

Kazakbayeva Dilfuzakhon Ilhomjon kizi

*Senior teacher, PhD of philological sciences, Andijan State Institute of Foreign Languages,
Uzbekistan shohbegim@list.ru*

Shohrat Mammadova Nusret

*Head of the Department of Literature Teaching Technology, Doctor of Philosophy, Associate
Professor, Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University
sohret.nesirova24@gmail.com*

DEFINITION OF THE TERM AND ITS ESSENTIAL FEATURES

Annotation. The place of terms in the lexical system of language and the relationship between a term and a commonly used word are determined. Linguistic features of terminological vocabulary are revealed.

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The concepts of term and terminology are key in science; a term ensures accuracy, clarity and understanding of scientific thought. However, despite the most important place of these concepts in the system of scientific knowledge and a large number of studies, there is still no consensus on a number of fundamental issues of terminology: thus, there is no generally accepted definition of a term, discussions are underway about the requirements for a term, its grammatical expression, the issue of the place of terminology in the language has not been resolved, etc.

In this paper, we will consider existing opinions on the place of a term in the language, determine its most important features and, based on this, try to give a definition of this concept.

Terminology is a part of specialized vocabulary, which includes words and phrases that name objects and concepts in various areas of human professional activity and are not commonly used. A comprehensive study of specialized vocabulary as the main component of language for special purposes began in the 20th century. Terminology as the most important part of specialized vocabulary has been actively studied since the beginning of the 20th century. It becomes obvious that this is a special area of vocabulary, a system organized according to its own laws and requiring its own methods and techniques for study. Despite the large number of studies devoted to terms (see the works of G. O. Vinokur, A. A. Reformatsky, D. S. Lotte, B. N. Golovin, V. M. Leichik, V. P. Danilenko, O. V. Zagorovskaya, T. L. Kandelaki, A. A. Superanskaya, S. V. Grinev, L. A. Kapanadze, A. S. Gerd, S. D. Shelov and many others), one of the main problems of understanding and studying a term as a linguistic category in modern Russian linguistics is its definition. During the study of the features of the term and terminology, a significant number of definitions of the concept of "term" have accumulated. A. V. Superanskaya explains the existence of various interpretations of the concept of "term" primarily by the fact that "... representatives of different disciplines associate it with their own special concepts and ideas, have an unequal volume of content and are defined in their own way."

However, in all logical definitions of a term, its connection with a concept comes to the fore. Cf.: "Terms are special words, limited by their special purpose; words that strive to be unambiguous as an exact expression of concepts and naming of things"; "a term is a word (or phrase), the linguistic sign of which is correlated (connected) with the corresponding concept in the system of concepts of a given field of science and technology"; "a term is a word or phrase of a special (scientific, technical, etc.) language, created (adopted, borrowed, etc.) for the exact expression of special concepts and designation of special objects"; "a term is a word (or phrase), which is a unity of a sound sign and a correlated (connected) corresponding concept with it in the system of concepts of a given field of science and technology".

Thus, based on the above, we consider the ability of a term to designate a certain scientific concept to be its most important feature: “for a term, the named concept is simultaneously the named object, i.e. the “name-concept” connection dominates. Behind a term there is always an object of thought, but not thought in general, but a special thought limited to a certain field”.

At present, the descriptive approach is the most recognized theory in specialized research. However, the shortcomings inherent in this theory (for example, the lack of a generally accepted definition of the term), controversial and undeveloped aspects (the normative nature of terminology, its specificity in relation to the general language) have given rise to other theories. For example, this is the concept of the "linguistic substrate" proposed by V. M. Leichik, according to which a term is "a complex three-layer formation that includes a) a natural-language substrate - a material (sound or graphic) component of the term structure, as well as an ideal (semantic) component of this structure, determined by the term's belonging to the lexical system of a particular natural language; b) a logical superstrate, that is, substantive features that allow the term to denote a general - abstract or concrete concept in a system of concepts; c) the terminological essence, that is, the substantive and functional features that allow the term to perform the functions of an element of a theory describing a certain special sphere of human knowledge or activity”. Also among the alternative theories, one can name the point of view of A. V. Superanskaya and her followers: taking a position in understanding the essence of a term that is in some ways similar to the point of view of supporters of the descriptive approach (for example, recognizing the existence of polysemy, synonyms and antonyms, multi-component terms, the expression of terms by different parts of speech, etc.), she believes that “terminology forms an autonomous section of the vocabulary of the national language, which has little in common with the literary language, ... an independent zone with its own patterns, sometimes inconsistent with the norms of the literary language,” and the meaning of an individual term is revealed only in the system of concepts.

In addition to the correlation of the term with the concept, modern terminology identifies a number of other important requirements that a term must meet: unambiguity, accuracy, compliance with the norms of literary language, brevity, absence of emotionality and expressiveness, motivation, systematicity, etc. The above conditions represent the requirements for a term in an ideal, but in practice there are terms that do not meet them, but successfully serve conceptual purposes. Thus, the question of the obligatory nature of certain requirements remains highly debatable at present.

For example, the requirement of unambiguity is refuted when studying specific terminological systems, where polysemy is a very common phenomenon. Today, the dominant opinion is that the unambiguity of a term is not a mandatory condition, but only a tendency, a state that any terminological system strives for; in practice, the unambiguity of a term is achieved "due to the restrictions that the conditions of each terminological field impose on it". However, it should be noted that in many cases, even within one terminological field, a term can have not one, but several lexical meanings, since the meaning of a term is determined, on the one hand, by the objective content of the corresponding concept, and on the other hand, by a certain subjective principle that is introduced by the researcher in order to clarify the boundaries of the content of a special concept denoted by the term. The requirement of brevity cannot be considered mandatory either. Moreover, the requirement of brevity may contradict the requirements of accuracy and consistency. As A. V. Superanskaya rightly points out, “a term is not a colloquial word, and its precision is more important than its brevity. In this regard, the verbosity of a term cannot be considered its shortcoming. If any concept is designated by a phrase consisting of a group of words that agree well with each other, this both ensures the systematic nature of the term and shows the connection of this concept with others”.

The requirement for motivation, that is, “semantic transparency that allows one to form an idea of the concept named by the term”, is also ambiguous. As a rule, the most important expression of

the motivation of a term is its systematic nature, i.e. the possibility of reflecting in the structure of the term the connection of the named concept with other concepts and the place of this concept in this conceptual system. However, most researchers agree that this criterion does not play a decisive role, since the term still has a definition and occupies a certain place in the system. "In different languages, the motivation of a word related to the same object may be different. For example, the Russian word "linen" is motivated by color (white), English linen - by the original raw material (flax), German Wäsche - by the main feature (erasable). Associations that served as the primary motivation may persist in the future, but they can also change and completely disappear in the process of functioning in speech. Thus, the Russian expression "colored linen" ... testifies to the complete loss of this word's original motivation".

Such a criterion of a term as embeddedness means preference for more widely used terms when compiling terminological recommendations.

Another issue that causes large-scale discussions in modern linguistics is the issue of grammatical expression of terms. According to a number of researchers (G. O. Vinokur, N. A. Shcheglova, A. A. Reformatsky, O. S. Akhmanova, etc.), a term can only be expressed by a noun or a phrase based on a noun. The position on the emphasized nominative nature of a term was refuted by many scientists (S. D. Shelov, I. G. Kozhevnikova, Yu. B. Zhidkova, V. P. Danilenko, A. V. Superanskaya, etc.). Currently, it is believed that terms can be nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and other parts of speech.

Terms expressed by adjectives, adverbs and participles, as a rule, pass into the category of term elements - constituent parts of a phrase, however, this does not exclude their use in the function of terms in texts of specialized literature and in professional communication. S. D. Shelov asserts that "in a terminological dictionary oriented towards the conceptual, semantic system of a given area of knowledge, there is no need to have nominal forms "at the input" at all costs ... it is enough to define only that form of terminological expression that requires its definition in a given subject area. Therefore, in some terminological dictionaries, the input form of presentation of a term is that part of speech that is directly encountered in the definitional context ... Thus, the thesis that a term is always either a noun or a substantive phrase can hardly be accepted for establishing the linguistic specificity of a term".

Thus, generalizing the above and sharing the point of view of a number of other scientists, we understand a term as a word or phrase correlated with a special concept, phenomenon or object in the system of any field of knowledge. We consider the most important features of terminological linguistic units to be, first of all, correlation with a certain scientific concept, accuracy and systematicity. The requirements of unambiguity and brevity, in our opinion, cannot be considered as mandatory for modern terminological units, since many terminological nominations often turn out to be polysemantic and multicomponent.

Conclusion. We consider terminology to be an integral part of the vocabulary of the literary language, independent but not isolated, which implies the subordination of terminology to the general trends in the development of the literary language on the one hand, but also some independence on the other. We see the function of a scientist to a greater extent in the study and description of the state of terminological systems than in their rigid artificial regulation; normative restrictions imposed on terms, in our opinion, rather slow down and limit the development of terminological systems than help them.

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