Functions of the Terminological Units of English Border Terminology

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Abstract

At the present stage of the development of international relations, the role of professional terminology is constantly growing. On the one hand, it is connected with the rapid development of all spheres of social life, science, and technology, and on the other hand - with the penetration of information technology in all spheres of human life. A term is a language unit, so it is characterized by having specific functions. The choice of the terminological scope is predetermined by the rapid growth of international relations and the development of the appropriate vocabulary of the border protection sphere. A border protection term is a lexeme possessing main features of a unit of a terminological system, including functions. Our research focuses on the analysis of the border protection terms functions and on their difference from the common language functions. The functions (nominative, descriptive, signifying, communicative and cognitive) are interrelated and expose different facets of a term.

Keywords: border protection, cognitive, communicative, definitive, function, term, nominative, signifying

1. Introduction

The definitions of a term vary because modern linguists study it from different standpoints. Cambridge Dictionary defines a term as "a word or expression used concerning a particular subject, often to describe something official or technical." According to Teresa Cabre, an outstanding Spanish scholar, "terms are used to name a specialized reality and are thus different from words in the general language because they have a primarily referential purpose" (Cabre 1999: 113).

In our work, we attempt to outline the main functions of specialized terminology of the border protection sphere. Thus, border protection terms are units denoting border protection concepts that are created artificially, taken from a natural language, or borrowed from related fields with which certain concepts correlate and which are related to other notions in this field. They form a terminological system.

2. Literature Review

Contemporary linguists study the structural, semantic, functional and cognitive peculiarities of the professional (specialized) terminology (Cabre, 1999; Formanova, 2022; Hromova, 2022; Kurakh, 2016; Kyrda-Omelian, 2022; Soloviova, 2021). Some scholars made comparative analysis of the English and German term-formation in the legislative documents on the basis of the Schengen Border Code

(Bloshchynskyi, 2021). Such scientists as Z. Batrynchuk, N. Yesypenko, I. Bloshchynskyi, K. Dubovyi and O. Voitiuk presented the research concerning texts multimodality of political print advertisements (Batrynchuk 2022).

A term fulfils certain functions within a specific scope. The functions of a language may vary, but the most widespread among them are the classifications by David Crystal (Crystal, 1993), Sara Thorne (Thorne, 1997), Jean Mulder, Kate Burridge, and Caroline Tomas (Mulder & Burridge & Thomas, 2001).

David Crystal lists seven different functions of a language: "emotional expression", "social interaction", "the power of sound", "the control of reality", "recording the facts", "the instrument of thought", "expression of identity" (Crystal,1993). Sara Thorne names the following language functions: transactional, referential, phatic, and expressive (Thorne,1997). J. Mulder, K. Burridge, and C. Tomas claim that the main functions of a language are: a means of conveying information; an instrument of action; maintaining social relationships a marker of groups; a tool of cognitive and conceptual development (Mulder & Burridge & Thomas, 2001.)

The methods of analysis of English border protection terminology are part of the system and structural paradigm, which uses the technique of direct components, the technique of oppositions, transformational method and component analysis. The initial principles are synchrony, systematization, and significance of a language.

3. Materials and Methods

The Aim

Our paper **aims to** outline the main functions of the border protection terminology and to analyze the role of professional terminology in the effective professional communication between the participants of the communicative act in the sphere of border protection and border defense.

Based on the purpose of the study, we identify the following objectives:

- describing the main approaches to the definition of language functions;
- outlining the essential functions of the specialized language;
- analyzing the main functions of the border protection terminology.

English border protection terms are a set of lexical units that have been extracted from reports of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM), the Unified Training Program for Border and Coast Guard Basic Training in the EU (Common Core Curriculum), The US Coast Guardsman's Manual, and guidelines for observing fundamental rights of migrants and refugees at European airports, and the European Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) which are the material of our research. The scopus of our study comprises 1400 terminological units.

The methods of analysis of English border protection terminology are part of the system and structural paradigm, which uses the method of direct components, the method of oppositions, transformational method, component analysis, which are as formalized as possible. The initial principles are synchrony, systematization and significance of a language.

4. Results

The term is a functional concept. Terms are, first of all, linguistic units within a particular lexical system, words in a particular function. Summarizing the views of prominent linguists on the problem of functions of terminological units, we note that the main functions are as follows: nominative, signifying, communicative, definitive, pragmatic, and the cognitive (or epistemological) one. The function of sign systematization, as well as and heuristic function, are also mentioned in some research papers (Sytdykov, 2011).

We consider English terms of the border protection sphere in isolation, thus they do not depend on the context. Certain general functions of terminological units are not the functions of the border protection units.

The term "function" has two meanings: first, it is the role played by the language unit (grammatical category, grammatical form) in the speech reproduction, and secondly, it is the purpose (or use) of various aspects of language and its elements. Under the notion "function of a word" scholars usually mean the aim and purpose of reproducing the lexical unit in the language, its (linguistic unit) actualization.

The functions of a language unit reveal its essence. They are also a realization of its role in the language system. The primary function of terminology is the maintenance of particular professional communication. In our research, we analyze the communication of the representatives of the frontier defense sphere.

The pragmatic functioning of terminological units lies in the peculiarities of subject-addressee relations, communicative needs of the experts, ways of transmitting information, as well as social and pragmatic goals. The functioning of terms is directly related to implementing the main features of terminological units. These features are the systemic essence of terms, their definite nature, unambiguousness, and informative value (Berezovskaia, 2011).

Eleonora Pawłowicz (2014), researching the functions of the specialized languages, claims that the main functions are:

a. communicative function (specialized languages are communication tools);

b. cognitive function (a specialized language structures the knowledge itself);

c. cumulative function (specialized languages accumulate and store gained knowledge);

d. group-forming function (a language both reflects and constructs reality);

e. instrumental function (specialized languages are not only tools of professional training, but also determinants both of creative participation in civilization

f. development and of using civilization achievements of others);

g. civilization development indication function (specialized languages' number, richness, internal organization, and degree of precision, indicates the standard of living in a given linguistic community).

Having analyzed the set of lexical units belonging to the border protection terminological system, we make an attempt to outline the main functions of the terminological units under consideration. Firstly, border protection terms possess *a nominative* function, the essence of which is to name objects, phenomena, and processes. The process of nominating a language implies the search or selection of the most successful word to convey a particular concept (object, process) using the word-formation models established in the language within a specific lexical system. The terms are language units in a particular function – the nominative one.

The nominative function is often considered to be identical with the representative one. That is, each lexeme nominates (represents) a specific concept. The peculiar feature of this function is that it denotes a special concept of a certain field of human activity. In other words, the nominative function reflects the name or designation of certain concepts, objects, processes, and phenomena in the border protection area. The rapid development of social and political events in the world predetermines the necessity to nominate the border concepts. The expansion of international relations, freedom of movement, the threat of illegal migration, and smuggling led to the emergence of concepts that immediately had to be nominated using language. The lexemes 'entry', 'check', 'search', 'image', 'interview', and others, which are the words of everyday language, were used in one of their meanings to nominate borderline concepts. The words 'offense', 'law enforcement' and 'legal aid' were borrowed from the legal field, 'electronics technician'; 'engineering' and 'processor' - from the engineering area, 'armed vessel', 'automatic gun' and 'revolver' - from the military one. The function of these lexemes is the nomination of border protection concepts. However, they are not purely the border protection terms, which confirms the postulate that the terminology is a set of all lexical units that operate within a given terminological scope and denote the concepts of this field. If intralinguistic resources are not enough to represent a particular idea, lexical units are borrowed not only from related fields but also from the other languages: 'function', 'identity', 'surveillance' - of French origin; 'cargo', 'squad', 'embarkation' - of Spanish origin; 'cell', 'conduct', 'custody' - of Latin origin, 'asylum', 'basic', 'ethnic' - of Greek origin, etc. The need to borrow language units refers not only to terminological systems but also to language in general. Borrowing does not necessarily take place to nominate a new, non-existent concept.

The word as a unit of language is a carrier of some information. It always correlates with the particular objects and phenomena of the reality denoted by it. The fact that a word encodes the objective reality determines the signifying function of language. In other words, the function of signifying is the reflection of objective reality through the concept. It lies in the ability of a language unit to express distinctive features, a meaningful concept of a particular class of objects. This function is inherent in terminological units, which function in speech according to standard language rules. There is an opinion that since not all terms are entirely (correctly) motivated, not all of them can express concepts - some of them only nominate them.

Another function of a term is the *definitive* function - the terms possess a clear and precise definition. Each term correlates with a clear separate definition that focuses on the relevant concept. Terms differ from non-terms by their correlation with the definitions, e.g., 'anti-human-trafficking squad – a squad dealing with human trafficking', 'Coast Guard aviation – the aircraft of the US Coast Guard', 'data protection violation - fail to comply with data protection'. Thus, if ordinary words have only a nominative function, the terms also perform a definitive function. If a term goes beyond its terminology, it loses its dominant field seme, so it does not perform a definitive function anymore, and, accordingly, ceases to be a term. We can say that determinologization is the process of transforming a term into a non-term by neutralizing its definitive function. The term and its definition should equally represent the concept. The term is equal to its definition, and the definition corresponds to the scope of the concept and conveys its main meaning. That is, the term names a concept, and its content is determined by definition. The definition provides the minimum amount of information necessary for understanding, perceiving and distinguishing individual concepts from each other.

One of the essential functions of the terminological units is the *communicative* one, the essence of which is to transfer certain meaningful information between the subjects through words, setting the feedback. In other words, the communicative function reveals that language is primarily a means of transmitting thoughts and feelings. This function is typical of all lexical items.

The communicative function of terms is somewhat different from the functions of the common language lexemes. Ordinary speakers fully understand each other in everyday communication, but experts must often clarify a specific term or argue its exact definition.

We aim to explore a set of terms in the border protection area. The existence of these terminological units is due to the need for internal and international communication. All the terms appear due to the need to transfer specific knowledge (or information). A border guard officer does not need to invent a new term every time to explain a specific concept to the representative of the border sphere or a non-expert. A border guard officer or other person involved in the protection of Europe's borders uses established concepts formed at a certain point in the development of border terminology. E.g., a border protection officer uses the term 'immigration', but not 'act of coming

to live permanently in a foreign country', because the former already exists within the border protection terminological vocabulary. Effective communication between border guards and travelers is possible due to the use of accurate, precise, and unambiguous terminological units. The pragmatic function (use of language for intellectual, emotional, or purposeful influence on the addressee of speech) is a subfunction of the communicative one. Still, this function is not manifested concerning the border protection terminology, as its implementation is possible only in discourse.

Cognitive function denotes the term as a result of verbalization of a long-lasting process of cognition of the essence of objects and phenomena of objective reality. A term is viewed as the result of a discourse that implements the process of cognition. In this process, the term results from the attempt to approach the adequacy of special knowledge. The process of thinking, the process of study, and the transfer of knowledge are interrelated aspects of this function.

Cognitive function means that language supports gaining and processing knowledge about the world not only because it allows us to communicate information (as the communicative function does) but primarily because it structures the knowledge itself (Pawłowicz, 2014).

The existence of maintenance of the border area is determined by the need for intra-departmental and international communication. All terminological units arose due to the need to transfer certain knowledge (or information). A demonstrative example of the cognitive functions is the fact, that a representative of the border area does not need to invent a new term every time, when they need to render a certain concept. A border guard officer or other person involved in the protection of European borders uses established concepts that were formed at a certain moment in the development of border terminology. For example, officers will not use the phrase 'an official document issued by a government' instead of the well-known term 'passport', because the terminology system already contains relevant terms, which are understandable to all the persons involved in the relevant field, as well as travelers.

M. Salamakha classifies the concepts into "terms with high cognitive value" and "terms with low cognitive value." The former ones form a significant number of other terminological phrases (semantic derivatives). Their peculiar feature is their low informativity. Thus, these are general terms that have a low semantic load. On the other hand, the terms with low cognitive value (a small number of semantic derivatives - mostly terms that consist of many components, have a high informativity and convey new information. (Salamaha, 2012). Within our study, the terms with high cognitive value are 'border', 'police', 'visa', 'passport', 'asylum', 'immigration', 'procedure', 'officer', 'procedure', 'system' etc., each of which occurs up to 30 times, both as one-component terms and as part of compounds ('border-related', 'asylum-seeker', 'officer-in-charge' etc.) and multi-component phrases ('human trafficking', 'subject to return procedure', 'border-crossing entry point', 'officer training on human trafficking' etc.) and others. Terms with low cognitive value are multi-component phrases: two-component ('personnel manual'), three-component ('protecting a crime scene'), and poly-component ('presumed victims of human trafficking'). We can conclude that terms with different cognitive value can unite, create new units, and coexist within the same terminological system. From the point of view of cognition, the term verbalizes abstract subject knowledge and provides the transfer of knowledge.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, we outlined the main functions of the terminological units of the border protection sphere. The terminological system of the border protection sphere functionates based on the main principles of the English language. Contemporary scholars outline different functions of a common language and a professional language. Thus, not all the functions of everyday language (e.g. expressing emotions) can be referred to as the functions of the professional language. They can contradict the main features of terminological units (such as unambiguousness). The main functions of English border protection terms are:

- the nominative one (nomination of border concepts);

- the signifying one (designation of border concepts);

- the definitive one (the term has a clear definition);

- the communicative one (transmission of information);

- the cognitive one (verbalization of the process of cognition).

The set of all common language and proper terminological language functions ensures the effective functioning of the English border protection terminology.

6. Suggestions for Further Research

We do not claim that it is impossible to extend the set of the functions mentioned above. Firstly, different functions are exposed in the terminological units to a different extent. Secondly, some functions can be united and interconnected. Thirdly, there is a need to analyze certain functions more profoundly. All the above-mentioned issues can be the aim of our further research.

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