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SEMANTIC NUANCES OF MULTI-COMPONENT TERMS IN E-COMMERCE LOGISTICS

Abstract

This article analyzes the semantic properties of multi-component terms used in the field of e-commerce logistics. The study identifies the components of these terms, their semantic relationships and context-dependent meanings. It also highlights the linguistic and domain-specific features that influence the development of e-commerce logistics terminology. It is emphasized that the semantics of terms plays an important role in the processes of their correct translation, automatic text analysis and digitization of logistics systems.

The article is based on an analysis conducted at the intersection of scientific linguistics, translation studies and applied logistics.

Keywords:

E-commerce, logistics, multi-component terms, semantic analysis, terminology, linguistic properties, contextual meaning, translation issues.

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Introduction

Today, the rapid development of the e-commerce industry is not only creating new trading opportunities but also causing an increase in the complexity of logistics processes that are important for its effective functioning. In e-commerce, the delivery of products to the consumer is part of a system of order management, inventory, warehouse management and many other services. The successful implementation of these processes requires large-scale and multi-stage systems [Liu, Shang, Lai: 2018].

Materials and methods

The terms used in e-commerce logistics are often multi-component, consisting of several words, and each word has its own meaning. Such terms play an important role not only in describing processes, but also in expressing their interrelationships, integration and complexity. For example, terms such as "supply chain management", "integrated logistics system", "omnichannel delivery" combine several processes and concepts. Semantic nuances of multi-component terms are the meaning conveyed by each part of the term and the uniqueness of these parts in creating a joint concept. Such nuances are important for clear and effective communication in the industry, since ambiguity or misinterpretation of terms can reduce the efficiency of logistics processes. Therefore,

there is a need for a deep analysis of multi-component terms used in e-commerce logistics and the identification of their semantic aspects. It is relevant both from a scientific and practical point of view. In scientific research, semantic analysis of multi-component terms allows us to study the linguistic, terminological and contextual features of words. In practice, correctly understood and accepted terms in a single meaning enhance cooperation between companies, allow us to automate and optimize processes. Therefore, identifying the semantic nuances of multi-component terms is not only a matter of providing a lexical explanation, but also shows how to apply them in a practical context. In e-commerce logistics, multi-component terms often involve knowledge from several fields - logistics, information technology, marketing and management. For example, the term "integrated information management system" combines technological and management fields. Therefore, the semantic analysis of such terms requires a multidisciplinary approach. Along with the lexical meaning of each component, the new meaning created by them together should be studied. Based on the above points of view, this work studies the semantic nuances of multi-component terms used in e-commerce logistics. The goal is to determine the composition of the terms, analyze the meaning of each component and reveal their joint semantic function. In addition, practical examples of some important multi-component terms in e-commerce logistics are given and their importance in the field is highlighted. The significance of the study is that it serves to ensure clear and effective communication in e-commerce logistics, enriches the terminological base and helps to better understand various processes in the field. Also, a deeper study of multi-component terms serves as the basis for introducing new innovations in the processes of digitization and automation of logistics systems. [Homburg, Kühnl, Heimerl: 2017].

Result and discussion

In the future, the analysis conducted on this topic will play an important role in creating more complex and advanced systems of e-commerce logistics, as well as in forming a common language and understanding between specialists and researchers working in the field. Multi-word terms (MWTs) are combinations of two or more words that function together as a single semantic unit, often naming specific processes, services, or concepts within a domain. In e-commerce logistics, MWTs are essential to precisely describe complex activities and technologies.

These are the most common type of MWTs in e-commerce logistics. They typically consist of a **head noun** and one or more modifiers that specify or qualify the head. They describe entities such as processes, systems, or services.

- **Order Fulfilment Process**

- *Order* (modifier) + *Fulfilment* (modifier) + *Process* (head noun)

Refers to the entire sequence of actions involved in receiving, processing, packing, and delivering a customer's order.

- **Digital Payment Gateway**

- *Digital* (modifier) + *Payment* (modifier) + *Gateway* (head noun)

Describes a technology platform enabling secure electronic payment transactions.

- **Last-Mile Delivery Service**

- *Last-Mile* (modifier) + *Delivery* (modifier) + *Service* (head noun)

Specifies the final stage of the delivery process, which involves transporting goods from a distribution hub to the end customer.

Compounds are MWTs where two or more words join to form a term with a specialized meaning. In many cases, one component modifies the other, and the overall meaning may sometimes be non-compositional (not fully predictable from individual parts) [Christopher, 2016].

- Example:

- **Last-mile delivery** – A compound noun specifying the delivery segment; "last-mile" functions adjectivally.

- Compounds may be written as separate words, hyphenated, or fused depending on convention.

Some MWTs emphasize actions or workflows rather than static entities:

- **Order Fulfilment Process** emphasizes the workflow, highlighting that it is a *process* – a series of steps.

- Such terms often include nouns like *process*, *procedure*, *operation*, or *workflow* as the head word.

These refer to specific services provided within the logistics ecosystem:

- **Delivery Service** refers to the service function; modifiers specify the type (e.g., *last-mile*).

- **Payment Gateway** is a service facilitating payments.

MWTs that relate specifically to technical components or platforms:

- **Digital Payment Gateway** includes *digital*, emphasizing the technological aspect.

- These terms often reflect the integration of IT within logistics.

In the specialized domain of e-commerce logistics, multi-word terms are formed through different **lexical-semantic structures**. Understanding these structures is crucial for grasping how terms convey meaning, how they function in communication, and how they can be translated or processed.

Compounds are words formed by combining two or more lexemes (roots or words) into a single unit with a unified meaning. In compounds, one element usually acts as the **head** (central element), and the others as **modifiers** that specify or restrict the meaning.

Characteristics:

- Often written as one word (e.g., **backorder**), hyphenated (e.g., **last-mile**), or separate words (e.g., **order fulfilment**).

- The meaning of the compound can be **transparent** (predictable from parts) or **opaque** (idiomatic or specialized).

Examples in E-commerce Logistics:

- **Last-mile delivery**: A compound where “last-mile” modifies “delivery” indicating the final stage of delivery.

- **Order fulfilment**: Combines “order” + “fulfilment” to denote the process of completing customer orders.

- **Inventory management**: “Inventory” modifies “management,” referring to managing stock.

The head noun often represents the core concept (e.g., delivery, management), and the modifier narrows or specifies its meaning (e.g., last-mile, inventory).

Collocations are habitual or conventional pairings or groups of words that frequently co-occur more often than by chance, creating a predictable pattern of language use. They may be idiomatic or partially idiomatic but are not necessarily fixed phrases.

Characteristics:

- Words in collocations have a strong tendency to appear together but retain their individual meanings.

- Their combination may sound “natural” to native speakers and sometimes non-literal in usage.

Examples in E-commerce Logistics:

- **Place an order** (verb + noun) – a common phrase meaning to request goods or services.

- **Track a shipment** – to monitor the progress of a delivery.

- **Process payment** – to handle financial transactions.

Collocations express routine actions or concepts within the domain. The meaning arises from the conventional use of these combinations.

Phrasal terms (also known as phrasal verbs or multi-word expressions) are fixed or semi-fixed phrases typically combining verbs with prepositions or adverbs to create a meaning that may differ from the sum of their parts.

Characteristics:

- Often describe actions or processes.

- The meaning can be literal or idiomatic.

- The components may be separable (e.g., “set up an account” vs. “set the account up”).

Examples in E-commerce Logistics:

- **Set up an account** – to establish a user profile or registration.
- **Carry out inspection** – to perform quality or process checks.
- **Check out** – to complete a purchase process online.

When analyzing multi-word terms, a key aspect is how easily the meaning of the whole expression can be understood from its parts. This relates to **semantic transparency** and **semantic opacity**.

A term is semantically transparent if its overall meaning can be directly inferred from the meanings of its individual components. In other words, the phrase “makes sense” literally when you look at each word.

Example:

- **Digital payment gateway**

- *Digital* = electronic, computerized
- *Payment* = transfer of money
- *Gateway* = entry point or interface
- **Combined meaning:** A system or platform that electronically facilitates payment transactions.

Because each word contributes a clear part of the overall meaning, the term is semantically transparent.

A term is semantically opaque if its overall meaning cannot be directly or fully deduced from the meanings of its individual parts. Such terms often involve metaphor, idiomatic usage, or domain-specific jargon.

Examples:

- **Shopping cart**

- Literally: a physical cart used for shopping in a store.
- In e-commerce: a **virtual container** where customers “collect” items before checkout.
- Here, the term borrows the physical shopping metaphor, but the actual referent is digital. The phrase is **partly opaque** because “cart” doesn’t literally mean a physical cart in this context.

- **Fulfilment centre**

- *Fulfilment* here refers to a business process of receiving, packing, and shipping orders, which is specialized jargon.
- *Centre* is a location or facility.
- The overall meaning is a **warehouse or facility** handling order processing, which isn’t obvious just from the literal meanings. This term is **opaque** because “fulfilment” isn’t a common everyday word outside logistics/business contexts.

Multi-component terms in e-commerce terminology have a complex linguistic structure and can vary in semantic transparency and opacity. For example, when the English term shopping cart is directly translated into Uzbek and Russian, the words “savat” or “korzina” are used in the traditional sense. However, how these words express the meaning of “virtual basket” in the context of e-commerce, that is, in the online shopping process, can be problematic. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account not only the lexical meaning, but also the contextual and cultural scope of the term in translation [Cabr : 1999].

Cross-linguistic comparison allows us to identify linguistic and cultural differences that arise in the process of adapting multi-component terms in e-commerce logistics to the Uzbek and Russian languages. Each language has its own morphological, syntactic and semantic features that affect the translation and understanding of terms. For example, while in Russian terminological units are often expressed in a short, strictly standardized form, in Uzbek terms are expressed in more descriptive, explanatory forms. At the same time, in Russian technical terms are often directly transliterated from English, while in Uzbek words are often recreated using internal lexical bases or explanatory terms are used.

The clear expression of semantic and pragmatic nuances in translation increases understandability for users, ensures the efficiency of services, and reduces errors in business

processes. For example, the term fulfillment center may be expressed in Uzbek as “order fulfillment center” or “delivery center”, but these terms may not cover or clearly define all aspects of the industry. As a result, customers or employees may misunderstand the term, leading to confusion in processes. Therefore, in the translation of multi-component terms in e-commerce logistics, linguistic accuracy and pragmatic compatibility must be ensured together.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to study the semantic and pragmatic aspects of the process of translation and adaptation of multi-component terms used in e-commerce logistics into Uzbek and Russian. Also, the difficulties that arise during the translation process, semantic transparency and opacity, cultural adaptation and the impact on user communication are analyzed. The study of these issues serves to more effectively organize national and international communication in the field of e-commerce, enrich the terminological base and form a common understanding between industry specialists.

The semantic and pragmatic problems that arise during the translation and adaptation of multi-component terms in e-commerce logistics into Uzbek and Russian were analyzed. The results of the study showed that when translating a multi-component term, it is necessary to pay attention not only to the lexical meaning, but also to the contextual, cultural and functional meaning of the term within the industry. Semantically transparent terms, such as digital payment gateway, are generally less difficult to translate because their component meanings are clear and can be translated one by one. However, opaque or metaphorical terms, such as shopping cart or fulfillment center, require more adaptation and explanation in translation. Pragmatic nuances, i.e. how terms are understood and used in a given situation, are important for effective communication between users and business entities. If semantic differences are not properly addressed, they can lead to customer misunderstandings, delays in business processes, and financial losses. Therefore, great attention should be paid to linguistic accuracy, cultural adaptation, and pragmatic context in translation and localization processes. [Temmerman: 2000]

In the future, the creation of unified terminological corpora, adaptation of terms to national culture, and development of interactive educational resources are important directions for the effective integration of terminology in e-commerce logistics in national and foreign languages. Such approaches will increase mutual understanding between specialists, researchers, and users working in the field, improve service quality, and increase global competitiveness.

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СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ МНОГОКОМПОНЕНТНЫХ ТЕРМИНОВ В ЛОГИСТИКЕ ЭЛЕКТРОННОЙ КОММЕРЦИИ

Аннотация. В данной статье анализируются семантические особенности многокомпонентных терминов, используемых в сфере логистики электронной коммерции. В ходе исследования определяются компоненты таких терминов, их семантические связи и контекстно-зависимые значения. Также выделяются лингвистические и предметные особенности, влияющие на развитие терминологии логистики электронной коммерции. Подчеркивается, что семантика терминов играет важную роль в процессах их корректного перевода, автоматического анализа текстов и цифровизации логистических систем. Статья основана на анализе, проведенном на стыке научной лингвистики, переводоведения и прикладной логистики.

Ключевые слова: электронная коммерция, логистика, многокомпонентные термины, семантический анализ, терминология, лингвистические особенности, контекстное значение, проблемы перевода.

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ЭЛЕКТРОНДЫҚ КОММЕРЦИЯ ЛОГИСТИКАСЫНДАҒЫ КӨПКОМПОНЕНТТІ ТЕРМИНДЕРДІҢ СЕМАНТИКАЛЫҚ ЕРЕКШЕЛІКТЕРІ

Андатпа. Бұл мақалада электрондық коммерция логистикасы саласында қолданылатын көпкомпонентті терминдердің семантикалық ерекшеліктері талданады. Зерттеу барысында осы терминдердің құрамдас бөліктері, олардың арасындағы семантикалық байланыстар мен контекстке тәуелді сөздер анықталған. Сондай-ақ электрондық коммерция логистикасы терминологиясының дамуына әсер ететін лингвистикалық және пәндік ерекшеліктер айқындалады. Терминдер семантикасының оларды дұрыс аудару, мәтіндерді автоматты түрде талдау және логистикалық жүйелерді цифрландыру процестерінде маңызды рөл атқаратыны негізделген. Мақала ғылыми лингвистика, аударма ісі және қолданбалы логистиканың тоғысында жүргізілген талдауларға негізделген.

Тірек сөздер: электрондық коммерция, логистика, көпкомпонентті терминдер, семантикалық талдау, терминология, лингвистикалық ерекшеліктер, контекстік мағына, аударма мәселелері.

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