

Terminology and LSP in higher education in Hungary¹

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1. Introduction

The central topic of the conference is responsibility and awareness in terminology, and this panel focuses on the question of professional responsibility.

The topic choice is not a coincidence, as responsibility and awareness in terminology are central issues in the publications of Swedish terminologists.

At the previous Summit held in Budapest, Anna-Lena Bucher talked about Sweden's terminological infrastructure (see Bucher 2011). The paper presented Swedish national terminology policy, more precisely terminological infrastructure. The programme called 'Terminology Infrastructure for Sweden (TISS)' was launched in 2002 (Nilsson 2010: 61). The main aim of the Swedish Centre for Terminology (TNC) is to develop a *terminology infrastructure*, which process has three pillars: "(1) a Language Act which addresses the terminology issue, (2) a well-established national centre for terminology, TNC, (3) a repository of "all" Swedish terminology, i.e. a national termbank: *Rikstermbanken*" (Bucher 2011: 143).

In practice, the TNC is a centre of Swedish terminology works; one of its main tasks is to train coordinators and participants in terminology projects. A crucial benefit of this role is the common principles of training and that terminology work is carried out with standardised and tested methods. For the joint work TNC developed the four-step Term-O-Stat model (see Bucher 2011: 145–146).

The first pillar of terminological infrastructure is the Swedish Language Act, which entered into force in 2009. The TNC was founded as early as in 1941, it is government funded and the aim of the support is to "promote an efficient specialized communication in Swedish industry and society by the means of terminology work" (Bucher 2011: 147). Works on the third pillar, a national termbank: *Rikstermbanken* began in 2006, when the Swedish government allocated a special financial grant for its development. According to Nilsson (2010), this was not only a key step in the development of the national terminology infrastructure, but also a landmark in raising the terminological awareness of Swedish society.

2. Awareness and responsibility in Hungarian terminology

Awareness and responsibility in terminology are concepts relevant to the whole community of speakers of a language. Although at various levels, it is crucial in science, professions, also in governmental, scientific and educational administration, and for the speakers of the language in general. One of the positive examples (good practices) in Europe is the Swedish example I have just mentioned.

¹ Acknowledgements. This study was supported by the Bolyai János Postdoctoral Fellowship (Hungarian Academy of Sciences).

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Hungarian language politics mostly occupied itself with the problems related to the status planning of Hungarian minorities living abroad. Research related to corpus planning – mainly of the general language (most importantly the compilation of the Hungarian National Corpus by the Research Institut for Linguistics) – is carried out in a network of research institutes across the border. Issues of the spoken language, mainly the sociolinguistic aspects thereof, are discussed at a conference series (titled “Élőnyelvi Konferencia”) held at a different venue every year.

The problems arising from language use and the international literature have drawn professionals’ attention and sense of responsibility to issues of terminology. There have been numerous initiatives at institutions of science and higher education, but these have been isolated and therefore their findings are limited. Nevertheless, they indicate that participants in tertiary education have acknowledged their responsibility for the terminology of the Hungarian language. What is yet to be achieved, is drawing the attention of the government to its responsibility and the need for conscious action. This lack of awareness is the reason why there is no terminology policy that would set the principles for long term development, there are no terminology development projects, and the support system for these is also missing. The pillars of terminological infrastructure listed in the Swedish example are non-existent in Hungary, and all we can do is hope that this is only for the time being.

In my talk I will discuss the teaching of terminology in Hungarian university education, and the sense of responsibility and awareness of those involved.

2.1. Hungarian language and terminology

The official language of Hungary is Hungarian. Hungarian belongs to the Finno-Ugric language family, it is a Uralic language, and among the official languages of Europe, its sister languages are Finnish and Estonian. Speakers of Hungarian are surrounded by Indo-European (Slavic, Germanic and Neo-Latin) languages.

In Hungary, Latin used to be the official language (and the language of education and public administration) till 1844. Hungarian started to evolve as the official language starting from 1844, and a significant period in the process was the “neologist movement” (1772-1872): when words were created in large numbers, the new scientific vocabulary was established and specialised dictionaries were published. The field of terminology saw a boost during the industrialisation of the 1950s, when the specialised vocabulary was also developed and got published in specialised dictionaries. Ever since, the teaching of LSP and of specialised vocabulary has been done in the professional sphere. That is the time when so called specialised universities were founded in Hungary, where the specialised texts and vocabulary of the given field were developed. In the 1970s foreign language teaching teams (so called lectorates) were founded at these universities, among these were the units that taught Hungarian specialised language to foreigners, and new teaching materials were developed. This system of specialised universities was abolished after the change of the political system in 1990, universities were transformed and now have multiple faculties. The reasons for this was manifold: the aim was to reform Hungarian higher education, to follow the transformation of the industrial structures (including the withdrawal of some sectors) and the introduction of the Bologna system. (On the Hungarian neologist movement and the situation

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of Hungarian terminology, see Fóris 2007, 2010a., On the Hungarian as the language of education in the universities of the Carpathian Basin, see Fóris 2011b.)

2.2. Terminology in professional higher education

In Hungarian university education, the teaching of LSPs and of terminology was linked to professional training and standardisation.

The presence of Hungarian terminology in tertiary education can be divided into two main fields:

1. Starting from the end of the 19th century specialist terminology in Hungarian was present in tertiary (university) professional education as a means of transmitting knowledge. Since that time, and even up to today, every field of study in higher education in Hungary has been taught in Hungarian, and a prerequisite of this is that every subject have its own accepted Hungarian terminology. Teaching the proper terminology has become a crucial part of teaching any subject. Naturally, even today there are arguments about the use of borrowed Greek and Latin terms especially in legal and medical language, and nowadays such arguments also extend to the translation or borrowing of English terms. These arguments have become especially heated in economics, medicine and technology. Nevertheless we can claim that the vast majority of specialised textbooks and lecture notes used in university education are in Hungarian (whether originally, or in translation).

In several subject fields, well-known professors took part in the standardisation of newly evolving specialist fields, for example the preparation of standards on the terminology of chemistry was assisted by János Inczédy, who mentioned in his talk in 2007 that the scientific organisation IUPAC (International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry) is cooperating with ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and other international organisations when drafting their recommendations and regulations. International, English terminology is similarly handled at the fields of physics, biology, geology, environmental science and engineering, etc., and the Hungarian nomenclature of chemistry was also regularly published (Inczédy 2007, c.f. Horányi 1991, Inczédy et al. 1997).

2. Teaching terminology in a foreign language became important in the second half of the 20th century related to the training of specialised translators. In the 1970s specialised translators formed workshops at Hungarian universities (the Technical University of Heavy Industry in Miskolc, the University of Agricultural Sciences in Gödöllő, the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, the Faculties of Natural Sciences at the Kossuth Lajos University in Debrecen, the University of Economics in Budapest, and the Faculty of Economics at the University of Pécs etc.). The training of specialised translators in various sectors was launched in 1974, and at the same time the teaching of LSPs also began (Klaudy 1993). The collection and recording of the terminology of mining and the heavy industry for example, also had significant results. (The majority of these are bi- or multilingual glossaries.)

Communication between people today is facilitated by new tools and methods that have appeared as a result of scientific and technological development. The changes in information systems, the fact that they have become widely used, and the automation and electronic

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documentation of human activities have transformed the ways of human communication. The aim is to help people find more information in less time, and to ensure this, what is needed in the accelerating and expanding international communication processes is the harmonisation of conceptual/terminological networks. Unambiguous relations between the terminology of natural languages have to be ensured – this includes between two language variants and also between different languages – so that knowledge necessary to use high performance tools and new methods can be accessed. All this requires experts who are familiar with new requirements and who easily find their way in this new era.

In the past one and a half decades we have seen an increasing number of linguists working in terminology, and that the results of various branches of linguistics (mainly of applied linguistics, for example lexicography, translation studies, corpus linguistics, computational linguistics or psycholinguistics; and the new trend in cognitive linguistics) are used in terminology work as well.

3. Issues of teaching Hungarian Terminology at universities

There are several reasons why issues of terminology have returned to the forefront of interest around the world, in particular at the field of the development of information technology and telecommunications devices and the introduction of new tools and methods in research, education and practical work. Recently the need has become very strong to create the unified economic, conceptual, terminological system for a unified Europe, which has also played a significant role in this process. One consequence of this is that since the middle of the 1990s terminology (and/or lexicography, and/or computational linguistics) has been introduced into the education of several European countries, and has today become a profession and broad field of research and application. In many countries one can obtain a BA or even an MA degree in Terminology, or even study at a postgraduate level leading to a PhD. The changes that have taken place in Europe in the last three decades, and the radical transformation of the political and economic life in Hungary, have also led to further conceptual and terminological changes in the Hungarian language area. This is why interest in the issues of teaching Terminology in Hungarian became a significant area of growth in the 1990s, and many universities reformed or launched their teaching of Terminology. Terminological issues may be approached from various angles, but differences of approach do not affect the basic principles of either scientific or practical issues.

As infocommunication systems are improving all the time and are being used in Hungary too, the isolation of specialised fields is significantly decreasing, and it is not only the experts within this field who are familiar with the professional conceptual systems. Professionals from other fields know them too; *data, knowledge, information* have become central concepts. The development and intertwining of telecommunication and information science together with the development of the internet and other networks make it easy to access and forward a lot of important information. The conceptual and terminological systems of given professions are also closely related and influence each other. The precise definition of concepts and the comparison and harmonisation of the various systems make communication between the systems of the different professions easier and more efficient. The appearance of infocommunication systems and the spread of the internet radically changed the methods of research and application of terminology, and the possibilities of teaching terminology.

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Besides providing the definition of the concept users are helped in finding their way among the large amount of information and use that information effectively if all the data is accessible on the relations of that concept and the characteristics of those relations as well. These so-called ontologies help users locate the required information quickly and effectively. Less widely used languages are currently struggling to create and continuously update such databases. – Although in the Hungarian language area high level work is done in corpus building, corpus linguistics, and computational linguistics (see MNSZ, Váradi–Héja 2011) the compilation of terminology databases has only just begun, and a national terminology database has not even been planned yet.

Training to meet the new requirements of terminology started on many levels in the 1990s. Several terminology courses were launched by companies, institutions and associations to meet specific needs. These are interesting for this study because they made up for the lack of institutionalised terminology training. However important they may be, I will not go into details, but instead focus on the university education of terminology in Hungary.

3.1. Terminology in undergraduate studies

3.1.1. Teaching Hungarian terminology at Hungarian universities

One of the main tasks of teaching terminology is to present and teach the complex terminological system of a particular subject field or domain. In one approach the teaching of terms and terminological systems is an integral part of professional training, since knowledge can only be expressed and communicated by using such terms. One of the main tasks of institutionalised education is the communication of specialised knowledge, which includes teaching the concepts of the subject precisely, teaching the appropriate terminology and the presentation of the relations between terms. A good exam in any subject is one that demonstrates the correct use of relevant terms. This means that university education automatically plays its part in the teaching of Hungarian terminology through the training of specialised teachers who possess adequate terminological knowledge. Every branch of university education has to play a significant role in developing an approach to terminology. This view evolved in Hungarian tertiary education, building on the traditions of neologism, and it is still present today. There are no separate Terminology courses in professional higher education. The teaching of Terminology is the task of head teachers and experts.

However, nowadays the growing number of terminological tasks requires a young generation of professionals with a high degree of expertise as well as the knowledge that will enable them to solve the problems involved in the use of specific language in their everyday work. They should be familiar with the conceptual systems and should handle the linguistic system as well.

3.1.2 Terminological issues related to Hungarian medium education abroad

Native speakers of Hungarian live in several countries. 98.5% of the ten million people living in Hungary speak Hungarian as their mother tongue and it is also the official language. There is also a significant number of native Hungarian speakers living outside the borders of Hungary. According to rough estimates there are 5 million such people; 3 million of them in the countries surrounding Hungary (Austria, Croatia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine), the largest group being in Romania. One third of all Hungarian speakers live

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outside Hungary in bilingual environments, where they use their native language alongside the majority language. The education of Hungarian speaking minority communities abroad in their native language, especially the teaching of languages for specific purposes, faces the problem of creating and acquiring Hungarian terms for new concepts. The biggest challenge in maintaining bilingualism is the lack of teaching materials in the native language covering old and modern sciences and professions.

The root of the problem is that there is no thoroughly planned, scientific, centralised Hungarian language planning, and no terminology policies for the territories in question. Native Hungarian speakers living abroad face several problems in relation to language use, terminology and translation in both directions. Specialised dictionaries, unified terminology inventories and databases are missing even within Hungary, and this makes the job of textbook writers, coursebook translators and dictionary compilers who work abroad very difficult. When translating textbooks from the majority language into Hungarian, they encounter several problems over use of terminology and normativity. Péntek (2004), writing about the situation of Hungarians living in Romania, speaks of the fear of foreign words often manifesting itself in defensive purism. Authors and translators of coursebooks and textbooks try to avoid even the generally known and widely used international terms, have problems translating geographical names, place names and names of institutions, and they face problems in the fields of the newer branches of physics, medicine, biology and economics.

The best solution would be bilingual education (including at university level), and the publication of textbooks and terminology databases that take both terminological and language systems into consideration (see Fóris 2005, Kontra 2004).

3.1.3. The teaching of foreign terminology

Teaching the terminology used in a specific profession in a foreign language is important for professional training at university level. As previously mentioned, specialised translation at the foreign language centres in universities fulfilled this task from the 1970s onwards. These foreign language centres were founded in Hungarian universities after the Second World War and their task was to teach the basics of foreign languages in order to fill the gaps in knowledge Hungarians had in foreign languages. However, by the end of the century, on the one hand university freshmen had a better knowledge of foreign languages, and on the other hand universities no longer considered it their task to provide elementary level teaching of languages. In the 1990s specialised universities joined to form large universities with many faculties; and the foreign language centres in these faculties took up the teaching and assessing of languages for specific purposes. The teaching of foreign language terminology and the creation of methodologies for testing was equally important in education and assessment.

In the new Bologna system of university education the training of specialised translators was also transformed; and now specialised translators are trained through higher vocational education, such as postgraduate education, at several universities. A number of bilingual collections of terms, glossaries and smaller sized explanatory dictionaries have been published, mostly by university faculties. From the 2008/2009 academic year, the training of translators became an MA course, and in the MA in Translation Studies Terminology as a separate discipline has also been included in the curriculum.

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3.1.4 Teaching terminology within the framework of linguistics

Most of the theoretical and methodological foundations of terminology belong to linguistics, this is why terminology forms part of the training in Hungarian literature and linguistics. Previously, this was undertaken within the curricula of individual subjects. However, due to the boom in the theory and methods of terminology, broad theoretical and methodological foundations are also needed to enable the knowledge gained to be used for the solution of specific problems. To meet this need, applied linguistic specialisations were launched within the faculties of humanities as part of the teaching of Hungarian linguistics. The first university to launch a specialisation in applied linguistics linked to the teaching of Hungarian or foreign language and literature was the University of Pécs. Here new applied linguistics courses have been introduced, such as a separate course on Lexicography or Terminology.

3.2. Terminology in Hungarian PhD studies

Students of doctoral programmes with a linguistic focus demonstrate a special interest in the issues of research into terminology. The importance of the topic is indicated by the interest of doctoral students in terminology and lexicography and their choice of related research fields. This is why terminology, as a separate discipline, was first introduced into PhD training in the applied linguistic doctoral programme of the Doctoral School in Language Sciences at the University of Pécs, and later in Veszprém at the Doctoral School of the University of Pannonia as part of the programme in language for specific purposes, and in the spring semester of the 2008-2009 academic year at the Doctoral School of Language Sciences of the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest as part of the programme in Translation Studies. The material for the course was published under the title *Hat terminológia lecke (Six Lectures on Terminology)* (Fóris 2005), which is used as a textbook in all three doctoral schools.

Issues of terminology form a significant part of the research programme of PhD training. Students who choose Terminology and/or Lexicography as their research field soon joined to form a group working according to the same unified principles, they make up the core of the terminology research group. To date, four members of the group have obtained their PhD with the following theses: *Sports Lexicography and Sports Terminology in view of new sports disciplines* (Bérces 2006), *Inquiries in the Domain of Hungarian Mathematics Terminology* (Czékmán 2010), *Terminology Issues of the Translation of Texts in Economics in the Case of the Italian-Hungarian Language Pair* (Tamás 2010), *The Terminology of Music. Lexicographic, Terminological and Semiotic Approach* (Bérces 2011).

4. The organisation and launch of the MA in Terminology

Practice forces production plants, financial institutions, administrative authorities, and research institutes to use terminological, taxonomical and ontological methods in order to process data and information. Such tasks are becoming more and more frequent in Hungarian practice as well. As institutionalised training has not begun yet, skills necessary for such tasks can mostly be gained through self-instruction. In addition, some quality insurance and standardisation organisations, and certain companies launch courses to teach workers about terminology regulation and new standards so that they can do their own job.

The growing importance of terminology created the need to employ special experts who are trained to do special terminological tasks.

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Hungarian university education belongs to the European Higher Education Area, and most of the training is done in the Bologna system. In this framework, we launched the MA in terminology in Hungarian, as a two-year programme at the Károli Gáspár University, Budapest. The first students started their education in the fall semester of the 2011/2012 academic year. (I shared the details of the training in English in my talk titled “Terminology master in Hungary – a case study” in November 2011 in Bucharest at the conference organised by Corina Lascu-Cilianu, Fóris 2011.)

I am convinced that the theoretical methodology of terminology and terminographic working methods have to occupy an important role in terminology majors, professional training and language instruction in university education equally.

5. Conclusions

From the above it shows that the situation of terminology is in many aspects different from the situation in other European countries. From this it follows that the university education of terminology also has to accept roles such as raising awareness and the feeling of responsibility in the various layers of society, and at various institutions. This has a strong relevance to the actual teaching because specialised knowledge obtained in training can only be used if the environment is appropriately prepared.

Note

The talk itself was not delivered at the Terminology Summit in Oslo due to health problems. I would like to express my gratefulness to the organizers for publishing the paper.

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