The role of English deverbal terms in industrial communication

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Abstract. The paper aims at analyzing deverbal terms containing component “time” in their semantics. Being the means of conceptual representation of “time” in the language and particularly in terminology, English deverbal terms are of apparent interest for industrial communication. Semantics of time is analyzed irrespective of grammatical aspect, through the human’s perception and understanding time manifested in communication. Semantic feature of “time”, being a linguistic category, allows to reveal reflection of some real time outline in a language, determining accuracy of terminological semantics in technical translation and in industrial communication. It is concluded that there is a whole layer of deverbal terms that have a temporal meaning due to a genetic connection with verbs denoting an event that takes place in time. The use of deverbal terms in industrial communication allows to specify the relation of events and processes denoted in their roots to time.

1. Introduction

The subject of dissertation researches on philology during the last decades testifies to a significant increase of interest in the study of the semantics of English deverbal terms integrating the time component. This is due, first of all, to the fact that terms perform the communicative function in industrial communication, which consists in providing mutual understanding between representatives of various professions. The effectiveness of such communication depends on the availability of a theoretical basis in each particular field of knowledge; degree of specialists’ proficiency in the stock of common, learned and special words; in terminological apparatus of the sublanguage of the system of scientific knowledge used by the specialists and professionals.

2. Terminology and terms

2.1 Terminology

Language as a tool of creation, transfer and storage of information is connected with the practical activities of humans. The professional language, or terminology, is one of its manifestation. Fundamental approaches to investigations in terminology in Russia are based on researches of D.S. Lotte and other Soviet linguists, as well as on the achievements of modern terminological theory and practice in general. As for the terminology, D.S. Lotte considers it as a set of terms that corresponds to the system of concepts of a particular field of science or technology. It can be assumed that the system of terms represents a system of concepts of a certain area of knowledge [1]. There are different definitions of terminology in linguistics. O.S. Akhmanova defines terminology as the complex of the terms of a particular manufacturing sector, activity, knowledge, forming a special layer of the vocabulary, which is most easily susceptible to conscious regulation and
arrangement [2]. V.M. Leitchik considers terminology as a language formation of a paradigmatic type, a spontaneously created set of lexical units having semantic generality and similarity in formal structure. These lexical units function in a language for specific purposes, denoting general concepts which are peculiar to a certain field of knowledge or activity [3]. Yu.V. Slozhenkina believes that terminology is the only one of the actualized parts of the whole creative process in the field of science, where there are objective and subjective beginnings, conservatism and novelty of discovery [4]. According to A.V. Superanskaya, N.V. Podolskaya and N.V. Vasilieva terminology as a system of terms constitutes the part of a special lexicon [5].

Terminology tends to be changed, the emergence of new terms and rethinking the old ones is the result of its dynamic character. Special words when appeared in the language become an integral part of a person’s daily life and a part of a specialized picture of the world of professionals. Communicative activity of a person is directly intertwined in his or her production activity, being an integral part of the latter it determines features of nomination processes. Undoubtedly, terminology is the most dynamic and mobile lexical system of the language, therefore researches in this field often have a historical orientation, showing how terminology arises, develops and changes in time, depending on the development of relevant sciences and the general style of thinking of the era. Formation of terminology in this or that branch of knowledge depends more on conscious efforts of people developing a certain branch of knowledge.

2.2 Terms

Problems relating to terms’ functions and properties, their role in technical translation and in industrial communication are considered in the works of some linguists [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], [16]. Terms of any branch of knowledge are the most dynamic and integral part of any vocabulary of a language so as through the emergence of new terms a language vocabulary is enriched and developed. M.N. Minakova notes that earlier the terms were referred to the periphery of the language, nowadays there is no doubt about their functional significance, since they are a part of the general lexical system of the language, but only through a specific terminological system [17].

According to the traditional point of view on terms accepted in the Soviet linguistic science of the 1960s and 1970s, terms are special words or phrases that due to their semantic and grammatical structure are opposed to commonly used words or free phrases. That is why the linguists initially studied an ideal term, that is, a monosyymantic term, a noun, accurately denoting a scientific and technical concept, the content of which is revealed in production process. As a result of this approach, the terms were attributed properties that many of them actually lacked.

At the beginning of the 1980s, linguists faced the task of investigating what was really not an ideal or desirable term, but a real term. As a result the point of view on the “term” as a word or phrase associated with a concept belonging to any area of knowledge or activity. However, this does not necessarily imply the recognition of once and for all this and final connection of a particular term with a specific scientific (technical) concept. The lexical unit receives the signs of the term inssofar as it appears in the terminological function, and loses them as soon as it ceases to be a term.

Terms essentially differ from other lexico-semantic groups of the language both as functional language units, and as an object of linguistic analysis. The peculiarities of the term include: 1) systemic character; 2) the availability of definitions for most terms; 3) the tendency towards monosemy within its terminological field; 4) lack of expression; 5) stylistic neutrality. Strict accuracy of terminological semantics refers to the characteristics of the term that are sustainably reproduced in linguistic literature. Nevertheless, the term retains the ability to transform its meaning depending on the conditions of communication. The accuracy of the terminological semantics is not provided by unity of a linguistic sign with the only possible conceptual content, it is determined by the
ability of the author of a scientific statement to relate the term to the variants of its definitions. The change in the communicative task and the functional-stylistic affiliation of the text leads to a determinologization of the lexeme. Performing the most important communicative function - providing mutual understanding between representatives of various fields of knowledge and scientific disciplines – terms, as we noted above, are a representative layer of the lexicon of modern languages.

Terms have a special role in industrial communication, but it should be noted that terms are not created uniformly in each language in the terminologization of a part of its vocabulary. Some languages have a greater impact on terminological word building. Consequently, some languages contribute more to the development of terminological systems than other languages.

An undisputable factor of influence on the quality and peculiarities of professional speech is formal and informal communication. Besides this quality is changing dramatically, even if it is an industrial communication, but not in a strict formal setting. In order to perceive terms that relate to a certain sphere adequately, it is necessary to create basic rules intended for understanding existing terms and creating new ones. However, it should be noted that the language, which absorbed many changes, reflects cultural and anthropological states of language communities. An increase in the amount of violation of the norms of the codified literary language is accompanied by fixation of vernacular language forms in speech. The factor of formality of spontaneous speech makes speakers use only those means of the language that are on the surface of linguistic consciousness.

3. Deverbative terms containing component “time” in their semantics

3.1 Time as a linguistic category
The investigation of lexical units with the seme “time” from the point of view of cognitive linguistics represents a model expressing definite ideas of a human with regard to some phenomena. The human idea of “time” is considered to be a certain real time reflection in a language, the real time being closely connected with extra linguistic activities of a person through the acquisition of, first of all, the spatial nature (objects, places). Time is one of the most important constituents of human self-existence. Many scientists believe that the daily experience is enough for absorbing the theory of the time nature. Nevertheless, it is evident that neither real physical time (which is a subject matter in natural sciences), nor psychological phenomenon of “the time being lived” i.e. “time of life being lived through” does not appear to be an object of a linguistic study, although they are directly relevant to the language. As for the linguistic aspect of time, usually the notion of “time” is considered to be a reflection of some real time outline in the language.

The language is known to form a continuum with other forms of a human behaviour. Therefore, the category of time in the language can be referred to such notions which can be used to determine the correlation of linguistic activities with an extra linguistic one of a human being and which contribute to transforming the real world into a “projected world” of a human consciousness. So, if event specifications of quantity are found as basic ones in building physical time outlines, in building linguistic time outlines specifications of quality are in predominance to deal with temporal relations. It should be noted that the problem of a language representation of time in the linguistics is most frequently connected with the temporality and aspect of a verb, as the verb essentially means an activity in the broad sense of the word, an activity always running in the time.

3.2 Deverbative terms with the seme “time” in industrial communication
The relationship between language and society manifests itself in a different form: the use of linguistic means are determined by the social characteristics of native speakers (age, professional, educational, etc.), by roles of communicants in society, and communicative situations. One of the aims of our research was to study the temporal semantics in such parts of speech as deverbative terms that are widely used in industrial communication, as well as in technical translation. Time as a linguistic category allows to see a certain reflection of real time in a language, it is closely associated with extralinguistic activity of a person through perception.
The scientific works of O. Ducrot and T. Todorov are of special interest for our study, in these works the semantics of time is analyzed irrespective of the grammatical aspect, through person’s perception and understanding of time manifested in speech activity [18]. The analysis allowed the scientists to conclude that temporality can be contained in all parts of speech, including deverbal terms. In this connection one may state that the semantic includes a temporal component, denoting the subject and object of action, which is related to time. We adhere to T. V. Bulygina’s point of view concerning the predicates/verbs’ availability of such attributes as: absence/presence of temporal connection, static/dynamic, duration/ non-duration, temporal perspectives [19]. For us, these attributes are of fundamental importance, since they represent some dynamic, temporal or temporally-conditioned signs belonging to the verbal lexeme as such.

In the English language H. Wendler investigated the semantic features of time that the verbal predicates have, he believed that the time is inherent to any verbal word, with all the verbs on this basis corresponding to different time schemata, and through them are associated with the tense forms of finite verbs [20]. From the very beginning, the reference to time for verbal lexemes is not homogeneous. Temporal attributes of verbal names are practically not marked in the dictionary, because they accompany each word, denoting event in a broad sense. Another thing is the term, which being used requires precision in both translation and in industrial communication. In this regard, the fact that the majority of verbal names under investigation turned out to be terms is not accidental. The data from contemporary British, American electronic and traditional explanatory dictionaries as well as from electronic encyclopedias were the material for our research (about 3000 examples). Our investigation has revealed a layer of deverbal terms that denote:

- specific time periods:
  - gestation - the period of development in the uterus from conception until birth; pregnancy;
  - after ripening - a period during which certain changes must occur in some dormant but fully developed seeds before germination;
  - inning - one of the nine divisions or of the periods of a regular game in which each team has a turn at the expense of three outs;
  - chronaxie - the minimum interval of time necessary to electrically stimulate a muscle or nerve;

- specific points in time:
  - cusp - a transitional point or time, as between two astrological signs;
  - dimension - one of the least number of independent coordinates required to specify uniquely a point in time and space;
  - singularity - a point in time at which gravitation forces cause of matter to have infinite density;
  - sailing - departure or time of departure from a port;

- processes in which time plays a special role:
  - aquatint - a process of etching capable of producing several tones by varying the etching time of different areas of a copper plate;
  - macroevolution - large-scale evolution occurring over geological time;
  - coalification - compression and hardening over a period of time;
  - melioration - the linguistic process by which a word over a period of time grows more elevated in meaning;

- the completely nominalized verbal names that denote objects:
  - printing - all the copies of a publication, such as a book, that are printed at one time;
  - mailing - a batch of mail dispatched at one time by a sender;
  - pressing - a number of recordings at the same time;
  - washing - articles washed or meant to be washed at one time.

4. Conclusion

Thus, we can conclude that deverbal terms have the sense of time due to a genetic connection with the verb denoting an event that takes place over time. The use of deverbal terms in the industrial communication allows deverbal terms to clarify the relations between the events and processes
indicated in the root and the time. The results obtained are of great theoretical and practical importance not only for the production process, but also for the general theory of the word and its semantic structure. In particular, they indicate the presence of a greater number of semantic features in the peripheral sphere of the deverbative terms and also about the prototypical nature of these features themselves, which is of undoubted interest for research in the field of modern terminology.

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