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Seven Good Reasons for a Better Account of Fine-grained Polysemy in Terminological Resources

Septynios svarios priežastys terminijos ištekliuose labiau atsižvelgti į smulkiąją polisemiją

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ABSTRACT

A quick look at terminological resources can give the wrong impression that polysemy is something that occurs only occasionally in specialized domains. These kinds of resources seldom account for the different meanings a linguistic unit or expression can carry in the same domain and, even when they do, the distinction between closely related meanings is not explained in ways that would allow unfamiliar users to grasp them correctly. This can be explained partly by the fact that polysemy is considered to be reduced or non-existent in specialized subject fields. It can also be explained by the theoretical assumption still relayed in some textbooks that the "ideal" term is typically monosemic. However, multiple meanings do co-exist in given specialized domains and corpora and many reasons would justify a more adequate treatment of polysemy in resources. We examine seven reasons in this article: subject field boundaries are not enough; imprecise definitions; general language dictionaries are not enough; different meanings affect combinatorics; lexical relations are linked to distinct meanings; different government patterns; different equivalence relations.

KEYWORDS: polysemy, terminological resource, regular polysemy, alternation, microsense.

ANOTACIJA

Pažvelgus į terminijos išteklius gali susidaryti klaidingas įspūdis, kad polisemija tik retkarčiais pasitaiko dalykinėse srityse. Tokie ištekliai retai atspindi skirtingas reikšmes, kurias kalbinis vienetas ar posakis gali turėti toje pačioje srityje, ir, net jei atspindi, artimų reikšmių skirtumas nėra paaiškinamas taip, kad nežinantys

vartotojai galėtų jas teisingai suvokti. Tai iš dalies galima paaiškinti tuo, kad polisemija specializuotose dalykinėse srityse laikoma suvaldyta arba neegzistuojančia. Tai taip pat galima paaiškinti teorine prielaida, kurios vis dar laikomasi kai kuriuose vadovėliuose, kad „idealus“ terminas paprastai yra vienareikšmis. Tačiau tam tikrose srityse ir specializuotuose tekstynuose egzistuoja kelios reikšmės, ir yra daug priežasčių, kurios pateisintų tinkamesnį polisemijos traktavimą terminijos ištekliuose. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjame septynias priežastis: dalykinių sričių ribų nepakankamumą; apibrėžčių netikslumą; bendrosios kalbos žodynų neužtektinumą; skirtingų reikšmių poveikį kombinatorikai; leksinių santykių sąsają su skirtingomis reikšmėmis; skirtingus valdymo modelius; skirtingus lygiavertiškumo santykius.

ESMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: polisemija, terminijos išteklius, reguliarioji polisemija, kaita, mikroprasmė.

1. INTRODUCTION[1]

A quick look at terminological resources can give the impression that polysemy is a rare phenomenon in specialized domains. Considering linguistic units within specific subject fields often prevents terminologists from addressing polysemy (Delavigne 2022), even more so when domains are delimited very precisely. In term banks and other domain-specific resources, concepts are associated with subject fields and their meanings are apprehended on this basis.

Recording multi-word nouns instead of single-word terms is an additional factor that contributes to giving the impression that polysemy is uncommon in specialized domains (L'Homme 2024b). Indeed, polysemous units are frequently disambiguated when considered within longer expressions. Consider *green* in *green technology* or *green area*: *green* is a polysemous adjective, but in *green technology*, it means "that is less damageable for the environment"; in *green space*, it can be defined as follows: "with vegetation". Terminological resources might record *green technology* and *green space* but few record *green* as a single-word term and the two meanings just mentioned.

A third factor that can explain reduced or non-existent polysemy in specialized resources is the lack of attention given to verb and adjective terms (for instance, the adjective *green* just mentioned), which display forms of polysemy that do not affect nouns that denote entities.

1 This paper was adapted from a presentation given at the 5th International Conference on Terminology, Scientific, Administrative and Educational Dimensions of Terminology organized by the Institute of the Lithuanian Language in Vilnius, Lithuania, in October 2023.

We could go on and list other factors, but they cannot hide the fact that polysemy occurs in specialized domains and corpora as this article will show. We contend that it should also be better represented in terminological resources and explained in ways that are helpful for users. In this article, we present seven valid reasons for accounting for polysemy, and more specifically fine-grained polysemy, and for making meaning distinctions explicit in specialized resources. Examples are taken from two resources that are compiled at the University of Montreal, the DiCoEnviro (2024) and the Framed DiCoEnviro (2024).

2. POLYSEMY IN SPECIALIZED DOMAINS?

In contrast to a common practice in general language dictionaries where meanings attached to polysemous lexemes are grouped and organized hierarchically, terminological resources, and especially term banks, describe concepts in separate entries differentiated from other ones.[2] The differences between these two approaches are often emphasized in terminology literature.[3] Some authors even refer to monosemy as an ideal property that differentiates term meaning from word meaning.[4]

However, multiple meanings do co-exist in specialized domains and corpora, and terminologists must often make meaning distinctions that can involve two or more domain-specific meanings or domain-specific and other meanings. Literature in terminology has, on occasion, addressed

2 "<...> in practice, because the subject field structure of the data separate homonyms belonging to different subject fields. In this way terminological dictionaries avoid the problem of establishing separate senses of words and numbering and ordering them in a single entry." (Sager 1990: 56).

3 "Concept-term monosemy involves the single-concept principle, according to which the terminologist must deal with one concept at a time, whether it be on a monolingual or multilingual terminology record or in a specialized vocabulary entry. This is the exact opposite of the principle of polysemy that is applied in general-language dictionaries in which the lexicographical entry comprises a series of senses, each reflecting a different concept" (Pavel, Nolet 2001: 22).
"<...> lexicographical dictionaries and related resources focus on words and their potentially multiple definitions, which is to say, words and their one or more meanings. In contrast, entries in terminological resources treat individual concepts in single entries, designated by one or more terms and potential equivalents in other language <...>" (Wright 2022: 91).

4 "If we compare the vocabulary of general language and terminology in this respect we see that the two systems differ significantly. Most words in the lexicon of general language have multiple meanings. Each linguistic form is associated with numerous meanings (some of which are clearly related to one another <...>. Theoretically, terms should be unambiguous and have one meaning and only one designation corresponding to one form. <...> A term in the system of a subject field should identify only one concept <...>" (Cabré 1999: 40).

the issue of polysemy directly, usually to distinguish specialized meanings from non-specialized ones or to state that adding a meaning to an existing lexical item is a common term creation method (Aldestein, Cabré 2002; Kocourek 1991). Polysemy or term meaning is also often considered from other perspectives, such as ambiguity (Sterner 2022), indeterminacy (Andersen 2007), variation (especially diachronic variation, Temmerman 2000), points of view (Condamines, Rebeyrolles 1996), categorization differences (Bowker 2022; Diki-Kidiri 2022; León Araúz, Reimerink 2010). Few terminology textbooks address polysemy directly.

It has been shown that polysemy is not only a recurrent phenomenon in domains such as computing and environment, but that it can take different forms that have been studied in lexical semantics (L'Homme 2020a, 2024b), such as:

– Regular polysemy (Apresjan 1974), such as the activity–result polysemy with *catch* in (1) or the activity–instrument polysemy with *transportation* in (2).

(1) a. FAO's International Plan of Action for reducing incidental CATCH *of seabirds in longline fisheries (FAO IPOA-Seabirds).*
b. A large percentage of the CATCH *for human consumption is destined for the international markets.*

(2) a. Encouraging use of electric vehicles for personal TRANSPORTATION.
b. Well over 90 percent of all motorized TRANSPORTATION *is fueled by products of petroleum*

– Forms of alternations that can lead to polysemy, such as the agent–instrument alternation with *contaminate* in (3).

(3) a. In some areas, the groundwater can be CONTAMINATED *by mineral poisons, such as arsenic - see Arsenic contamination of groundwater.*
b. the unregulated mining is likely leaching mercury into the air, soil, and water, CONTAMINATING *the region and imperiling its people.*

– Microsenses (Cruse 1995; Croft, Cruse 2004), such as the subtle difference that is seen between *plant* in (4), an activity that concerns trees, and *plant* in (5), an agricultural activity.

(4) The conifer has been PLANTED *in the southern Appalachian Mountains by some members of the Torreya Guardians because habitat in the Florida panhandle no longer supports a viable population*

(5) local farmers typically remove all the trees from a patch of forest before PLANTING *their food crops or cash crops on the newly cleared plot <...>*

In addition to these manifestations of polysemy, others can also be found in specialized domains (see, for instance, Durán-Muñoz, Jiménez-Navarro 2023 on motion and fictive meanings of verbs in the domain of tourism). In terminological resources, these different meanings are seldom recorded[5] and, even when they are, the distinctions between them are not described in ways that allow users to grasp them easily. In this paper, we give seven reasons why we believe this situation should change.

3. SUBJECT FIELD BOUNDARIES ARE NOT ENOUGH

As was mentioned above, in terminology but also other related areas, term meaning is usually considered from the perspective of previously delimited domains. In some resources that aim at representing knowledge organization (thesauri, ontologies and terminological knowledge bases), the domain also provides the basis against which concepts (rather than meanings) are defined, situated within the knowledge structure of the field, linked to other concepts, and clearly differentiated from these other concepts.

More concretely, specialized resources and especially term banks associate each term record with a given subject field. Domains can be specific (e.g., circular economy or programming) or much broader (e.g., environment or computer science). This approach has the inevitable consequence of cutting possible sense relations that could be explained if a broader perspective were taken.

That said, even when subject fields are delimited for a given terminology project, the domain label itself is often insufficient to classify distinct meanings in resources. For instance, the strategy would be helpful to distinguish *plant* in (4) from *plant* in (5) by associating the former to the domain of deforestation and the latter to agriculture. However, no domain delimitation method would allow us to distinguish regular polysemy in (1) and (2) or alternations such as the one illustrated in (3), since these meanings are most likely to occur in the same domain or subject-specific corpus.

5 L'Homme (2024a) analyzed a sample of 45 polysemous items in the field of the environment. These 45 lexical items were taken from the DiCoEnviro (2024) and corresponded to 96 different meanings (distinctions were established based on lexico-semantic criteria). Each lexical item of the sample was looked up in four different resources that focus on the environment. The analysis also took into consideration additional meanings (senses that were not recorded in the DiCoEnviro). The polysemy ratio in these resources range from 1.06 to 1.64 (against the 2.23 ratio of the DiCoEnviro).

Furthermore, domain labels can even lead to some confusion for users of terminological resources applying this domain label strategy. Identical meanings can be considered to be different if they are associated with distinct domains. For instance, in the Termium Plus® term bank, *network* is described in 22 records. Part of these records define *network* as a representation or a graph of relations; others define *network* as an organized configuration of computers. Even if the domain label changes, we can hardly deduce from this high number of term records that *network* has 22 different meanings or that the domain alone triggers a need for creating a new entry.

4. IMPRECISE DEFINITIONS

It appears quite obvious that inadequate delimitations of meanings or distinctions between two senses will inevitably lead to imprecise definitions. Nevertheless, this often occurs in terminological resources that fail to distinguish regular polysemy phenomena or different meanings that result from alternations. Consider the following definition given for *contaminate* in Park and Allaby (2017), a dictionary on the environment and conservation:

Contaminate: To pollute or make impure or unclean, either by contact or by mixture.

The definition fails to distinguish the two meanings of *contaminate* instantiated in (3). Example (3) a. contains an occurrence of *contaminate* that has two arguments and (3) b. an instantiation of *contaminate* with three arguments.

Contaminate 1: X (a harmful substance) ~ Y (an area)

(3) a. In some areas, the ground water can be CONTAMINATED *by mineral poisons, such as arsenic – see Arsenic contamination of groundwater.*

Contaminate 2: X (an agent, an activity) ~ Y (an area) with Z (a harmful substance)

(3) b. the unregulated mining is likely leaching mercury into the air, soil, and water, CONTAMINATING *the region and imperilling its people.*

Contaminate 1 refers to a situation in which a harmful substance infiltrates a natural entity (a lake, soil, a river), changes its composition and contributes to degradation. *Contaminate 2* designates a situation where an

agent or an activity carried out by an agent causes the harmful substance to become part of the composition of a natural entity and degrade it. The definition recorded in the Park and Allaby (2017) dictionary does not allow users to distinguish a meaning that involves an agent or a cause (3) b. from another event that does not involve an external cause (3) a.

In other cases, terminological resources may record only one meaning of a polysemous unit. For instance, the GEMET Thesaurus (2024) defines *harvest* as follows: "The amount or measure of the crop gathered in a season". The definition captures the entity meaning of *harvest* in (6) b., but not the activity meaning in (6) a.

(6) *a. Protection of critical wildlife habitats in the Arctic is becoming recognized by those living inside as well as outside the Arctic as essential for both the conservation of Arctic wildlife and its sustainable* HARVEST *by residents of the Arctic.*
b. HARVEST *quantity and timing, including pre-commercial and commercial thinnings, selection, and clear-cut harvesting will affect the quality and quantity of timber produced, having implications for carbon storage and biodiversity.*

5. MEANING DISTINCTIONS IN GENERAL LANGUAGE DICTIONARIES ARE NOT ENOUGH

If units are not recorded in term banks or specialized dictionaries or if a specific meaning is missing, users of resources might look them up in general language dictionaries. However, even if these latter repositories account for many domain-specific meanings, they might fail to capture distinctions that are important from the perspective of specialized domains. Consider the verb *introduce* in examples (7).

(7) *a. <...>* INTRODUCE *changes directly into the text.*
b. <...> political resistance to INTRODUCING *an endangered species to unoccupied habitat.*

Although *introduce* in both (7) a. and (7) b. can be paraphrased as "someone places something somewhere", a terminologist working on the topic of endangered species might perceive a semantic modulation between the two instantiations of the verb. This can be confirmed by looking at the relations that each occurrence of *introduce* shares with other units: in (7) a. it shares relations with *insert*, *delete* and *edit*; whereas the *introduce* in (7) b. appears in the same lexical paradigm as *reintroduce*, *introduction*, *colonize* and *inhabit*.

As shown in Table 1, the Merriam-Webster (online dictionary) makes five meaning distinctions for the transitive verb, some of which are broken down into two or five sub-senses. The Oxford English Dictionary makes eight meaning distinctions that are also broken down into sub-senses. Both dictionaries define the general meaning of placing something somewhere (Sense 5 in the Merriam-Webster and sense 1b in the Oxford English Dictionary), but no distinction or example would allow a user dealing with *introduce* in a corpus on endangered species to grasp the specificities of the verb when linked with this topic.

Table 1. *Introduce* (transitive) in the Merriam-Webster (2024) and the Oxford English Dictionary (2024)

MERRIAM-WEBSTER		
1	: to lead to or make known by a formal act, announcement, or recommendation: such as	a: to cause to be acquainted
		b: to make preliminary explanatory or laudatory remarks about
		c: to bring (someone, such as an actor or singer) before the public for the first time
		d: to present or announce formally or officially or by an official reading introduce legislation
		e: to present formally at court or into society
2	to lead or bring in especially for the first time	
3		a: to bring into play
		b: to bring into practice or use
4	to bring to a knowledge of something	
5	**PLACE, INSERT**	
OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY		
1		a: To lead or bring into a place, or into the inside or midst of something
		b: To put or place in from without, to insert.
		c: To usher or bring (a person) into a society or body; also, †into a state or condition (*obsolete*).

2	To bring (a thing) into some sphere of action or thought; to bring in in the course of some action or in a literary or artistic composition; to add or insert as a feature or element.	
3	To bring into use or practice; to bring into vogue or fashion; to institute (a law, custom, etc.).	
4	† To bring on, bring about, give rise to, occasion, induce. *Obsolete.*	
5	To usher in (a time, action, matter, etc.); to bring forward with preliminary or preparatory matter; to start, open, begin.	
6	† To bring (a person) into the knowledge of something; to initiate; to teach, instruct. *Obsolete.*	
7	To bring into personal acquaintance; to make known to a person or to a circle.	a: to make known in person, esp. in a formal manner, with announcement of name, title, or other identification.
		b: To conduct formally into a person's presence; to present formally, as at court, or in an assembly, as the House of Lords or Commons, a society, etc.
		c: To bring out into society; spec., in modern use, to bring (a young lady) 'out'.
		d: To bring to the knowledge of, or make acquainted with, a thing, by actual contact, by experience, description, representation, etc.
8		† To present (an address or the like) formally. *Obsolete.*
		To bring to the notice or cognizance of a person, etc.; to bring a bill or measure before parliament, etc.

6. DIFFERENT MEANINGS, DIFFERENT COMBINATORICS

Other reasons that justify making meaning distinctions in terminological resources and for explaining these distinctions to users stem from the linguistic properties of units. One of these properties is their ability to combine other lexical units. Consider examples in (8) that illustrate two different meanings of *environment*.

(8) *a. Global averages give the big picture, but changes to regional climate help us understand how warming will affect Canadian society and the* ENVIRONMENT.
b. The diet of the Gulf sturgeon consists of soft-bodied organisms such as aquatic insects and other aquatic invertebrates while they inhabit freshwater, and molluscs, shrimps, other invertebrates, and small fish while in marine ENVIRONMENTS.

Environment in (8) a. refers to the set of biological conditions that can be found in a given area. This specific meaning can be combined with units such as *affect, alter, degradation, global, protect, and protection*. Environment in (8) b. refers to a place where a living entity carries out regular activities (feeding, reproducing, taking care of youngs, etc.). It combines with a different set of lexical units, such as *aquatic, coastal, inhabit, live, marine, saline* and so on. In resources that record collocates, the failure to distinguish these two meanings of *environment* would inevitably lead to confusion.

Similarly, *green*, a polysemic adjective in the environment, also combines with different sets of nouns. Consider the examples in (9).

(9) *a. The Spanish supplier Iberdrola now offers <...> the ability to subscribe to a* GREEN *energy electric contract for 100 percent renewable energy.*
b. the role of GREEN *spaces in providing a quality urban environment; software which enables contaminated sites to be identified more quickly; better methods for monitoring water quality; and cheaper solar power.*

Green in (9) a. expresses a meaning that can be paraphrased as "that is less damageable for the environment" and combines with nouns such as *energy, gas, technology, infrastructure, building*, etc. In contrast, *green* in (9) b. means "with vegetation" and combines with nouns such as *area*, *space*, *neighbourhood*, etc. Despite this obvious meaning distinction, hardly any terminological resource accounts for it or does so indirectly by recording noun phrases that contain *green* (L'Homme 2024b).

7. DIFFERENT MEANINGS, DIFFERENT TERMINOLOGICAL RELATIONS

As was shown with examples mentioned previously and reminded in Table 2, different meanings also share paradigmatic relations with different sets of lexical units.

Table 2. Polysemous units and related terms

TERM	EXAMPLE IN THE ARTICLE	RELATED TERMS
catch 1	Example (1) a.	capture, fishing
catch 2	Example (1) b.	bycatch, landings
contaminate 1	Example (3) a.	acidify, eutrophicate
contaminate 2	Example (3) b.	decontaminate, pollute, inject
environment 1	Example (8) a.	biome, ecosystem
environment 2	Example (8) b.	site, habitat, territory
green 1	*Green technology*	clean, ecological, polluting
green 2	*Green space*	vegetation, plant
introduce 1	Example (7) a.	insert, delete, edit
introduce 2	Example (7) b.	reintroduce, colonize, inhabit
plant 1	Example (4)	reforest, clear, afforest, cut down, tree
plant 2	Example (5)	cultivate, harvest, agriculture, culture, crop
transportation 1	Example (2) a.	transport, carry, drive
transportation 2	Example (2) b.	vehicle, car, bus

Figures 1, 2 and 3 depict graphical representations of the set of relations defined for three different meanings of the verb *produce* in the environment (exemplified in (10)).

(10) a. The biogas engine and the biogas busses are also big polluters PRODUCING *high emissions of nitrogen oxides.*
b. EPR creates a feedback mechanism that drives firms to stop PRODUCING *non-recyclable and non-reusable products that contain hazardous materials.*
c. All of these reintroduced ferret populations have PRODUCED *healthy numbers of litters in the wild.*

Figure 1 shows that *produce* 1 in (10) a. is linked to the near-synonyms *emit* and *release*. Its arguments are labelled as agent (e.g., *polluter*), cause (*activity*, *transportation*) and patient (harmful substances, such as *gas*, *pollutant*, etc.).

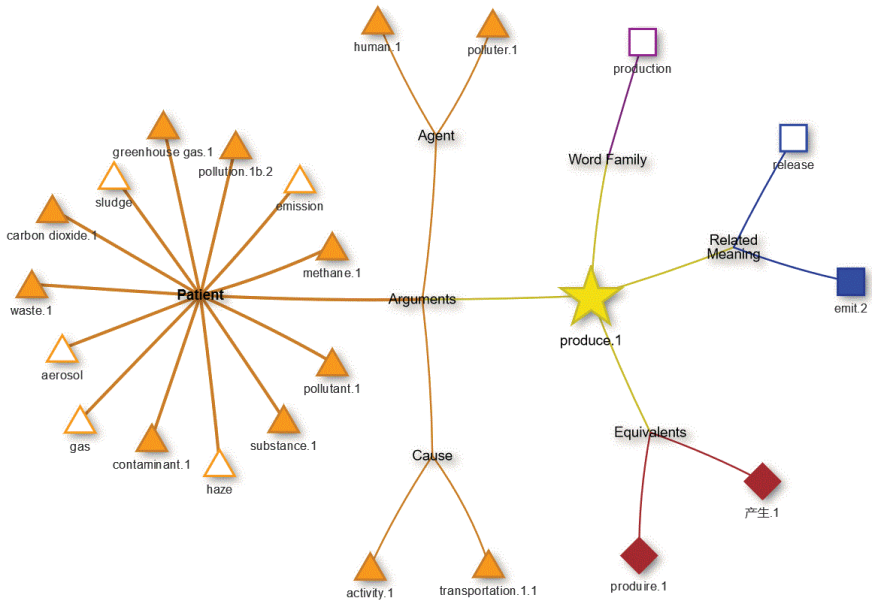

Figure 1. *Produce* 1 and relations (NeoVisual 2024)

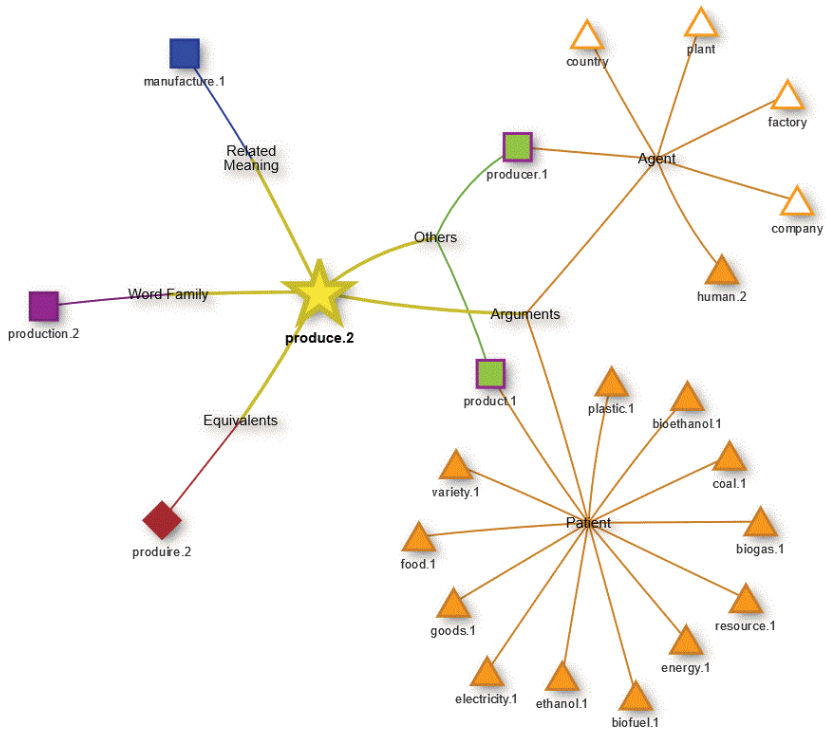

Figure 2. *Produce* 2 and relations (NeoVisual 2024)

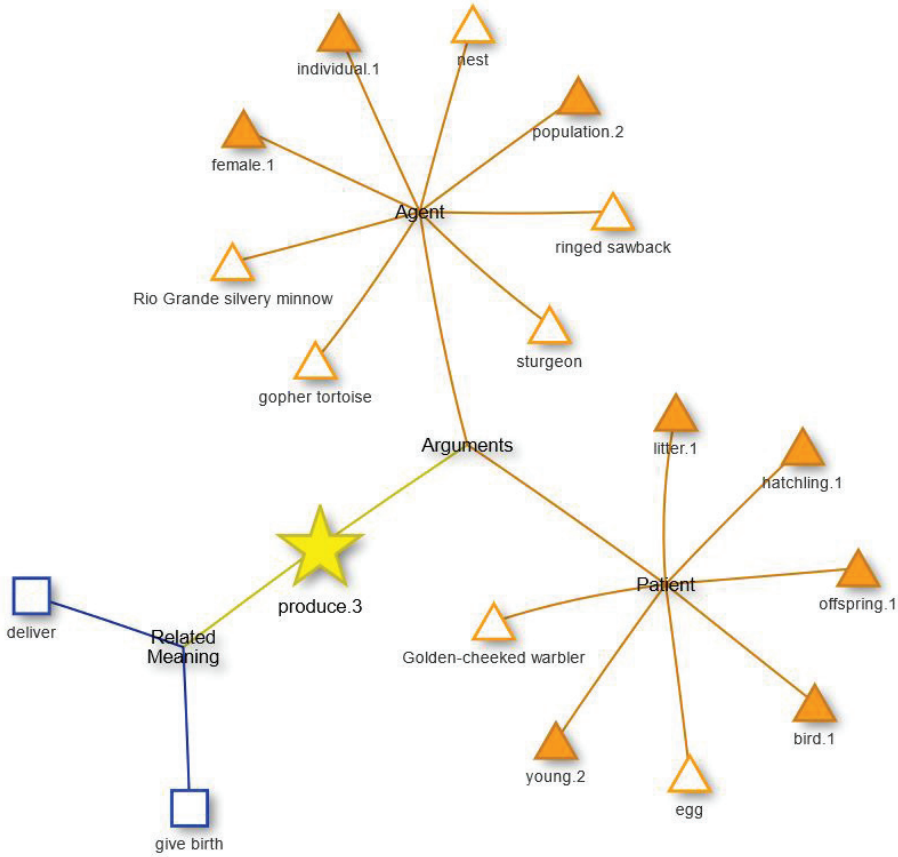

Figure 3. *Produce* 3 and relations (NeoVisual 2024)

Figure 2 illustrates a different network of relations. In this case, *produce* (10) b. has a different near-synonym, i.e. *manufacture*. It is also linked to a new set of agents and patients: the typical agent is lexicalized as *producer* and the patient, as *product*.

Finally, *produce* also expresses an activity carried out by species in (10) c. Figure 3 shows it is related to *deliver* and *give birth* and that its arguments are realized with terms such as *individual* or *female* as agents and *egg* or *young* as patients.

8. DIFFERENT MEANINGS, DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT PATTERNS

Very few terminological resources describe the government patterns of terms systematically since the linguistic properties of terms are not a central concern in resources that focus on explaining knowledge expressed by terms. This prevents them from having to distinguish meanings triggered by alternations.

For instance, when failing to distinguish the two meanings of *contaminate*, the Park and Allaby (2017) environment and conservation dictionary would not allow a proper description of the government patterns linked to each sense.

Contaminate 1: X (a harmful substance) ~ Y (an area)

Y *is contaminated by, with X, Y is contaminated.*

Contaminate 2: X (an agent, an activity) ~ Y (an area) with Z (a harmful substance)

X (of Z) contaminates Y; X contaminates Y (by introducing Z), Y is contaminated with Z (by X).

9. DIFFERENT MEANINGS, DIFFERENT EQUIVALENCE OPTIONS

Another *interesting* perspective that can be given on polysemy is provided by interlinguistic equivalence. Polysemous lexical items can display isomorphic meanings in different languages. For example, *green* almost always translates into *vert* in French which is also polysemous. Frequently, however, different meanings translate into different lexical items in another language.

Figure 4 shows how four different meanings of *terre* in French translate into English depending on the meaning considered. In the figure, the words with no sense number are lexical items that have not been disambiguated; the words in black with a subscript number represent disambiguated terms or lexical units. Short descriptions of their meanings are given between quotation marks. As can be seen in this figure, the equivalence relations become much more complex when examining the separate meanings of *terre*. The English equivalents can also be polysemous and linked to new sets of French terms. Bilingual or multilingual terminological resources failing to make relevant distinctions between these meanings are likely to miss possible equivalence relationships.

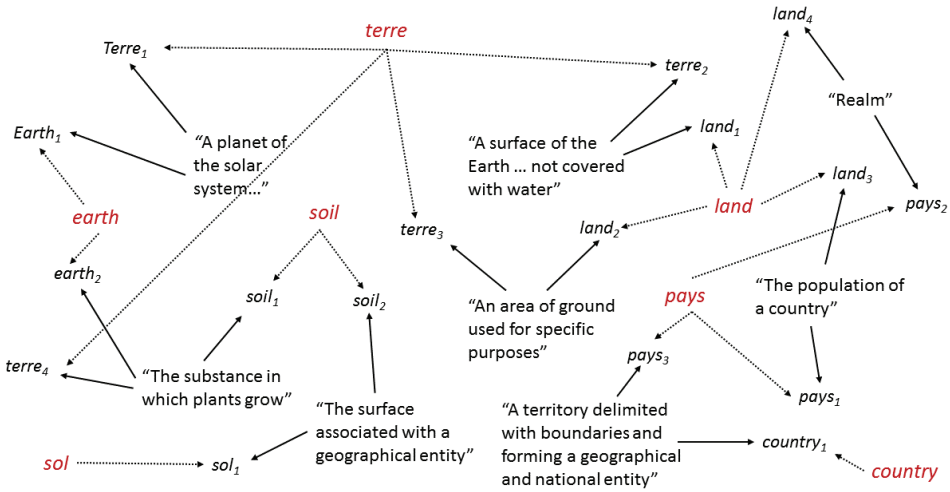

Figure 4: *Terre* in French, four different meanings and relations between polysemous equivalents in English (L'Homme 2020b: 234)

10. CONCLUSION

We examined seven different reasons that would justify a more accurate and explicit account of polysemy in terminological resources. The methodological approach taken in most resources (i.e. defining concepts precisely from the perspective of a previously delimited domain) and some of the consequences that stem from it (i.e. considering multiword terms, lack of attention to verb and adjective terms) result in giving the wrong impression that polysemy is uncommon in specialized domains.

In other words, the methodology still applied to compile terminological resources and the structure of term records lead to a monosemic treatment of units and expressions. This is emphasized in resources that aim at representing the organization of knowledge in given domains since concepts must be clearly differentiated from one another.

But this does not mean that polysemy is non-existent: in many cases, it is simply hidden behind domain labels or multiword terms, a situation that prevents terminologists from having to address it directly. This, perhaps, is convenient for the designers of terminological resources, but inevitably causes frustrations on the part of users who might not find the information that will help them understand the precise meaning of terms. Another important drawback of the lack of attention to polysemy is that

it is incompatible with corpus-based analysis which inevitably leads to the observation that different specialized meanings co-exist and interact in corpora.

In our opinion, the examples presented in this article are compelling evidence to justify a precise account of distinct meanings in specialized resources even more so as general language resources might not capture important distinctions in given subject fields. Users who look up resources to find information about the combinatorics of terms, paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations, and precise equivalence options need descriptions that go beyond situating concepts in knowledge structures.

Taking into account polysemy in terminological resources in ways that would make meaning distinctions explicit for users requires a thorough revision of their current structure and compilation methods. We suggested (L'Homme 2020a) alternative strategies that could be developed to represent polysemy: listing and representing terminological relations, situating specific meanings in larger semantic frames, etc. These strategies (and others) were implemented in resources that record computing and environment terminology. However, resorting to these new methods requires that terminologists become acquainted with new principles and techniques to help them validate meaning distinctions and represent meanings in resources.

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SEPTYNIOS SVARIOS PRIEŽASTYS TERMINIJOS IŠTEKLIUOSE LABIAU ATSIŽVELGTI Į SMULKIĄJĄ POLISEMIJĄ

Santrauka

Terminologijoje polisemija dažnai nepastebima arba svarstoma iš kitų perspektyvų (dviprasmiškumas, variantiškumas, homonimija ir kt.). Apibrėžiant sąvokas konkrečiose dalykinėse srityse terminologams nereikia turėti reikalų su daugybe reikšmių ir atspindėti reikšminių skirtumų tokiuose ištekliuose kaip terminų bankai ir specializuoti žodynai. Ištekliuose, kuriais siekiama perteikti konkrečių dalykinių sričių žinių struktūrą (tezaurai, ontologijos ir terminologinės žinių bazės), sritis sudaro pagrindą, kuriuo remiantis sąvokos (o ne reikšmės) apibrėžiamos, išdėstomos žinių struktūroje, susiejamos su kitomis sąvokomis ir aiškiai nuo jų atskiriamos.

Šiame straipsnyje, naudodamiesi aplinkos srities pavyzdžiais, parodome, kad polisemija yra labiau paplitusi specializuotose dalykinėse srityse nei paprastai manoma. Žinoma, sutelkus dėmesį į reikšmes anksčiau apribotose srityse, sumažėja polisemijos tikimybė. Tačiau kodėl polisemija nedažna terminijos ištekliuose, paaiškina tokie veiksniai kaip sudėtinių terminų įtraukimas, nepakankamas dėmesys veiksmažodžiams ir būdvardžiams, kuriems būdingos kitokios polisemijos formos nei daiktavardžiams, žymintiems vienetus.

Pateikti pavyzdžiai yra pagrįsti patirtimi, įgyta kuriant du specializuotus aplinkos srities terminų išteklius, t. y. *DiCoEnviro* ir *Framed DiCoEnviro*, ir naudojantis specializuotais tekstynais, sudarytais kuriant šiuos išteklius. Dauguma mūsų nustatytų reikšminių skirtumų nėra užfiksuoti kituose su aplinka susijusiuose ištekliuose.

Pasisakome už adekvatesnį polisemijos traktavimą terminijos ištekliuose ir pateikiame septynias priežastis, kodėl reikšminiai skirtumai turėtų būti aiškiai atspindėti ir paaiškinti: 1) dalykinių sričių ribų nepakankamumas; 2) apibrėžčių netikslumas; 3) bendrosios kalbos žodynų neužtektinumas; 4) skirtingų reikšmių poveikis kombinatorikai; 5) leksinių santykių sąsaja su skirtingomis reikšmėmis; 6) skirtingi valdymo modeliai; 7) skirtingi lygiavertiškumo santykiai.

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