

Harmonization as the keystone of the terminology

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What terminology is?

There are many ways, how to understand what terminology is:

- special words or expressions used in relation to a particular subject or activity (Cambridge dictionary);
- the technical or special terms used in a business, art, science, or special subject (Merriam-Webster);
- the system of terms belonging or peculiar to a science, art, or specialized subject (Dictionary.com);
- language for special purpose; normalized vocabulary;
- **A necessary tool for communication!!**

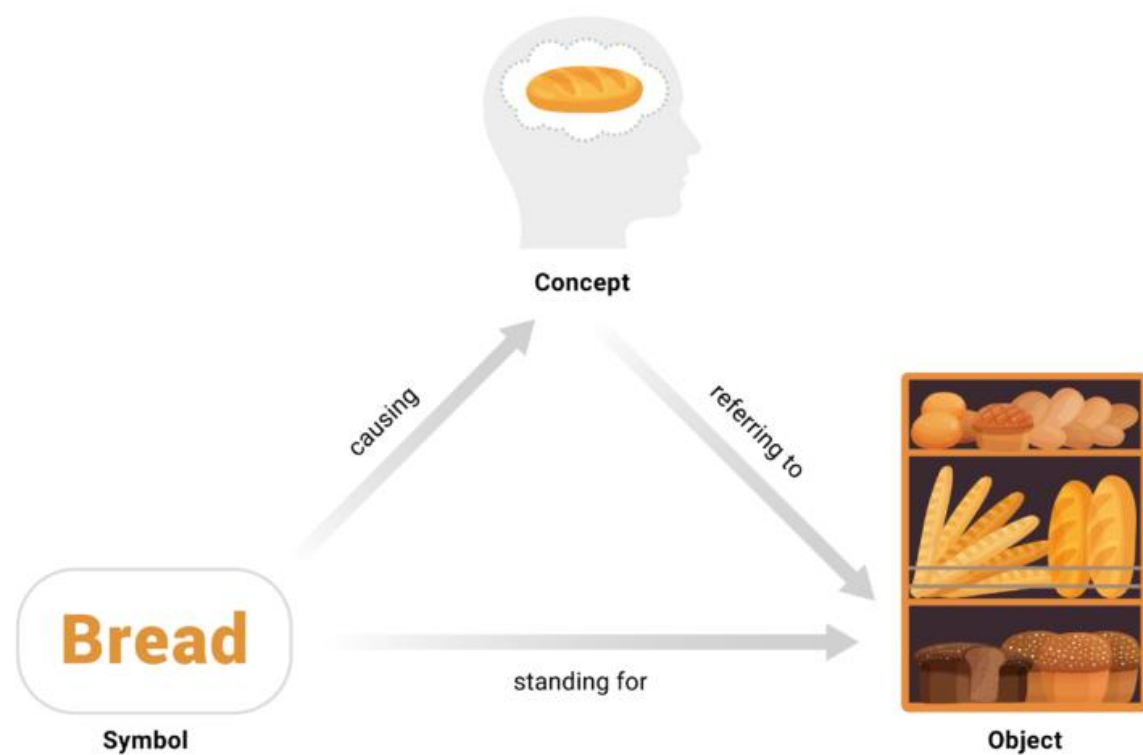
Components of term

- Object (real or abstract);
- Concept (during the process of conceptualization we create in our minds mental representation of this object);
- Linguistic designation to name the concept(single word or multi-word term) = term

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- Definition (a statement of the meaning of a term in few short words);
- Subject field (attribution of respective term to some branch of knowledge or human activities);
- Place in the system (relations with other terms).

Semiotic triangle (The Acrolinx Team)





Home Affairs



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Different meanings of the word bishop

Meanings of the word *bishop* (Latin *episcopus*) (Oxford dictionary)

1. In episcopal churches member of the clergy consecrated as a governor of a diocese.
2. A chief elder in non-episcopal churches.
3. A ladybird.
4. Any of several African weaver-birds of the genus *Euplectes* (also bishop-bird).
- 5. A chess piece that move diagonally.**
6. Mulled and spiced wine.
7. Various articles of closing etc.

Different designations for the same chess piece

- ‘a chess piece that move diagonally over the squares of one color’:
- original from Farsi *pil* (war elephant), in Arabic to *al-fil*, still used in ES *alfil* and IT *alfieri*, similar Sanskrit *gajah*;
 - a clergyman: EN *bishop*, Irish *easpag*, Latin *episcopus* (*obsol.*);
 - a runner: DE *Läufer*, PL *goniec*, Latin *cursor*;
 - a court jester: FR *fou*;
 - a rifleman: CZ *střelec*, EN *archer* (*obsol.*);
 - To create neologism: in Latvian *laidnis*.

Terminology *versus*. lexicology

Semasiological process
(lexicology)

Meaning < < < < < < < < < <

Word

Concept > > > > > > > > > >

Term

Onomasiological process
(terminology)

Historical examples of international harmonization

- Introduction of metric system of measures and weights (1791);
- Unification of statistical information (mid 19th century);
- Universal Postal Union (founded in Bern 1874);
- International Classification of Diseases (ICD) (Chicago 1893);
- International Electrotechnical Commission (London 1906);
- International Federation of the National Standardizing Associations (Prague 1926), since 1947 International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

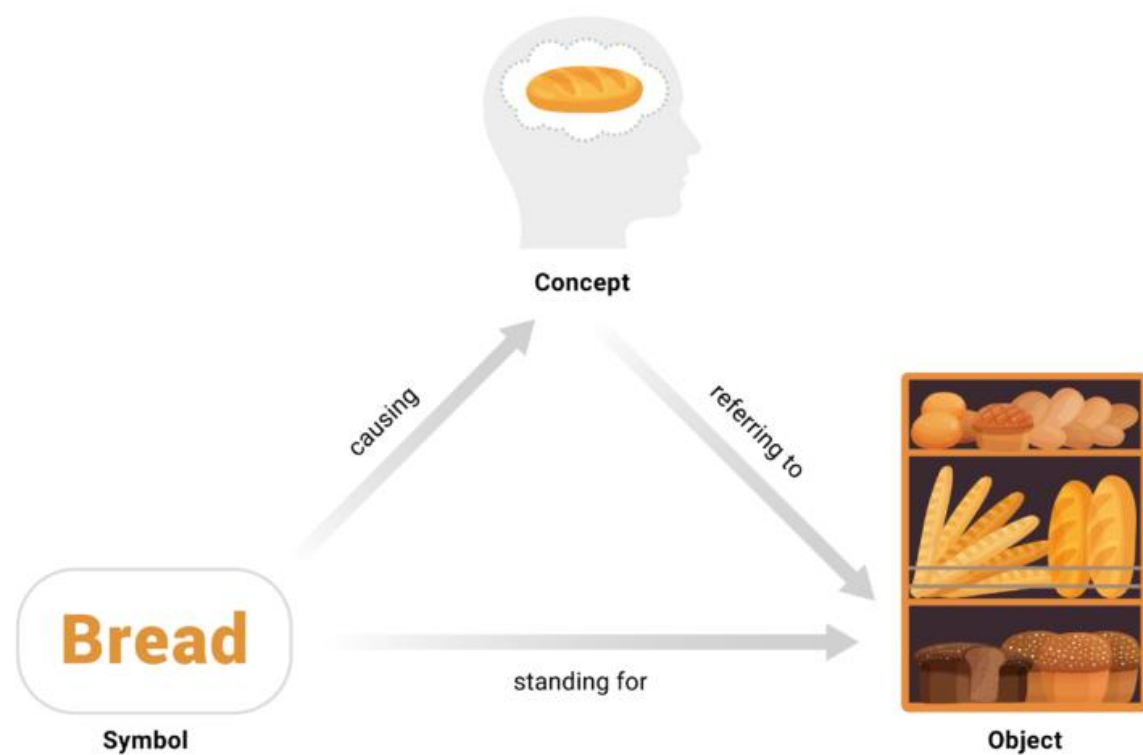
Standardization *versus* harmonization

- Standardization is the process of developing, promoting and possibly mandating standards-based and compatible technologies and processes within an industry. (www.techtarget.com)
- Concept harmonization means the reduction or elimination of minor differences between two or more closely related concepts. It involves the comparison and matching of concepts and concept systems in one or more languages or subject fields. (ISO 860)
- Term harmonization refers to the designation of a single concept (in different languages) by terms that reflect similar characteristics or similar forms. Term harmonization is possible only when the concepts represent almost exactly the same. (ISO 860)

Desirability of harmonization (ISO 704)

- “Concepts and terms develop differently in individual languages and language communities, depending on professional, technical, scientific, social, linguistic, cultural or other factors.”
- Differences between concepts do not necessarily become apparent at the designation level.
- Similarity at the designation level does not necessarily mean that the concepts behind the designations are identical.
- Is it possible to harmonize both – concepts and terms – simultaneously? – **No, concepts first.**

Semiotic triangle (The Acrolinx Team)



Descriptive *versus* prescriptive approach

- Descriptive approach describes the language how it is used (without preferences), dealing with real terms (accurate or ambiguous, modern or obsolete) in a text or in a dictionary.
- Prescriptive approach defines norms and standards as well as preferences in word usage.
- Prescriptive terminology management is practiced by standardizers, government regulators, nomenclature specialists, language planners and lawyers-linguists in close relation with experts in their fields.
- Prescriptive approach is not a form of linguistic purism, but a tool to avoid miscommunications and ambiguity in a subject field.

Why do languages need new words (terms)?

- Emergence of new objects and concepts (permanent challenge);
- Different approaches toward existing concepts (new fields of knowledge requires their own terminology);
- **International harmonization of terminology;**
- Needs of new information management systems;
- [Artistic creative activity for poetry or journalism.]

Principles of term formation (ISO 704)

Transparency – term is transparent when the concept it designates can be inferred without definition.

Consistency – terminology of any subject field should be coherent corresponding to the concept system, not random collection of terms.

Appropriateness – proposed terms should adhere to established patterns of meaning within a language community. Terms that can cause confusion should be avoided.

Linguistic economy – a term should be as concise as possible.

Principles of term formation (ISO 704) (cont.)

Derivability and compoundability – productive term formations that allow derivations and compounds (according to conventions in an individual language) should be favoured.

Linguistic correctness – neoterms should conform to the morphological, syntactic and phonological norms of the language in question.

Expressive neutrality – from the stylistic and expressive viewpoint terms should be as neutral as possible.

Preference for native language (\pm)

[Proposed at the right time!!]

Different users, different scope

Terminology is:

- For linguists: a part of the lexicon defined by subject matter;
- For subject field specialists: the formal reflection of the conceptual organization of a special subject;
- For users: a set of useful, practical communication units;
- For language planners: an area of language and communication for proactive intervention.

Term creation process is the never-ending cycle

- Identification of needs and existing resources;
- Proposal of new terms (if necessary) or modification of existing ones;
- **Reconciliation of opinions with experts in the subject field (so-called preventive harmonization);**
- Approval of terms (if necessary);
- Ensuring availability of terms
- Approbation of terms in practice



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