

SEMANTIC AND COMMUNICATIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF TERMINOLOGICAL UNITS IN BBC NEWS REPORTING

Akhmedov Davronbek Gayratbek ugli

*Independent researcher of
Andijan State Institute of Foreign Languages*

Abstract. *This article explores the semantic and communicative characteristics of terminological units used in BBC News reporting. Terminological units play a crucial role in shaping media discourse by ensuring accuracy, clarity, and credibility in the transmission of information. The study aims to analyze how specialized and semi-specialized terms function semantically and communicatively in news texts addressed to a mass audience. The research is based on a qualitative analysis of selected BBC News articles covering political, economic, and social topics. Methods such as semantic analysis, contextual analysis, and discourse analysis are applied. The findings indicate that terminological units in BBC News texts not only convey factual information but also perform important communicative functions, including informing, persuading, and framing public perception.*

Keywords: *terminological units, media discourse, semantics, communicative function, BBC News.*

Introduction. In modern mass media, language serves as a powerful tool for shaping public opinion and transmitting knowledge. News reporting, in particular, requires a high degree of accuracy, objectivity, and clarity. One of the key linguistic elements that ensure these qualities is the use of terminological units. Terminological units are words or phrases that denote specific concepts within particular fields such as politics, economics, science, and medicine.

BBC News, as one of the most influential international media outlets, addresses a global audience with diverse cultural and educational backgrounds. Therefore, the way terminology is selected, structured, and explained in BBC News reporting deserves special attention. This study focuses on the semantic properties and communicative functions of terminological units in BBC News texts, aiming to reveal how professional terminology is adapted for mass communication.

The main objective of this article is to analyze the role of terminological units in BBC News reporting from semantic and communicative perspectives. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What semantic characteristics do terminological units exhibit in BBC News texts?
- What communicative functions do these units perform in news discourse?

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SEMANTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TERMINOLOGICAL UNITS

One of the most prominent semantic characteristics of terminological units in BBC News reporting is their systematic use in contextually stabilized and conceptually precise meanings. News discourse, particularly within an international media institution such as BBC News, prioritizes terminological consistency in order to avoid semantic ambiguity across diverse audiences. As a result, terminological units are rarely employed metaphorically or polysemously; instead, they tend to preserve their core denotative meanings.

For instance, in BBC News articles addressing economic developments, terms such as inflation, recession, and interest rates are consistently used in alignment with macroeconomic definitions. In reports discussing rising consumer prices, inflation is framed as “a sustained increase in the general price level,” often accompanied by references to central bank policy or purchasing power. This usage reflects a high degree of semantic specialization while maintaining transparency for non-expert readers. The term recession, likewise, is employed to denote a prolonged period of economic decline, frequently contextualized through indicators such as GDP contraction or unemployment rates, thereby reinforcing its standardized semantic scope.

Another notable semantic feature is the extensive reliance on semi-technical terminology, which occupies an intermediate position between expert discourse and general language. BBC News frequently reports on global crises using terms such as pandemic, sanctions, and climate change. Although these terms originate from medical, political, and environmental sciences respectively, their meanings have become widely recognizable through repeated media exposure. For example, in coverage of global health emergencies, the term pandemic is used to denote large-scale disease outbreaks across multiple countries, often accompanied by contextual data such as infection rates or public health measures. This practice preserves terminological accuracy while ensuring semantic accessibility.

Furthermore, BBC News demonstrates a deliberate strategy of contextual semantic explication, which plays a crucial role in mediating specialized knowledge. In many articles, terminological units are immediately followed by explanatory clauses or reformulations. For instance, in reports on international relations, the term sanctions is often clarified through phrases such as “economic restrictions imposed by governments” or “measures aimed at limiting trade and financial activity.” Such contextualization allows complex terms to remain intact while facilitating comprehension, thereby enhancing semantic coherence within the text.

COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS OF TERMINOLOGICAL UNITS

From a communicative perspective, terminological units in BBC News reporting perform a multifaceted set of functions that extend beyond mere information transfer. The most fundamental of these is the informative function, which constitutes the core

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communicative purpose of news discourse. Terminological units enable journalists to compress complex institutional, political, and social processes into concise lexical forms. For example, political reports frequently employ terms such as ceasefire, peace talks, and diplomatic negotiations to summarize prolonged and intricate processes involving multiple actors and interests. Through such terminology, BBC News achieves efficiency and clarity in conveying high-density information.

In addition to their informative role, terminological units contribute significantly to the construction of institutional authority and credibility. The systematic and accurate use of specialized vocabulary signals professional competence and adherence to journalistic standards. In BBC News reports on legal or political affairs, terms such as international law, human rights violations, or constitutional reform function as markers of expert discourse. Their appropriate usage reinforces the perception of BBC News as a reliable and knowledgeable source, thereby strengthening audience trust.

A particularly important communicative role of terminological units is their framing function, through which linguistic choices influence audience interpretation. BBC News carefully selects terminology that foregrounds certain aspects of events while backgrounding others. For instance, in reports on armed conflicts, the use of the term humanitarian crisis rather than military operation shifts the focus toward civilian suffering, displacement, and access to aid. Similarly, describing political unrest as protests versus riots carries distinct evaluative implications, subtly guiding audience perception without overt commentary. In this way, terminological units operate as powerful framing devices within news discourse.

Finally, terminological units perform an essential educational and cognitive function. Through repeated exposure to specialized and semi-specialized terms within explanatory contexts, audiences gradually acquire domain-specific knowledge. BBC News reporting on environmental issues frequently introduces and reinforces terms such as carbon emissions, renewable energy, and net-zero targets, enabling readers to develop conceptual familiarity with complex scientific and policy-related issues. This pedagogical dimension of media terminology contributes to public awareness and informed decision-making, underscoring the broader social role of news discourse.

Conclusion. This study has analyzed the semantic and communicative characteristics of terminological units in BBC News reporting, demonstrating their essential role in shaping contemporary media discourse. The findings indicate that terminological units are predominantly used in their standardized and contextually fixed meanings, ensuring semantic clarity and reducing ambiguity. The frequent use of semi-technical terms and contextual clarification strategies reflects BBC News' deliberate effort to adapt specialized knowledge for a broad international audience while maintaining terminological accuracy.

From a communicative perspective, terminological units fulfill multiple functions in news discourse, including informative, credibility-building, framing, and educational roles. Through the strategic selection and contextualization of terminology, BBC News effectively balances professional authority with audience accessibility. These results contribute to media linguistics and terminology studies by illustrating how terminological units operate as key linguistic mechanisms in the dissemination and interpretation of complex global issues.

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