

Lexicography, Terminography and the Role of New Mobile Devices in Teaching Terminology¹

ÁGOTA FÓRIS

Károli Gáspár University TERMIK

PÉTER GAÁL

Károli Gáspár University TERMIK

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1. INTRODUCTION

The establishing and launch of the *Master in Terminology* started two years ago, and as a result the training of terminologists has been introduced into Hungarian tertiary education at a master's level. The *Master in Terminology* is a two-year programme at the Faculty of Humanities of the Károli Gáspár University, Budapest. The language of instruction is Hungarian. The first year comprises the introductory and specialist subjects (mainly of linguistics), and the second year focuses on practical training, during which students have the opportunity to work as trainees at various institutions (cf. Fóris 2011, 2013).

Terminology, lexicography and terminology management form the core material of the programme. When designing the curriculum, beyond including the most important theories and methods of lexicography and terminology, a key question is which modern tools (their use, content and form) we should focus on in the training. Not long ago desktop computers were a state-of-the-art, but soon they are becoming a thing of the past, and it seems that in a few years time portable computers (laptops, netbooks) will also become outdated.

Current trends clearly indicate the spread of smartphones and tablets. Some of these gadgets already measure up to average personal computers

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both in performance and in functionality, and they are expected to outperform PCs soon. Today, just like regular computers, smartphones and tablets offer a wide range of software and are able to carry out various tasks.

The paper discusses the emphasis placed in the MA in Terminology on modern tools and the possibilities they open, primarily in the teaching of lexicography and terminology.

2. LEXICOGRAPHY AND TERMINOLOGY IN THE PROGRAMME

Owing to the development and interconnection of telecommunication and information technology and the establishment of internet and other networks, easy and quick access and transmission of information is available for users. The easy permeability of the systems of different professions is facilitated by accurate definitions and the comparison of particular systems and their harmonization. The methods of terminology research and applications and possibilities of teaching terminology have been changed fundamentally by infocommunication systems and the spread of the internet. If the database not only contains the definitions of concepts but also details on the relations among the concepts and on the characteristics of such networks of relations, that helps handling the large amount of information contained in them and makes it possible to use the information in the most effective way. Efficient and quick selection of the required information is helped by these semantic and ontology systems.

Competences of terminologists mainly include forming terminology systems in regard to entities of the world and developing the system of terms which carries information in ontologies (with taking notice of professional knowledge and principles of verbal communication). In the Master knowledge is conveyed in an onomasiological approach, connected to conceptual systems. The description of connections among concepts, creating terms and definitions, the use of terminology management tools, principles of terminological systems based on the latest research have an important role in the curriculum. The spread of electronic and mobile applications demands handing over and using the material of modern terminology in this attitude, which is possible only with specialists trained for this goal.

The core material of the MA in Terminology programme is made up of: semantics; onomastics; morphology; word formation, term formation; terminology, lexicography; language politics; language planning, language

rights; corpus linguistics; terminology management, terminography and documentation; standardization, quality management.

Students attend lectures on terminology in the second semester of the training, lexicography as well as terminology management (both lectures and seminars) in the third semester, and take part in terminology seminars in the fourth semester. Our current paper focuses on recently appeared gadgets in the area of lexicography and terminography.

3. NEW TOOLS IN LEXICOGRAPHY AND TERMINOLOGY

The quick and wide spread of mobile communication tools in recent years has caused significant changes in the field of terminology and lexicography. Ten or twenty years ago ordinary desktop computers were a state-of-the-art. But soon not only desktop PCs, but ordinary portable computers (laptops, netbooks) will also become outdated for users. Current trends predestinate the era of mobile communication tools (e.g. smartphones, tablets). Here are some statistics about these trends: the *Pew Internet & American Life Project*, 2013 survey, which summarized the statistical data between 2011 and 2013 in the USA, revealed that 55% of mobile phone users have a smartphone and only 45% of them have a traditional mobile phone (*Pew Internet & American Life Project*, 2013). (In 2011 these were in a reverse order, so significant changes happened in the last two years.) Similar trends could be observed about tablets. According to the 2013 prognosis of *International Data Corporation (IDC)*, the number of sold tablets will approximate the number of sold portable computers, and will outstrip desktop computers.

The performance of smartphones and tablets grows progressively, the high end ones are nearly as powerful as an average PC, and they will probably outperform PCs soon. But in size and portability mobile tools leave PCs behind right now. These features make them suitable for running and using different applications, for example — what is important for the point of view of terminology — electronic dictionaries, terminology databases or other translation support software products.

Electronic dictionaries (mainly online dictionaries) are the future (what is more maybe the present) in terminology and in lexicography, and paper based reference works are put into shade. Six advantages and innovations of electronic dictionaries (compared to paper dictionaries) are emphasized by Sylviane Granger (2012): corpus integration, more and better data,

efficiency of access, customization, hybridization (using the characteristics of various types of reference works) and user input. It is easy to see that in the twenty first century modern dictionaries need to possess all of these six features in order to make effective use possible, in the fields of translation, education or industry.

Online dictionaries could be classified as *institutional Internet reference works* or *collective free multiple-language Internet reference works* (Fuertes-Olivera 2010). Collective dictionaries become more and more popular among dictionary users, although they are often mentioned as dictionaries filled with ‘unauthentic’ and ‘not reliable’ information. The most well-known community reference works are the Wiki dictionary projects like Wikipedia or Wiktionary. In the point of view of terminology, the most interesting Wiki project is maybe TermWiki, which is a free, multiple-language, online, collective terminology database. The reason TermWiki is new and interesting is because it combines the features of collective free multiple language dictionaries and features of popular social network sites. TermWiki allows non-professionals, professionals, terminologists and translators to share knowledge, edit pages of terms or create brand new pages. The reliability of this kind of terminology databases could be improved by the participation of professionals in the editing and supervising work.

The use of electronic dictionaries on mobile platforms is slightly different from traditional computer use, because the screen of smartphones and tablets is much smaller than ordinary PC or laptop screens and typing is done not on a traditional keyboard but a virtual one. For comfortable and efficient use of electronic dictionaries on mobile platforms we have to take the features of smartphones and tablets into consideration. There are two opportunities about it: to create the mobile version of the dictionary homepage, or a mobile dictionary application. Recently there is only little research and publication about mobile dictionaries because they appeared in large numbers just one or two years ago. A good example is Deny A. Kwary’s (2013) article that deals with mobile business dictionaries and its improvement potential. Therefore mobile lexicography will be an important area of future lexicography research.

Smartphones and tablets may soon appear in the teaching of terminology. The use of mobile tools at a lecture could be an easy and efficient way to acquaint students with different online dictionaries and terminology databases. Most teenagers and members of twenty-something age group

already have these gadgets, so they don't need a computer room — only internet connection — to access these online reference works. But easy access is not only available in the classroom, because mobile tools are with us practically every moment in life, so we can access dictionary information without desktop or portable computers.

Apart from education, the workplace could be another scene of the everyday use of mobile tools. Due to globalization there are more and more fields of activity which demand language support. Smartphones and tablets (because of their size) could be with employees all the time, regardless of where they work. So when they need a dictionary or terminology database they don't need to access their desktop computer every time. Another advantage is the built in voice recognition of mobile operation systems and other applications which supersedes the slow and complicated typing. (For example: a factory engineer can't leave the machines and devices behind when he needs to look up an unknown term. But it isn't necessary because he can access the required information with the help of his smartphone.)

The need for mobile dictionary and terminology applications is considerable. If we have a look at *Google Play* (one of the most popular online application store on the Internet), we see that there are many offline and online dictionaries (both free and pay) and some terminology applications for download. The most available terminology applications on *Google Play* are about medical and financial terminology. But download statistics shows that these apps are not as popular as mobile dictionaries. It follows therefore, that they have only a few users, but this trend could easily change by developing these apps and making people aware of their existence.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Actual terminology working methods are based on the use of tools of information technology and language technology. The aim of the *Master in Terminology* is to contribute to our integration into the European Higher Education Area by training professionals who are able to use modern technology and are familiar with their linguistic background that is needed for their development. Qualified terminologists could take an active part in Hungarian participation in European Union integration process. The high level theoretical and practical training grounded on a

wide basis allows graduates to find employment easily. As the position of the terminologist was unknown before, needs and regulations didn't exist in Hungary. Therefore, besides training terminologists, another important task is to make the labour market aware of the financial and professional benefits of employing one. The first students who graduated have quickly found jobs at research institutes, technical translation agencies, enterprise development centres as terminologists, project managers and translators.

Terminology, terminography and lexicography trainings (including making students acquainted with modern tools and software products) play an important role in teaching. The appearance and spreading of mobile devices set new tasks and challenges to terminology and lexicography. The claim of availability and easy use of traditional electronic (online) sources and reference works by smartphones and tablets will probably keep growing. To achieve this it isn't enough to transfer existing electronic reference works to mobile platforms. It's definitely necessary to optimize them for the most efficient use. Concerning the theoretical background: terminology and lexicography research should be extended to the research of mobile dictionaries and terminology databases. The result of this type of research may contribute to the making of better and more reliable applications, and more up-to-date education for students.

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LEKSIKOGRAFIJA, TERMINOGRAFIJA IR NAUJŲ MOBILIŲŲ ĮTAISŲ VAIDMUO MOKANT TERMINOLOGIJOS

Terminologijos magistro programa sukurta ir pradėta dėstyti 2011 m.; taip terminologų rengimas Vengrijoje tapo aukštojo mokslo dalimi. Programos branduolį sudaro terminologija, leksikografija ir terminijos tvarkyba. Šiuolaikinės leksikografijos tendencijos rodo išmaniųjų telefonų ir planšetinių kompiuterių panaudojimo plėtrą. Kai kurie

iš šių įrenginių savybėmis ir funkcionalumu prilygsta vidutiniškiems asmeniniams kompiuteriams; manoma, kad greitai turėtų juos ir pralenkti. Šiandien išmaniuosiuose telefonuose ir planšetiniuose kompiuteriuose, kaip ir įprastiniuose kompiuteriuose, yra labai įvairios programinės įrangos, jie gali atlikti įvairias užduotis. Straipsnyje aptariamas modernių priemonių vaidmuo ir jų teikiamos galimybės, mokant leksikografijos ir terminologijos pagal *Terminologijos magistro* programą.

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Ágota Fóris
Károli Gáspár University TERMIK
Reviczky u. 4, 1088 Budapest, Hungary
E-mail aforis@t-online.hu

Péter Gaál
Károli Gáspár University TERMIK
Reviczky u. 4, 1088 Budapest, Hungary
E-mail peter.gaal.hun@gmail.com