CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S HEALTH TERMINOLOGY IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN

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Acest articol prezintă rezultatul cercetării multiaspectuale a terminologiei din domeniul sănătății femeilor: modalități de creare a termenilor, particularitățile semantice și de traducere a acestora. Înțelegerea sensului unor unități terminologice specializate este dificilă pentru un utilizator intermediar (traducător, interpret, jurnalist sau terminolog), însă cunoașterea domeniului, a specificului terminologiei din domeniu, a modelelor și regulilor de formare a termenilor poate facilita înțelegerea și utilizarea corectă a acestor unități.

Terminology is a new science that studies terms and their usage in specialized fields. As stated by Maria Teresa Cabré this science deals with collection, description, and presentation of terms, in one or more languages, having the aim to optimize communication among specialists and professionals. This field represents a linguistic discipline which systematically studies the designation of concepts (terms, names, symbols) through the research and analysis of terms used in specific contexts in any subject area, with the aim of documenting them and promoting correct usage [1, p.8]. According to the linguist researcher Bertha María Gutiérrez Rodilla, the main characteristics of-terms represent [1, p.84]:

1. Precision – if a term is precise, then its communicative dimension is unchanged, i.e. its meaning does not depend upon the context.

2. Emotional neutrality – the use of terms has to be free of affective, personal or subjective components that are observed in the standard register.

3. Stability over time – it refers to the validity of a term (with its concept and referent associated) over time. For instance, *estrogen* is a medical term, meaning a group of hormones secreted by the ovaries which affect many aspects of the female body. It is monosemantic which implies precision; it is emotionally neutral; and it is stable over time since it has been used without any variation in use, form and meaning remaining the same for a long period of time in scientific

documents. Based on the corpus of examples selected for our study (200 terms), the majority of terms from the subject field of women's health terminology are monosemantic: 186 units (93%).

They belong to a single domain and their concept is clearly defined in a particular branch of study – medicine (e.g. *placenta* – a temporary organ that joins the mother and fetus, transferring oxygen and nutrients from the mother to the fetus and permitting the release of carbon dioxide and waste products from the fetus; *ovary* – a female reproductive gland in which eggs are formed and which produce the essential female hormones estrogen and progesterone. It is located in the lower abdomen, to the left and right of the uterus) [2, p.544]. We can conclude that these terms are used in a specific field and are relevant just to the medical branch. Medical terminology is characterized by its own language and vocabulary, which represent the result of a centuries-old development. It is a system of specialized vocabulary that is used to describe specific medical aspects and diseases.

It is based on standard root words, prefixes, and suffixes, mainly of Greek and Latin origin [3, p.256]. The main aspects of medical terminology include the use of Greek and Latin terms and regular morphology, with the same suffixes and prefixes used quite consistently for a particular meaning. After having analyzed the corpus 200 of terms we conclude that the majority of terms, 167 units (80%) (e.g. *myometrium – miometru, ovary – ovar, estrogen – estrogen, menarche – menarche* etc.) have Greek or Latin origin or use Greek or Latin term forming components (e.g. *mastectomy – mastectomie, embryotomy – embriotomie, colposcopy – colonoscopie, biopsy – biopsie* etc.).

These are examples of international terms. Formation of new terms in each field of medicine deserves an appropriate attention because the terms become successively a part of general language. Between general (codified) language and the language of science, there is a very close relationship [4, p.167]. Analyses of medical terms formation are important because we can reflect on their exact meaning and be aware of any possible ambiguity. It is very important to understand the concept the unit of knowledge represents, what constitutes the mental representations of each form of derivation (e.g. with a suffix or prefix we can identify the concept of the word), the correct spelling, the formation of initialsms, eponyms, synonyms, etc.

This gives us the opportunity to familiarize with the medical field, to understand new terms and to find equivalents in the target language.

Linguistic problems may appear during the translation of some terms from a specific domain, especially in women's health terminology.

It is always important to use a specialized dictionary and to check the meaning of the word and without extensive knowledge of the field, the research is mandatory. For example, the Romanian term *avort* can be translated into English as *miscarriage* or *abortion*, but it is important to understand the meaning of these terms which look semantically identical. *Miscarriage* is a naturally occurring event and it is the spontaneous loss of a fetus before the 20th week of pregnancy but *abortion* is the deliberate termination of a human pregnancy, most often performed during the first 28 weeks of pregnancy. In this case after consulting lexicographical sources, we found that the equivalent of *miscarriage* is *avort spontan* and it should not be confused with the other term. Another linguistic challenge is represented by translator's false friends. These are used to describe pairs of words in from source language to target language that look or sound similar but differ in meaning (i.e. *drug* is translated into Romanian as *medicament*, but it can be confused with *drog*, another example is *fetal distress* translated as *suferință fetală*). In this case it is important to pay attention to the context and the branch of knowledge the term belongs to and also to find the terms in dictionaries. Some difficulties can arise when the translator or interpreter has to deal with abbreviations. In many cases there are several possible abbreviations for the same term, and even sometimes the same abbreviation for multiple terms. It is very important to study the field and to be informed in which cases the abbreviations are used and of course to study the definition.

Abbreviations are used primarily in writing but also orally to avoid pronouncing the whole long term. We noted that these are usually abbreviations of words that appear more often, being quite well known in their full form as well: *pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) – boală inflamatorie pelviană (BIP), IVF in vitro fertilization – FIV fertilizarea în vitro, early ovarian failure (EOF) – insuficienţă ovariană precoce (IOP)* etc.

As we can notice the equivalent from the Romanian is created via transposition with the head word coming first. There are also some

international abbreviations which remain unchanged in different languages (e.*g. hCG human chorionic gonadotropin – hCG gonadotropină corionică umană*) and other two abbreviations are used in source language but not in the target language (e.g. *phenylketonuria (PKU) – paramenopauză, breast self-examination (BSE) – autoexaminare a sânilor*).

The translation problems can even appear with common noun eponyms. The translation of eponyms in Romanian keeps the proper name while the structure of the word combination is changed, for example *Alzheimer's disease – boala Alzheimer*. But there are cases when other changes might occur, for example *Pap test* is translated as *test Papanicolau.* We can notice in this case that the proper name is clipped in English, while the Romanian language uses the full form of the proper name. *Bartholin's cyst* is translated as *chistul glandei Bartholin*, here the word *glanda* is added but in English *Bartholin* stands for *gland*; while in translation of the term *Fallopian tubes* as *trompă uterină, Fallopio* is omitted. We can conclude that understanding and translating women's health terminology is a complex task which demands experience in the medical language, technical knowledge, and the right technology to guarantee consistency and accuracy (medical dictionaries, reports, books etc.).

References:

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Recomandat
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