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Cognitive Approach to Synonymic Relationship in Terminology

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Abstract

The complex and least studied aspects of the study of terms include questions of their systemic organization at the level of lexico-semantic paradigmatics. An important problem that requires a detailed study on the material of various term systems is the implementation of the semantic process of synonymy in terminology. Based on this, the article reveals the content of the term "terminological synonymy". The main attention of the author is drawn to the generalization of theoretical views on the essence of the phenomenon of synonymy in terminology. The study analyzes the cognitive approach to synonymic relationship in terminology, including the interpretation of the concepts of "synonym", "doublet" and "variant", also offers its own understanding of these concepts.

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The problem of synonymy, the study of which lasts as long as philology exists, is still far from being resolved. Therefore, it is not surprising that, when applied to terms, this issue causes the same variety of various judgments as it does regarding the synonymy of lexical units in general. To date, linguists talk about a kind of "explosion" of synonymy in terminology, due to the rapid development of sciences.

The term (from the Latin terminus - "border") means "a word or phrase of special scientific speech, which is created (accepted, borrowed) to accurately express special concepts and designate special objects." From an ordinary word or phrase, the term differs in the accuracy of semantic boundaries.

The study of terms is carried out by a separate branch of lexicology - terminology. Terminology is a kind of subsystem of the general literary language, which obeys all the laws of the common language of people, occupying a special place in it.

This placement of terminology leads, on the one hand, to the obligatory nature of general trends in the development of the literary language, and on the other hand, to a certain freedom, independence in its functioning. A two-way interaction has been established between scientific terminology and general literary language. On the one hand, general vocabulary constantly enriches the main base of terminology, being its main source, on the other hand, terms are often determined. For terminological vocabulary, in comparison with the commonly used one, certain differential features are characteristic: consistency, stylistic neutrality, a tendency towards unambiguity within the terminological field, the presence of an exact definition, a tendency towards the absence of synonymous correspondences, etc.

The problem of synonymy in terminology has been the subject of many studies by well-known scientists, but so far there has not been an unambiguous view of the essence of this linguistic phenomenon. Disputable issues remain such as clarifying the boundaries of terminological synonymy, defining the criteria for synonymy in terminology, the relationship between synonymy and variance.

Synonymy is a semantic phenomenon, which is considered one of the most important system-forming categories in the lexicon. Synonyms in linguistics are understood as words denoting the name of the same concept, common in basic lexical meaning, but differing in semantic shades or emotionally expressive coloring, or in the sphere of stylistic use, or in the possibilities of combination with, in other words. Since terminology is part of the vocabulary of a language, synonymy is inevitable in it.

Speaking about synonymy in terminology, it should be noted that the same types of systemic connections are fixed in term systems as in other layers of the vocabulary of a commonly used language.

In a general literary language, each word of a synonymic series in a certain context can have only one meaning, and therefore the use of a synonym here is quite justified. The specificity of the term is that, regardless of the context, it has only one meaning, and therefore synonymous terms for designating one concept are considered undesirable in terminology. L. Novikov notes that in the general literary language "synonyms are considered one of the most important backbone categories. In terminological systems, their role is much less, since in them only a kind of full and partial synonymy is realized.

The signs of synonyms in terminology somewhat coincide with the signs of synonyms in the general language vocabulary, in particular, they denote the same concept, can denote the same subject, are capable of interchangeability in the text without losing their main meaning. However, synonyms in terminology also have their own characteristics that distinguish terminological synonymy from commonly used synonymy. They are often identical in meaning; are synonymous by denotation and signification at the same time; do not change the meaning of the statement at all; may have differences in the conceptual plan, may differ in the semantics of word-forming elements, features of functioning; are not opposed on the basis of emotional and expressive significance, they are divided within the framework of the scientific style (academic and popular science). It is also necessary to consider the specifics of each terminological system. Thus, church-religious terminology, in contrast to technical terminology, cannot be denied synonymous relations at the level of frequency of use, scope of use, etc.

Some researchers note that terminological synonymy should be considered a negative phenomenon, since it violates the structural integrity of the terminology system, makes it difficult to function, terms that enter into synonymous relations are often superfluous and violate the indispensable condition of terminology - the absence of synonymic correspondences for the term; makes it difficult to master the terminology; interferes with the presentation of information and its ambiguous perception. Other scholars argue that synonymous terms are useful because each of them reveals the content of the concept in a different way; the existence of synonymous terms contributes to the semantic development of the terminological system as a whole, helps to find by selection the most appropriate name to designate a certain concept, the presence of synonyms in the terminology makes it possible to avoid repetitions in the presentation of the material; synonymous terms fully meet the communicative needs of users. V. Leichik assesses the presence of synonyms in terminology as a natural result of the development of science and an increase in the amount of scientific knowledge about an object.

O. Martynyak believes that one should not sharply oppose synonymy in the terminology of synonymy in the literary language as a whole, because the terminological vocabulary is a layer of the vocabulary of the literary language,

which has the same features [16]. That is why it is necessary to speak of synonymy in terminology not only as a "ballast in terminology", but also as an integral feature of terminology and language in general.

When defining synonymy in terminology, there are several trends. Most scientists consider synonyms to be words of the same part of speech that have meanings that completely or partially coincide, and therefore can replace each other in the context. Other researchers note that synonyms can correlate with one concept or object, and call them terminological doublets. Some scientists associate synonymy with general literary vocabulary, and doublets with terminology. There are also scientists who argue that synonymous terms are not only doublet (absolute) forms, but also relative ones. Such a variety of views on terminological synonymy can be explained, first of all, by the ambiguous interpretation of synonymy in the general literary language.

Since the scientific style requires the maximum accuracy of definitions, industry terminologies tend to get rid of synonymy, which makes it difficult to perceive scientific information and may cause misunderstanding of a scientific text. But, on the other hand, synonymy is a natural manifestation of the development of the language, since in the process of the direct development of science, the number of terms for designating already known objects and phenomena is constantly increasing, which affects the development of synonymic series. The abundance of synonyms marks those areas of terminological vocabulary that have been formed over a long historical period. Some scholars believe that synonyms appear only in the early stages of the formation of terminological systems. Each terminology has certain features of the manifestation of synonymic relations, which is associated with the peculiarity of the formation and structure of its categorical and conceptual apparatus, and at the initial stage of the formation of terminology, and during the period of intensive development or normalization of the terminological system, a large number of synonyms can be observed.

According to L. Simonenko, synonymy is observed in terminological systems at any stage of development. Therefore, from the very beginning of the emergence of term systems, there is a need to choose from a synonymous series of the term that can accurately characterize a particular concept.

A. Koval notes that the emergence of a new concept usually causes the appearance of several terms at once, created in different places by different people. Over time, the content and scope of the new concept is refined, it becomes possible to separate the characteristic features of the concept and create or choose from the existing terms one that meets the requirements. Other synonyms for this concept are gradually falling out of use. Thus, the researcher argues that "the presence of synonymous terms in the scientific style is, although undesirable, but an inevitable consequence of the rapid development of science and technology." Thus, it can be seen that the emergence of a large number of synonymous rows is caused by the possibility of approaching objects and phenomena of reality in a different way in the process of their cognition, as a result of which various nominations appear in the process of naming the same realities of the objective world.

The reasons for the emergence of synonymy in terminology are due to linguistic and extralinguistic factors: non-uniformity of terminology; the presence of obsolete names that function along with new ones; the interaction of the literary language and dialect speech; the revival of the terminological heritage of the past and the creation of new names; the use of a borrowed term; the existence of full and abbreviated versions of the terms.

V. Piletsky believes that the use of "special names in texts convinces that a second name is needed: a) for the scientific definition of the concept and interpretation of the name of the term (especially foreign), b) for the exact expression of thought, especially when the boundary between concepts is not clearly defined, c) to avoid repetition of the same word or phrase.

In general, although synonymy in terminology is assessed negatively, since synonyms, as a general linguistic phenomenon, do not always convey one concept, but quite often denote close meanings, have certain stylistic shades, etc., which is unacceptable for terminology, nevertheless it is an inevitable phenomenon. This is explained by the fact that terminology is a component of vocabulary, its subsystem and develops according to the same laws as the general literary language. Synonyms correspond to one concept, and therefore some researchers do not recognize the synonymy of existence in the term system, but allow the existence of double terms, others support the opinion that there are synonyms, although they believe that only terminological pairs occur in terminology, in contrast to the general literary language, where there are whole synonyms.

T. Mikhailova notes that "almost all domestic and foreign linguists today recognize the naturalness and inevitability of synonymous relations between terms as a manifestation of general language processes."

D. Lotte believed that the existence of two or more terms to designate one concept over time leads to the fact that "one of these terms can narrow or expand its semantic structure, or even begin to designate a completely different concept. According to the scientist, only a synonym containing two terms, one of which is a short form of the other, can be acceptable. These terms are constructed in such a way that the extended term covers the features of the concept in a more open form, although it does not designate any other concept compared to the short form, neither in terms of the meaning of the term elements, nor in the content of the term as a whole. The scientist calls such terms even and considers their existence possible only in those conditions when they correlate with one concept. Short synonyms for full terms are possible only in narrow professional use, and are unacceptable for popular science and scientific speech styles.

Thanks to the works of V. Danilenko, the views on the synonymy of terms have changed somewhat. The researcher admits that the terms "are characterized by the same linguistic phenomena as any other word of the general literary language, therefore, the phenomenon of synonymy." She also believes that the requirements to ban synonyms will never be met even by those scientists who deny the existence of synonymy in terminology, because even they "mask" synonyms when they take them in brackets, when they give recommendations on the use of abbreviated forms of terms, and "also when using internationalisms that are synonymous with a national term.

At present, many scientists "under synonymy in terminology usually understand the phenomenon of doublet...". E. Tolikina notes that within the terminology we deal only with doublets. There are no emotional-expressive, stylistic or shading oppositions between doublets, they can differ only in etymology or structure. At the same time, she calls for the elimination of doublets "to streamline terminological systems." Thus, E. Tolikina believes that the synonymy of terms provides for the correlation of synonyms with one concept, that is, one meaning. V. Leichik refers to doublets different root formations that are identical in content, and synonyms can express both the same concept and several close ones. The scientist also calls the manifestation of synonymy those cases when the term corresponds in semantics to non-terminological lexical units, including those that do not belong to the literary style (jargon, professional vocabulary, dialectisms).

D. Lotte divided synonyms into absolute and relative, pointing out the need for synonyms in the field of terms, and noted that the synonymy of terms is clearly manifested in their functioning in scientific texts.

So, doublet as a kind of synonymy is most characteristic of terminology. Terminological doublets are words or phrases that are united by a special terminological correlation with the same scientific concept and object of reality. A characteristic feature of doublet terms is that they refer to the same object, have a common denotation and do not have any semantic differences.

Another problem worth paying attention to is the issue of the difference between synonymy and variance of terms. According to some scientists, there can be no synonymous connections between single-root formations with the same meaning, since such formations are not separate independent words, but word-forming variants of words. This position, which develops the theory of A. Smirnitsky about the variance of the word, was developed by O. Akhmanova. O. Akhmanova and A. Smirnitsky for the first time raised the issue of the relationship between variants and synonyms, which had a great influence on practical and theoretical work in the field of synonymy. O. Akhmanova identifies phonetic and morphological variants; the latter includes single-root words with the same meaning. The limit of lexical synonymy, according to the theory of the linguist, passes within word-formation phenomena: all single-root formations with the same meaning remain outside the synonymy, but the synonymic system covers single-root words, the semantic connections of which are built on the proximity of the meaning. However, the study often lacks clarity in distinguishing between semantic identity and similarity of meanings, which casts doubt on the whole theory. Even O. Akhmanova herself notes: "Due to the fact that different affixal derivational morphemes have different degrees of lexical-semantic independence, it is often difficult to practically distinguish different words-variants of one word." In our opinion, this theory does not consider the fact that single-root units, even identical in meaning, cannot be variants of the same word, because they appeared as a result of word formation, i.e. basic way of creating words in a language. E. Ivannikova argues that "single-root words with the same meaning are separate independent words that arise due to the presence of parallel derivational means in the language." That is, if we analyze the relationship of semantically close cognates, it becomes obvious that synonymous relations are also manifested in cognates.

So, despite the requirement not to use synonyms in one term system, the synonymy of terms is inherent in any terminology. Synonymous terms are necessary for the scientific definition of the concept, the exact expression of thought, the avoidance of repetitions of the same word or phrase. In the scientific literature, absolute synonymy, or doublet, and variance are distinguished. The term "doublet", in our opinion, is inappropriate to use in the analysis of term systems because of its ambiguity in linguistics. In addition, this concept does not exhaust the entire variety of linguistic forms of some synonymous terms. Supporting the opinion of researchers, we believe that the name "terminological variation" should not be used either, because it is possible to understand all cases of denoting the same concept by various linguistic means as a synonym in the broad sense of the word. Thus, we consider it appropriate to use the terms "terminological synonyms" or "terms-synonyms".

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