THE RELATIONSHIP AND INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE CONCEPTS "WORD" AND "TERM"

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Abstract. *The concepts of word and term occupy a central place in linguistics and terminology studies. While both function as lexical units of a language, they differ in their scope, function, and degree of semantic specialization. This article examines the relationship and interdependence between the notions of "word" and "term," highlighting their shared linguistic nature and their functional divergence. Special attention is given to the process of terminologization and determinologization, which demonstrates the dynamic interaction between general vocabulary and specialized terminology.*

Keywords: *word, term, terminology, lexical unit, terminologization, semantics*

Introduction

Language serves as the primary means of human communication and knowledge transmission. Within the lexical system of a language, the concepts of *word* and *term* play a crucial role in representing reality. Although these notions are often contrasted in linguistic research, they are not isolated phenomena. On the contrary, words and terms are closely interconnected and influence each other in the development of language and scientific discourse.

Understanding the relationship between words and terms is essential for linguistics, translation studies, lexicography, and professional communication, as it helps clarify how general language units transform into specialized concepts and vice versa.

A *word* is traditionally defined as the basic lexical unit of a language that possesses phonetic form, grammatical structure, and semantic content. Words function in everyday communication and reflect both objective reality and subjective human experience. They are characterized by semantic flexibility, polysemy, emotional coloring, and stylistic variation.

Words can acquire different meanings depending on context, cultural background, and communicative intent. This semantic openness allows words to function across various domains of discourse, including scientific, literary, and colloquial speech.

A *term* is a special type of lexical unit used to denote a specific concept within a particular field of knowledge, such as science, technology, law, or economics. Unlike general words, terms aim for precision, unambiguity, and conceptual stability. Ideally, a term corresponds to one concept within a defined system and lacks emotional or expressive connotations.

Terms function primarily in professional and academic communication, where clarity and accuracy are crucial. Their meaning is determined not only by linguistic form but also by their position within a conceptual system.

Despite their functional differences, words and terms share a common linguistic nature. Structurally, a term is formed using the same phonetic, morphological, and syntactic resources as an ordinary word. In many cases, terms originate from common words that acquire specialized meanings in a professional context.

This relationship is evident in the process of **terminologization**, whereby a general word becomes a term by gaining a precise, field-specific meaning. For example, common words such as *field*, *network*, or *root* function as terms in linguistics, physics, and computer science.

Conversely, the process of **determinologization** occurs when a term enters everyday language and loses its strict conceptual boundaries. As a result, former terms

may develop figurative meanings and stylistic flexibility, functioning as ordinary words in general discourse.

The interdependence between word and term reflects the dynamic nature of language development. Scientific progress continuously generates new concepts that require linguistic representation, often relying on existing words as the basis for new terms. At the same time, specialized terminology influences general language by introducing new lexical items and meanings.

This interaction demonstrates that terms cannot exist independently of the general lexical system, while words serve as the primary source for term formation. The boundary between word and term is therefore not absolute but functional and context-dependent.

Conclusion

The analysis of the concepts of *word* and *term* demonstrates that they constitute closely related and mutually dependent elements of the lexical system rather than isolated or opposing categories. A word, as a general lexical unit, is characterized by semantic flexibility, contextual variability, and stylistic diversity, which allow it to function across different communicative domains. A term, in contrast, emerges as a specialized linguistic unit whose primary function is the precise and unambiguous designation of concepts within a specific field of knowledge. Despite this functional distinction, both units rely on the same linguistic mechanisms and coexist within a shared lexical framework.

The relationship between words and terms is dynamic and sustained through the ongoing processes of terminologization and determinologization. Through terminologization, common words acquire specialized meanings and become integrated into professional and scientific discourse. Conversely, determinologization enables terms to enter general language use, where they may lose their strict conceptual boundaries and develop broader or metaphorical meanings. These processes illustrate that the boundary between word and term is not fixed but context-dependent and shaped by communicative needs and social practice.

Understanding this interdependence is particularly significant for translation studies, terminology management, and professional communication. Translators and language professionals must be able to distinguish between general and specialized meanings while recognizing their shared linguistic origin. Accurate interpretation and appropriate usage of words and terms directly influence the clarity, precision, and effectiveness of knowledge transfer across languages and cultures. Consequently, a systematic awareness of the relationship between word and term contributes to higher-quality translation, more consistent terminology usage, and more efficient professional communication.