# *SAME MEANING DIFFERENT TERMS IN SHIPBUILDING AND MARITIME LANGUAGE*

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*Abstract: The present research article aims at identifying different terms that have the same meaning in shipbuilding (or naval architecture) and maritime language.*
*In order to achieve this aim, several specialized dictionaries were explored and a selection of their words was the focus of research. Out of the total number of words only those words which have the same meaning in the shipbuilding and maritime languages were the topic of our interest. We have used the term "maritime language" since we do not have the terms Maritime Romanian as an independent discipline.*
*Our research article presents the terms which share the same meaning but which have different forms, their occurrence and etymology.*

*Keywords: maritime English, shipbuilding, terminology, specialized meaning.*

## Introduction

Due to his theories on the structure of language, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), the Swiss linguist, is often known as the founder of modern linguistics.

In Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*, a book summarising his lectures at the University of Geneva from 1906 to 1911, he explained the relationship between speeches and the evolution of language, investigating language as a structured system of signs.

The first point to understand is when Saussure mentioned 'linguistic units,' sound-images' and 'concepts,' he was referring to the mental processes that create these entities. He was not referring to spoken or written words, but to the mental impressions made on our senses by a certain 'thing.' It is our perception, or how we view this 'thing,' together with the sound system of our language that creates the two-part mental linguistic unit he referred to as a 'sign.'

For our purposes, we take as an example the fairly new concept of *suprastructură*. The sound image, or impression in our minds is of the image representing a superstructure or the Romanian *suprastructură*, and through our language system we know how that image sounds mentally. We know the concept or meaning associated with this 'sound impression' that *suprastructură* is the top part of a ship. The connections between the two elements are made mentally without uttering or writing the word '*suprastructură*,' and the two parts formed are joined and become united as a mental linguistic unit. Saussure calls this two-part linguistic unit a 'sign.' The same image is associated to *castelatură* for the maritime domain. Uttering it a specialist in the field will associated it with the upper side of a ship but will not use *suprastructură* like a naval architect would but *castelatură*.

If people have been long intuitively aware of the twofold nature of language, (in other words of the fact that when we communicate through language we actually use sounds to convey meanings), it was the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who first gave a coherent and scientific interpretation of language as a system of signs. In Saussure's theory, linguistic



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signs have a dual structure, the two sides of the sign being inextricably linked (the metaphor the Swiss linguist uses is that of a sheet of paper the two sides of which are practically inseparable). For Saussure, any linguistic sign is made up of a significant (Language: signifier), that is an "acoustic image" (the phonological "skeleton" of the word) and a signifié (Language: signified), or a concept, to which the respective acoustic image sends.1 We should not mistake, however, Saussures's " image acoustique " for the real sounds we produce when we utter a word. The Swiss linguist himself warns against possible misinterpretations of his theory.

In spite of being more «concrete» than the concept, the acoustic image is primarily a psychologic and not a material reality, which is proved, he argues, by the fact that we can speak to ourselves without actually articulating the words whose acoustic image is only present in our mind.

Two are the essential features of the linguistic sign in Saussure's opinion: its arbitrariness and the linearity of the signifier. The "arbitrariness" of the linguistic sign has been one of the most famous and heatedly debated of Saussure's concepts. What he actually understands by the arbitrariness of the sign is the arbitrariness of the relation holding between its constituent parts, the signifier and the signified. This link is arbitrary in the sense that there is no reason whatsoever for which a particular string of sounds should be associated with a certain meaning. On the other hand, Saussure cautiously warns against any misunderstanding of his terminology.

The association between the acoustic image and the concept is arbitrary in the sense that it lacks motivation; it is not 1 arbitrary, however, in the sense that it depends on the free choice of the speakers. In reality, he argues, we have the very opposite situation: once this association stablished, it becomes immutable, that is it cannot be changed. Languages tend to be very conservative systems and it is not up to any of the speakers in a linguistic community, and, indeed, not even to the entire collectivity itself, to change the association between the signifiers and the signifieds in the language they use. Shipbuilding and maritime languages make no exception. Even if both fields could use the same term, they tend to prefer using different terms for the same reality.

Within the framework of the Romanian linguistics, Saussure's ideas were further developed by Munteanu. He stated that the same signified may have two significants. On this theoretical background, the present paper proposes to list the terms (shipbuilding and maritime) which present the same reality using different terms.

Since shipbuilding and maritime languages are two compartments of sociolinguistics, the specialized linguistics shows the presence of two significants for the same signified the language used in these two fields is consolidated and the terms remain as they are without one taking the place of the other.

The linguistic research of specialized naval architecture terminology is at the beginning and there are few contributions which aim the theoretical aspects of this field of research. The vast majority of articles or books have a lexicographic character. Even if we have lexical contrastive studies, the shipbuilding and maritime dictionaries the vocabulary is richer due to the insertion of various operations specific to other fields.



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**Corpus**

Our corpus is extracted from fundamental literature in the field, i.e. the monolingual dictionary entitled *Dicționarul marinăresc (1982)*. In spite of the laborious work intended to distinguish and record same terms in shipbuilding and maritime Language, only 26 terms were included in our data bank.

**Methodology**

In order to reveal the presence of different terms for the same concept, we used *Dicționarul marinăresc,* various shipbuilding textbooks and dictionaries. We have studied 3,600 Language dictionary entries. From our research we have extracted only the entries which have the same meaning but different terms in Maritime and shipbuilding.

**Results**

Having explored the papers mentioned in the corpus, the following results were palpable : out of the total number of 3,600 dictionary entries 26 terms, listed below, represent a small percentage (only 0.72 %) and belong exclusively to the maritime language.

1. **Aclina** (maritime) = ecuator magnetic (naval architecture)
2. **Acrostol** (maritime) = galion (naval architecture)
3. **Aprova** (maritime) = asietă negative (naval architecture)
4. **Apuntament** (maritime) = debarcader (naval architecture)
5. **Apurare** (maritime) = asietă pozitivă (naval architecture)
6. **Aripă** (naval architecture) = bonetă = potantă (maritime)
7. **Avantport** (maritime) = anteport (naval architecture)
8. **Bastiment** (maritime) = navă (naval architecture)
9. **Brizant** (maritime) = val de resacă (naval architecture)
10. **Cheson** (naval architecture) = flotor de ranfulare (maritime)
11. **Cheiaj** (naval architecture) = taxă de platform (maritime)
12. **Cisternă** (maritime) = tanc (naval architecture)
13. **Coliziune** (naval architecture) = abordaj (maritime)
14. **Cot** (naval architecture) = șapan (maritime)
15. **Dănfui** (maritime) = degaza (naval architecture)
16. **Debarca** (naval architecture) = deșanța (maritime)
17. **Ruliu** (naval architecture) = tangaj (maritime)
18. **Etalon** (maritime) = punte (naval architecture)
19. **Flanc** (maritime) = bordaj exterior (naval architecture)
20. **Ganci** (maritime) = cârlig (naval architecture)
21. **Ghibră** (maritime) = etravă (naval architecture)
22. **Gutieră** (maritime) = filă lacrimară (naval architecture)
23. **Izogonă** (naval architecture) = agonă (maritime)
24. **Puntac** (maritime) = pontil (naval architecture)
25. **Remuu** (maritime) = siaj (naval architecture)
26. **Suprastructură** (naval architecture) = castelatură (maritime)



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Our study also revealed that the majority of terms are nouns. It is known that shipbuilding and Maritime Language are not very resourceful in creating other parts of speech.

Building a ship is a complex operation which involve various disciplines (Technical safety, Marine Systems, Corrosion, Instrumentation, Telecommunication, Electrical, Mechanical, just to name few of them) at various stages ( design, building, testing, launching, converting and repairing a ship). These operations bring new words in the shipbuilding and maritime field, but these operations are, sometimes, described using different terms.

Besides, in shipbuilding there are various standards and norms which have to be taken into account. These standards (MARPOL, SOLAS, Classes- DNV, Bureau Veritas, RNR, e.s.o) bring new words in the active vocabulary of naval architecture.

In conculsion, it is only by focusing on word meaning and words in context that it is possible to realize that, setting aside the lexical items that occur across various disciplines, the maritime field-specific lexis consists of few really 'unique' words and of a large number of items, not 'unique' in and of themselves, which become 'technical' and 'field specific' through the role played by polysemy and homonymy. Such items are 'field specific' and even 'unique' since they are used with these specific meanings only inside the ML frame of reference.

**Corpus:**

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