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TERMS AND PROFESSIONALISMS: FORMATION, FUNCTIONAL FEATURES, AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN TERMINOLOGY MANAGEMENT

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Abstract. This article examines the theoretical foundations of the concepts of terms and professionalisms, their relationship, their functional characteristics in professional communication, and the processes through which they develop. It also discusses the classification of specialized vocabulary, terminology standardization, the development of multilingual terminological resources, and the management of terminological data through digital technologies. By identifying the distinctive features of terms and professionalisms, the article considers ways to promote accuracy, consistency, and comprehensibility in scientific and technical communication. The role of interdisciplinary interaction, translation, professional education, and artificial intelligence in the development of terminological systems is also addressed.

Keywords. term; terminology; professionalism; professional vocabulary; specialized language; terminology standardization; terminology management; multilingual communication; translation.

The rapid development of contemporary science and technology has led to the emergence of specialized lexical units that express concepts belonging to different fields. In science, engineering, medicine, information technology, economics, and manufacturing, the accurate use of specialized vocabulary is important for exchanging scientific information, improving professional performance, and transmitting knowledge consistently. From this perspective, the study of terms and professionalisms is a significant area of contemporary linguistics, terminology studies, translation studies, and professional communication.

Terminology is concerned with naming and defining concepts in a particular field of knowledge, organizing them systematically, and identifying the relationships between them [1, 2]. The international standard ISO 704:2022 sets out principles for terminology work, including the relationships between concepts and designations and approaches to term formation and definition writing [1]. This approach suggests that terminology should be understood not merely as a collection of specialized words, but as a scientific and practical activity based on a system of concepts.

Alongside terms, professionalisms constitute an important layer of specialized vocabulary. They are used within particular occupations and professional communities, especially in everyday workplace communication, production processes, and the exchange of practical experience. However, the boundary between terms and professionalisms is not always clear-cut. Some expressions initially used informally within a professional group may become more widely used or enter an official terminological system over time.

The aim of this article is to explain the theoretical nature of terms and professionalisms, identify their similarities and differences, outline contemporary principles of terminology management, and demonstrate the importance of specialized vocabulary in multilingual and digital communication.

The article uses descriptive, comparative-analytical, and classification methods. Its discussion is based on terminology literature and principles presented in international standards.

Theoretical foundations of terms and terminology. Terminology studies the units used to name concepts in specialized fields of knowledge and the semantic relationships between those concepts. A term can be described as a designation for a concept within a particular subject field. Unlike many words in general vocabulary, its meaning is interpreted in relation to a specific scientific, technical, or professional context.

M. T. Cabré presents terminology as an interdisciplinary field closely connected with linguistics, cognition, communication, and documentation. Her approach emphasizes that terminological units should be studied not only in terms of their linguistic form, but also in relation to the concepts they represent and the communicative functions they perform [2].

One of the principal characteristics of terms is their capacity to express a specialized concept with a high degree of precision. Their meaning, field of application, and relationship to other concepts are therefore important [1, 5]. Examples include **myocardial infarction** in medicine, **interface** in information technology, and **photovoltaic system** in energy engineering. The meaning of each unit is clarified by the theoretical and practical knowledge of its relevant field.

The consistency of a terminological system depends on the accurate definition of concepts and the identification of relationships among them. If one concept is expressed by several names, synonymous variants may need to be recorded. Conversely, if the same form has different meanings in different fields, its subject area and context should be specified. For this reason, terminological resources should ideally record not only the term itself, but also its definition, subject field, source, synonyms, and usage characteristics.

J. C. Sager links terminology work with the collection, organization, standardization, storage, and use of specialized vocabulary [3]. This perspective shows that terminology work extends beyond theoretical linguistic questions to practical information management and translation.

The nature and distinctive features of professionalisms. Professionalisms are specialized lexical units used in the activities and communication of particular occupational groups. They often emerge through practical experience, informal interaction, and the conventions of a professional environment [5, 6]. Such expressions can help practitioners communicate quickly and concisely, coordinate work, and share professional knowledge. The differences can be summarized as follows:

Functional and communicative features of terms and professionalisms. Specialized vocabulary primarily serves to transmit information accurately and efficiently in professional communication. Terms name concepts, organize scientific information, describe technical processes, and help establish a shared conceptual framework among specialists. Professionalisms, in turn, may promote brevity, speed, and mutual understanding in everyday workplace interaction.

One important function of specialized vocabulary is communicative precision. When concepts in a field are expressed through consistent terminology, information exchange among specialists becomes more reliable [1, 2, 6]. By contrast, using different names for the same concept without explanation, or using one term to refer to different concepts, may lead to misunderstanding.

A second function is the transmission and preservation of knowledge. Terminological dictionaries, databases, technical documents, and educational materials preserve specialized knowledge in an organized form. These resources support professional training, scientific research, and the transfer of practical experience to new generations.

A third function relates to translation and interdisciplinary collaboration. Specialists working in different languages need coordinated terms to express the same concepts. In this process, identifying a dictionary equivalent is not sufficient: the meaning of the concept, its field of use, and its functional characteristics must also be taken into account.

At the same time, excessive use of professionalisms may create barriers to communication. This is particularly relevant in international collaboration, public communication, and texts intended for broad audiences, where specialized expressions may need to be explained. Effective professional communication therefore requires a balance between terminological precision and accessibility.

Terminology standardization and management. Terminology standardization is the process of establishing consistent designations for concepts in a particular field and promoting uniform use of preferred terms [1, 6]. It is especially important in engineering, medicine, technology, and other areas where precision is essential.

ISO 704:2022 describes general principles for terminology work, including relationships among objects, concepts, definitions, and designations, as well as approaches to term formation and definition writing [1]. These principles provide a methodological basis for developing terminological dictionaries, standards, and specialized databases.

Terminology management includes more than collecting and classifying terms. It also involves checking, approving, updating, and monitoring their use in practice. This process can be organized into the following stages:

1. Term identification and collection. Relevant units are extracted from specialized texts, standards, research articles, and professional documents.
2. Concept clarification. The meaning of each term, its field of application, and its relationships with other concepts are established.
3. Terminological analysis. Synonyms, variants, abbreviations, and possible cases of polysemy are examined.
4. Standardization and approval. Recommended forms are identified with the participation of relevant specialists.
5. Documentation and dissemination. Terms are recorded in dictionaries, databases, standards, and electronic resources.
6. Monitoring and updating. New concepts, technologies, and changes in usage are taken into account.

This approach helps improve the reliability of terminological resources and encourages consistent use of terms across documents.

In digital terminology management, storing data in standardized formats is also important. ISO 30042:2019 specifies requirements for the TermBase eXchange (TBX) format, which supports the structured representation and exchange of terminological data [4]. Such an approach facilitates the reuse of terminology across systems, integration into translation workflows, and improved compatibility between electronic resources.

The role of terminology in multilingual translation and intercultural communication. In an increasingly globalized world, scientific and technical information is frequently exchanged across languages. The accurate organization of terminology is therefore one of the key conditions for high-quality translation. Translating specialized texts requires more than finding a lexical equivalent: the concept expressed in the source language must be represented accurately within the terminological system of the target language.

Several problems may arise in translation. First, the target language may not have an exact equivalent for a source-language term. Second, similar-looking terms may designate different concepts in different languages. Third, some professional expressions may be associated with national culture, production practices, or the traditions of a particular professional community.

Terminological dictionaries and multilingual databases are valuable in addressing these challenges [2, 3, 6]. A terminological entry that includes a definition, subject field, contextual example, approved equivalents, and source information gives translators a more reliable basis for decision-making.

Translating professionalisms requires additional care because their meanings may depend on the experience and informal communication practices of a professional group. A literal translation does not always preserve the original meaning. Translators should therefore analyze the context and, when necessary, use an explanatory translation or select a functionally appropriate expression in the target language.

When multilingual terminological resources are developed, it is particularly important to verify the semantic equivalence of terms across languages. In addition to grammatical form, the concept's meaning, subject-field specificity, and practical usage must be considered.

Digital technologies and future directions in terminology. The development of digital technologies is transforming the ways in which terminological data are collected, processed, stored, and disseminated [4, 6]. Electronic dictionaries, terminology databases, text corpora, machine translation, and artificial intelligence tools offer new opportunities for analyzing specialized vocabulary.

Electronic terminology databases can store terms in a unified system, link them to definitions and translation equivalents, identify duplicate or inconsistent entries, and track updates [4, 6]. Such systems are particularly useful for organizations, translation services, and research institutions that operate in multiple languages.

Artificial intelligence and natural language processing technologies can support automatic term extraction, contextual analysis, and the identification of semantic relationships between terminological units. However, not every unit identified automatically should be treated as an established term. Distinguishing general vocabulary from professional jargon, abbreviations, and polysemous expressions requires contextual analysis and review by subject-field experts.

Another important direction is the development of terminological competence. Professionals need not only to know the terms of their field, but also to select, define, translate, and explain them appropriately for different audiences. These skills should be developed through professional education, continuing training, and lifelong learning.

Digital terminology work must also address the reliability of data, linguistic and cultural differences, the regular updating of resources, and accessibility for users. Technological tools can accelerate terminological work, but scientifically grounded analysis remains essential when interpreting concepts and making normative decisions.

The study of terms and professionalisms is important for understanding how specialized vocabulary is formed, used, and developed. The analysis presented in this article leads to several conclusions.

First, a term designates a concept within a particular field of knowledge or activity and primarily serves to communicate specialized information accurately and consistently. The effectiveness of a terminological system depends on clear definitions, explicit conceptual relationships, and consistent use of designations.

Second, professionalisms are specialized lexical units that emerge in the practical activities and everyday communication of professional communities. Although they share certain features with terms, they may differ in their scope of use, stylistic characteristics, and normative status. The boundary between the two categories is dynamic, and the status of particular expressions may change over time.

Third, terminology standardization and management help ensure the accuracy, consistency, and reliability of specialized vocabulary. The main stages include collecting terms, clarifying concepts, documenting synonyms and variants, disseminating approved forms, and regularly updating terminological resources.

Fourth, terminological consistency in multilingual communication improves translation quality and supports the accurate transfer of concepts between languages. The meaning, subject-field specificity, and contextual use of a term must be considered alongside its lexical form.

Fifth, digital technologies expand the possibilities for organizing and processing terminological data. Nevertheless, automated results should be reviewed through terminological expertise, particularly when dealing with polysemous units and context-dependent professionalisms.

Overall, a key objective of contemporary terminology work is to preserve conceptual precision while ensuring that specialized vocabulary can be used, translated, and understood effectively by different audiences. The systematic study of terms and professionalisms therefore provides an important theoretical and practical foundation for improving professional communication, transmitting scientific knowledge, and developing multilingual terminological resources.

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