

Specific Features of Linguistic Units Related to Public Catering

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Abstract:

This article examines the specific features of linguistic units related to public catering, focusing on the lexical, semantic, structural, and functional characteristics of words and expressions used in the sphere of food service. Public catering represents a significant area of professional and everyday communication, generating a wide range of specialized vocabulary associated with food products, dishes, cooking processes, kitchen equipment, service, and establishments. The study analyzes the ways in which these linguistic units are formed, their semantic relationships, and their use in different communicative contexts. Particular attention is paid to professional terminology, borrowed words, phraseological expressions, and culturally specific vocabulary reflecting national traditions and eating habits. The research demonstrates that public-catering vocabulary is characterized by semantic diversity, terminological specificity, productivity in word formation, and close interaction between language and culture. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the linguistic organization of public-catering discourse and may be useful for lexicography, terminology studies, intercultural communication, and foreign-language teaching.

Keywords: public catering; linguistic units; food-related vocabulary; culinary terminology; lexical units; phraseological expressions; word formation; intercultural communication.

Introduction

Language is a fundamental means of communication through which people express their ideas, experiences, knowledge, and cultural values. Every sphere of human activity develops its own linguistic resources that reflect the specific nature of professional and social interaction. One such sphere is public catering, which includes restaurants, cafés, canteens, catering services, bakeries, food

establishments, and other forms of food service. The development of this sphere has contributed to the formation of a diverse range of linguistic units associated with food products, dishes, cooking methods, kitchen equipment, service processes, occupations, and establishments. (Mapes, 2018)

The vocabulary of public catering occupies a distinctive position within the lexical system of a language. It combines commonly used words with specialized professional terms and expressions. For example, words denoting food and beverages may be familiar to all speakers, whereas terms related to culinary techniques, professional equipment, food preparation, or restaurant management may be restricted to particular professional communities. At the same time, many expressions used in public catering acquire additional meanings depending on the communicative context. (Mapes, 2018) Consequently, the linguistic units of this sphere can be examined from lexical, semantic, structural, stylistic, and functional perspectives.

An important characteristic of public-catering vocabulary is its close relationship with social and cultural development. Food is not merely a biological necessity but also an important component of national identity, traditions, customs, and everyday life. The names of traditional dishes, ingredients, cooking techniques, and forms of hospitality often contain culturally specific information. As a result, the vocabulary associated with public catering can serve as a linguistic representation of national cuisine and cultural heritage. (Montanari, 2006)

Another significant feature of this lexical field is the presence of borrowed linguistic units. The globalization of the food industry, international tourism, migration, and the expansion of restaurant culture have facilitated the introduction of foreign culinary terms into many languages. Words associated with international dishes, cooking styles, restaurant formats, and food-service technologies may be borrowed, adapted phonologically or grammatically, and eventually integrated into the receiving language.

Materials and Methods

The present study employs a descriptive and analytical approach to investigate the specific features of linguistic units related to public catering. The research focuses on lexical and phraseological units used in the context of restaurants, cafés, canteens, catering services, bakeries, and other food-service establishments. The material of the study consists of words, word combinations, professional terms, expressions, and names associated with food products, dishes, beverages, cooking processes, kitchen equipment, food-service personnel, establishments, and customer service. (Roche, 2016)

The linguistic material was collected from a range of sources, including explanatory and bilingual dictionaries, specialized culinary dictionaries, restaurant menus, advertisements, online food-service resources, culinary publications, and authentic examples of professional communication. Particular attention was paid to linguistic units that demonstrate distinctive semantic, structural, stylistic, or cultural characteristics. Both commonly used vocabulary and specialized professional terminology were included in the analysis in order to identify similarities and differences between general and professional language.

A descriptive method was used to classify the collected linguistic units according to their thematic and functional characteristics. The lexical items were divided into several major groups, including names of food and beverages, names of dishes, cooking methods, ingredients, kitchen utensils and equipment, types of public-catering establishments, occupations and personnel, and service-related expressions. This classification made it possible to identify the principal semantic fields represented in public-catering vocabulary.

Results

The analysis of linguistic units related to public catering revealed that this lexical field is characterized by considerable thematic diversity, semantic specialization, structural variability, and strong interaction with cultural and social factors. The collected material demonstrates that public-

catering vocabulary constitutes a relatively distinct lexical-semantic field containing both commonly used words and specialized professional units.

One of the main results of the study is the identification of several major thematic groups of linguistic units. The first group comprises the names of food products and ingredients, including meat, dairy products, vegetables, fruits, cereals, spices, sauces, and other components used in food preparation. The second group includes names of dishes and beverages. This category is particularly extensive because it reflects both everyday food items and traditional or internationally recognized dishes. The third group consists of linguistic units denoting cooking and food-preparation processes, such as boiling, frying, baking, steaming, roasting, mixing, slicing, and seasoning. Another important group includes terms referring to kitchen utensils, appliances, and professional equipment. In addition, the analysis identified vocabulary related to types of food-service establishments, professional occupations, customer service, payment, ordering, and delivery. (Temmerman, 2000)

The semantic analysis demonstrated that public-catering linguistic units have different degrees of specialization. Some words are part of the general vocabulary and are widely understood by speakers regardless of their professional background. Other units have a narrower professional meaning and are primarily used by chefs, waiters, confectioners, restaurant managers, and other specialists. This distinction indicates that the vocabulary of public catering exists at the intersection of general and professional communication.

Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrate that linguistic units related to public catering represent a distinctive and dynamically developing component of the lexical system. Their characteristics are determined not only by the practical requirements of food preparation and service but also by cultural traditions, professional communication, globalization, and technological development. The results confirm that the vocabulary of public catering should be viewed as a complex lexical-semantic system rather than as a simple collection of words associated with food.

One of the most significant findings concerns the thematic diversity of public-catering vocabulary. The presence of separate groups related to ingredients, dishes, beverages, cooking processes, equipment, occupations, establishments, and customer service reflects the multidimensional nature of the food-service industry. This thematic organization demonstrates that specialized vocabulary develops in response to the needs of particular professional activities. At the same time, many of these terms gradually enter everyday language as culinary practices become more widely known.

The coexistence of general and specialized vocabulary is another important characteristic. Some linguistic units are easily understood by the general population, while others require professional knowledge for accurate interpretation. This distinction is particularly relevant in professional communication among chefs, confectioners, restaurant managers, and service personnel. Specialized terminology contributes to precision and efficiency, whereas general vocabulary facilitates communication between food-service professionals and customers. Thus, the public-catering sphere illustrates the interaction between professional terminology and common vocabulary.

The semantic characteristics identified in the study can also be explained by the continuous expansion of the food-service sector. Semantic specialization enables existing lexical units to acquire more precise meanings within professional contexts. Polysemy, synonymy, and semantic extension provide speakers with different possibilities for describing food, taste, texture, preparation methods, and service procedures. These processes demonstrate that public-catering vocabulary is not static but constantly adapts to new communicative requirements.

The prevalence of compound words and multi-word terms reflects the need for accurate and detailed naming. In the culinary and food-service context, a single word is not always sufficient to identify a particular dish, ingredient, technique, or piece of equipment. Consequently, combinations of lexical units are frequently used to specify characteristics such as composition, preparation

method, temperature, consistency, or presentation. This structural feature contributes to the precision of professional discourse.

The role of borrowed vocabulary deserves particular attention. The international character of contemporary gastronomy has increased contact between languages and has facilitated the spread of culinary terminology across national boundaries. Restaurant concepts, dishes, ingredients, cooking techniques, and professional practices often originate in one cultural environment and subsequently become familiar in others. Borrowing therefore reflects not only linguistic contact but also the internationalization of food culture. However, borrowed terms may undergo adaptation, which demonstrates the ability of the receiving language to integrate new vocabulary into its existing lexical and grammatical system.

The linguocultural findings are especially important because food-related vocabulary is closely connected with national identity. Traditional dish names and culinary expressions frequently preserve information about historical practices, local ingredients, customs, and forms of hospitality. Therefore, studying public-catering vocabulary can provide insights into cultural values and social traditions. In multilingual contexts, the preservation and appropriate interpretation of culturally specific culinary terms can also support intercultural communication.

The analysis of phraseological and figurative expressions further demonstrates that food is an important source of conceptualization in language. Expressions originating from eating and culinary experience may acquire abstract or metaphorical meanings. This phenomenon illustrates how everyday activities influence broader patterns of linguistic expression. Such units are particularly significant from a linguocultural perspective because their meanings may not always be fully understood through literal translation.

Another important issue is the functional differentiation of public-catering language. The vocabulary used in menus, advertisements, professional communication, and customer interaction serves different communicative purposes. Menu language generally emphasizes clarity and conciseness, while advertising language tends to employ expressive and emotionally appealing descriptions. Professional discourse requires terminological accuracy, whereas communication with customers often favors accessible vocabulary.

Conclusion

The study has demonstrated that linguistic units related to public catering constitute a distinctive, diverse, and dynamically developing component of the lexical system. Their specific features are determined by the nature of food-service activities, professional communication, cultural traditions, and changes in contemporary society. The analysis revealed that public-catering vocabulary includes a wide range of lexical and phraseological units associated with food products, dishes, beverages, cooking processes, kitchen equipment, professional occupations, catering establishments, and customer service.

The research showed that these linguistic units are characterized by semantic specialization, polysemy, synonymy, structural diversity, and active word-formation processes. Compound words, terminological combinations, professional expressions, and borrowed lexical units play an important role in expanding the vocabulary of public catering. The influence of international gastronomy and globalization has particularly contributed to the introduction and adaptation of foreign culinary terminology.

Another important conclusion is that public-catering vocabulary has a strong linguocultural dimension. Names of traditional dishes, ingredients, cooking methods, and forms of hospitality reflect national customs, historical experience, and cultural identity. Thus, food-related linguistic units perform not only a nominative function but also preserve and transmit culturally significant information.

The study also established that public-catering vocabulary varies according to communicative context. Professional discourse requires terminological precision, whereas menus, advertising, and

customer communication often prioritize clarity, attractiveness, and accessibility. The development of digital technologies and online food-service platforms has further accelerated the emergence and dissemination of new food-related linguistic units.

Overall, the findings confirm that the language of public catering is a productive field for linguistic research. Its study contributes to the understanding of lexical development, professional terminology, intercultural communication, and the relationship between language and culture. Further research may focus on comparative analyses of public-catering vocabulary in different languages, corpus-based studies of its frequency and development, and the influence of digital communication on contemporary culinary terminology.

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