Innovative methods of compiling a Finnish-Russian forestry dictionary

Vehmas-Lehto, Inkeri

Nordterm
2007


http://hdl.handle.net/10138/24675

Downloaded from Helda, University of Helsinki institutional repository.
This is an electronic reprint of the original article.
This reprint may differ from the original in pagination and typographic detail.
Please cite the original version.
Innovative Methods of Compiling a Finnish-Russian Forestry Dictionary

A new Finnish-Russian forestry dictionary containing nearly 5000 terminological entries in 30 domains of forestry and forest ecology will be published next winter. It was compiled at the University of Helsinki by a team consisting of two terminologists (Irina Kudasheva and Igor Kudashev) and two editors (Aleksandr Gerd from the University of St. Petersburg and myself). The dictionary project was financed in 2003–2006 by the EU Interreg Program and the Ministry of Education.

In many respects, we have followed the principles of Guide to terminology by Heidi Suonuuti and the ISO 704 standard Terminology work – Principles and Methods. However, there are also some innovative features in our methodology and also in the dictionary itself. These are mostly based on the needs of our target groups, i.e. 1) translators and interpreters, and students of translation, and 2) specialists in forestry and forest ecology.

The primary target group, translators and interpreters, need clarity and transparency, because they cannot be expected to have much background knowledge about forestry or forest ecology. The secondary target group, forestry specialists, on the other hand, require scientific exactitude.

References to sources
The needs of forestry specialists were the main reason why both terms, definitions, equivalents and most of the notes are provided with references to the sources of information, i.e. to special literature, on one hand, and to the 42 experts in forestry and ecology collaborating with the dictionary team, on the other hand.

The references give the reader the opportunity to form an opinion of the degree of reliability of the information given in the dictionary and also, if necessary, the opportunity to look for more information. On the other hand, the references underline the fact that it is the experts that are primarily responsible for the special field information in the dictionary.

In order to economize space, we employed symbols to denote different kinds of sources:

The sign □ + the surname of the author or an abbreviation of the name of the book denote a literary source:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{jäätikköjokimuuodostuma} & \ (4.10) \ □ \ Mälkön 2003, 25 \ [\text{Metsämaa}] \\
\text{jäätikköjokikerrostuma} & \ □ \ SESMS \\
\text{glasifluviaalikerrostuma} & \ □ \ SESMS \\
\text{jäätikön sulamisvesivirtojen kuljettaman ja kerrostaman lajitteenen aineksen muodostuma} & \ □ \ Haavisto, 69 \\
\text{флювиогляциальные отложения} & \ (4.25) \ □ \ ССФГ
\end{align*}
\]

The sign ⬆ without a surname means that the equivalent or the note is made by one of the terminologists. The same sign combined with the surname of the expert denotes an oral source:
haake (23.3) Kuitto, 9 [Bioenergian tuotanto] [Puutavaranlaitoj ja laatuvaaamukset]
leikkavia sellit pienen, suunnilleen samankokoisi palkoi hakettet puutavara Latilia
Haketta käytetään sellun ja kultta ja lastulevyn valmistukseen sekä polttoaineena. Latilia
щепа (23.23b; 23.59) LXTC

juurivaurio SESMS [Metsätuhot]
juureen syntynyt vaurio Kärkkäinen
повореждение отдельных корней корневой системы Филипчук

There is also another sign referring to the experts. Sign + surname of an expert are used to signify that the expert corroborates the existence of a term which was not found in the literature.

haapavaneritukki II (23.7) Kärkkäinen [Puutavaranlaitoj ja laatuvaaamukset]
puutavarakappale: haavasta tehty vaneritukki Kärkkäinen
осыновое фанерное бревно Курицын
Единица лесоматериалов.

The references also show whether a definition or note is an exact citation from the literature or its edited version: if edited, the book sign is followed by the sign ≈. Most definitions were edited. The definitions found in the literature only served as “raw definitions”.

latvamurto SESMS [Metsätuhot] [Puutavaranlaitoj ja laatuvaaamukset]
kasvavan puun katkennut latva ≈ SESMS
_latvamurtoja aiheuttavat mm. myrskyt, lumi ja eläimet. ≈ SESMS
облом вершинны (23.55) Мозоловская

Choice of entries
The choice of entries was based on the needs of translators, the primary target group of the dictionary. We followed descriptive principles, i.e. terms were chosen on the basis of what terms are used in Finnish texts – not on the basis of what terms should be used. In other words, the dictionary also contains such Finnish terms that are “not so good”. This is because translators cannot help coming across such terms in their work. However, if it is obvious that the term is not recommendable, we have used a sign expressing this fact – the sign .

In contrast to “traditional” LSP glossaries, which often stick to nouns and noun phrases, our dictionary also contains some verbs and term elements, mostly adjectives (e.g. luonnonvarainen ‘wild, uncultivated’).

Order of entries
The order of entries in our dictionary is alphabetic. In other words, we chose the most common and traditional order of entries in dictionaries. However, the alphabetic order differs from the ”traditional” order of entries in LSP glossaries, where entries are mostly organized in logical order, i.e. according to the concept system. In a dictionary for translators logical order would not work, because a translator – as a non-specialist in forestry – might not find the appropriate term. Translators look for information on the basis of terms, not on the basis of concepts or concept systems. Another reason for arranging the entries alphabetically is the fact that the dictionary is too big for logical order.

Domains
Logic and order, on the other hand, are introduced in the form of concept diagrams (see below) and also through the division of the material into the 30 domains by which it was dealt with. Each entry also contains the name of the domain. If the term belongs to more than one
domain, a maximum of three are mentioned. The following term is accompanied with the names of two domains, forestry and forest conservation:

- **kemiallinen heinäntorjunta** (16.5; 18.2) SESMS [Metsähallinta] [Metsäsuojelu]
- **kemiallinen torjunta** I SESMS
- heinäntorjunta käyttäen rikkakasvien torjunta-aineita <Kolström>
- химический способ борьбы с сорной растительностью ЛЭ II, 492
- химический способ борьбы с сорняками Сергеева

Situated on the same line with the term, the names of the domains (in this case, forestry and forest protection) help the readers to orient themselves, especially if they are non-specialists.

One of the reasons why we considered it important to mention the domain is the size of our dictionary: though it is small in comparison with general language dictionaries, it is unusually big for a dictionary which contains definitions.

**Concept analysis**

The dictionary is based on concept analysis, i.e. the basic method of terminology work in general. So, there is nothing non-traditional in the analysis itself. Only the practical working methods differed from those used, e.g., by The Finnish Terminology Centre TSK. The TSK has often resorted to boards of experts: we had just one Finnish and one Russian expert for each domain. The Finnish experts participated in the choice of terms, drawing the concept diagrams, checking the correctness of definitions and notes and creating new ones. The Russian experts, on the other hand, participated in finding the equivalents or, if necessary, creating them, drawing Russian concept diagrams and writing notes about Russian concepts.

The experts were interviewed personally by the terminologists. In addition, e-mail attachments also played an important role in the compilation process. As the editor of the Finnish “side” of the dictionary, I operated almost exclusively with attachments; I met personally only three of the 21 Finnish experts. The methodology was created and developed during the working process. Attachments – each of them containing the entries of a certain domain – were exchanged via e-mail between the expert and me several (up to15) times, until the problems were solved and every entry was signed both by the expert and me. The experts and I used different colours to make our contributions identifiable. When we ran out of colours we also added our initials and dates. The previous stages of the discussion were kept untouched in the attachment as a kind of archive to be resorted to if necessary. In the end, the attachments were mostly quite colourful.

**Representing the results of concept analysis**

The results of concept analysis were represented in definitions, notes, and concept diagrams. They also formed the basis for the choice of equivalents.

Though the Russian concepts were also analysed, the entries only contain the definitions of the Finnish concepts. This is because it would require too much time of the reader to compare the Finnish and the Russian definitions and, even then, a positive result could not be guaranteed. Consequently, the authors performed the comparative work for the reader and wrote notes about the differences.

The most important concepts were included in the 700 concept diagrams, i.e. diagrams showing the mutual relations of the concepts, the concept system. The diagrams can be used, e.g., when preparing for interpretation, because they can give the reader a quick overview of
the field. The diagrams were drawn separately for Finnish and Russian concept systems. Contrary to traditional terminological glossaries, the target language diagrams were also included in the dictionary.

As regards concept diagrams, our approach differs from the traditional, normative glossaries where the diagrams are harmonized as far as possible. We had neither the time nor the need even to try to build uniform concept diagrams for Finnish and Russian concepts. Instead, Finnish concepts were described on the basis of Finnish concept systems and Russian concepts according to Russian concept systems. Consequently the Finnish and Russian diagrams may look very different, though they contain terms that – at least partly – correspond to each other.

![Diagram 1: Types of ditches in Finnish according to their function](image-url)
Diagram 2: Structure of the network of ditches in Russian

Equivalents
Our aim was to find the natural equivalents, i.e. the terms that are used in Russian texts and by Russian specialists. The primary source of equivalents was Russian (scientific) texts. Another way of finding an equivalent was to translate the definition of the Finnish concept into Russian and ask the Russian expert whether there is a corresponding term in Russian.

The equivalent could be an absolute one, i.e. at least practically correspond to the same concept as the Finnish term. Very often, however, it was a near equivalent, a partial one. The near equivalents were marked with the sign ≈ and a note about the differences of the L1 and L2 concepts.

hiekka II (4.7) [Metsämaa]
maalajite, jonka raekoko on 0,2–2,0 mm Haavisto, 46
≈песок (4.18) ГСС
В России песком считаются частицы размером 0,1–2,0 мм.

In those cases, however, where no natural equivalent was available, our dictionary suggests an artificial one coined by the Russian experts or by the terminologists in collaboration with the experts. We could not follow the principles of normative terminology work, according to which there is a blank in the glossary, if there is no equivalent in the target language. For a translator, an equivalent is essential, because there cannot be gaps in a translation. The artificial equivalents were marked with the sign ⬛ and the surname of the expert suggesting the artificial equivalent in question or accepting the one suggested by the terminologists.

juuristovaario ⬛ SESMS [Metsätuhot]
puun juuriston vaurio Kärrkäinen
IDs Juuristovaario voi olla mekaaninen, kemiallinen tai biologinen. Mekaanisia vauroilta ovat mm. haavat, katkeamiset ja painevauroit. Kärrkäinen
повреждение корневой системы Филипчук

We took great care not to include artificial equivalents, when a natural one existed. Therefore, we were very critical towards bilingual and multilingual dictionaries and translations. If we made an exception and used a translation as a source, we checked with the Russian experts
whether the equivalent is used in Russian texts, and provided the equivalent with the appropriate signs denoting its character.

References