p. 8].

V. M. Leichik, in his book "Term Studies: Subject, Methods, Structure" [10, p. 106], underscores the distinction between terminology and a terminological system, noting that terms within terminology acquire their specialized meanings, while in a terminological system they additionally exhibit characteristics such as systematic organization, precision, unambiguity, and stylistic neutrality.

Similarly, K. Ya. Averbukh, in the monograph "General Theory of Term," defines a term system as terminology where its inherent systemic properties are explicitly manifested [2, p. 131].

Not all researchers agree that terminology lacks systemic organization while a terminological system does. Advocates of this viewpoint conceive of terminology not merely as a collection of words, but rather as a structured network of interconnected term-words and terminological phrases. This interconnectedness is evidenced through relationships such as synonymous, antonymic, generic, and whole-part relationships within the same terminology. For instance, V. A. Tatarinov [19, p. 268] argues that modern terminology is inherently systemic and undergoes standardization—where terminological units are unified to facilitate effective use in professional and scholarly communication.

D. S. Lotte, one of the pioneers of terminological studies in our country, also viewed terminology as a system. He asserted that scientific terminology should not be seen merely as a list of terms but as a semiotic expression of a specific system of concepts, which in turn reflects a particular scientific worldview [Quoted from: Ibid., p. 280]. Later, Lotte emphasized that terminology is "not just a collection of terms, but a semiological representation of a specific system of concepts, which, in turn, reflects a particular scientific worldview" [11, p. 38].

V. A. Tatarinov highlights the multiple meanings of the term "terminology" and defines it as follows: 1) a collection of specialized units within a language; 2) a compilation of specialized units across various fields of human activity, realms of existence, or the lexicon of an individual scholar; 3) a group of terms viewed collectively in contrast to other specialized vocabularies or

common language terms; 4) an organized system of terms, specifically as a terminological system; 5) a scholarly discipline dedicated to the study of specialized vocabulary (general terminology) [19, p. 267-268].

When examining a collection of industry terms through the definitions outlined above, we find it beneficial to adopt the term "terminology" in its third and fourth senses. This means understanding it as a grouping of terms set apart from other categories of specialized (industry) vocabulary like professionalisms, nomenclature names, pragmonims, and terminoids, and also as a structured system of terms within a specific field of knowledge. This approach assumes that if individual terms are organized systematically, then the terminology itself becomes systemic.

A word or phrase qualifies as a term when its designation forms part of a system—an organized framework of specialized concepts and their relationships. This organized framework is referred to as a terminology field. According to the encyclopedic dictionary "General Terminology," the term "terminology" denotes a multi-tiered classification structure that is systematically unified, encompassing terms across homogeneous professional domains and comprehensively covering the scope of professional experience and knowledge [Ibid., p. 275]. This viewpoint aligns with the concept introduced earlier by the developer of the term field method, A. A. Reformatzky [16, p. 103]. The authors of the "General Terminology" dictionary further clarify this perspective, asserting that the position of a lexical unit within the overall field hierarchy elucidates its meaning, and that the field provides precise guidelines for structuring the comprehensive system of connections. Therefore, the significance of terms is contingent upon "the juxtaposition of all terms and their interrelationships based on the genuine semantic content of objects" [19, p. 278].

According to R. Yu. Kobrin, a term field is characterized as a system encompassing "scientific and technical specialized concepts, which are expressed through terminology—a collection of interconnected lexical units" [7, p. 39]. V. M. Leichik, however, sees the operational scope of a term field as a contentious issue in terminology, noting that "the concept of a term field often overlaps with that of a term system" [10, p. 200]. The divergence in defining a term field—whether as a blueprint for the content of terminology or as a blueprint for the content of a term system—underscores the ongoing lack of a universally accepted and comprehensive definition of a term system that definitively distinguishes it from terminology.

CONCLUSION

After examining various definitions of the terms "terminology," "terminosystem," and "terminofield," several conclusions can be drawn.

A term functions as a lexical unit within terminology, a term system, and a term field. Terminology constitutes a collection of terms primarily serving a nominative function, while a terminological system (or terminology system) is an evolving set of terms designed for communicative purposes. The formation of a terminological system is rooted in a singular scientific theory or concept.

Systematic organization, extensively debated among terminology experts, characterizes both the terminological system and terminology. Terms within both systems are interconnected through hierarchical relationships such as generic and whole-part relationships spanning multiple levels. Many industry-specific terms within terminology and the term system undergo lexical-semantic processes including polysemy, synonymy, and antonymy.

Moreover, both terminology and the term system reflect the conceptual framework of specific fields within science, technology, or other areas of activity, as well as national identity. This explains variations in equivalent terms across different languages, for instance, "Schürze" (German for apron) and "skirt" (English) or "Antennenarm" (German for antenna arm) and "antenna shoulder."

In contemporary terminological studies, there is a tendency to use the term "terminosystem" rather than "terminofield," as scholars frequently consider a term field and a term system to be equivalent concepts.

The key insights from this article can be valuable for examining terms within specific fields of knowledge, as well as for educational purposes, particularly in theoretical courses such as "Lexicology" and "Terminology Management."

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