

Finding one's way: the case of Slovak terminology (general overview from 1844 onwards) ¹

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Abstract

This paper seeks to present the development and unique aspects of terminology activities in Slovakia over the last 150 years, set in historical context. The limited size of the article allows only to draw an outline and to present the most significant personalities and works. The authors cover the beginnings of terminology theory and practice in the period of Slovak standardization, continue with the development of Slovak terminology in the 20th century, especially in the 1950s, the decade of terminology, and finish with an outline of terminology work at the beginning of the 21st century. In addition, one chapter is devoted to the Slovak terminology theory.

Streszczenie

W poszukiwaniu własnej drogi: działalność terminologiczna w Słowacji (przegląd od roku 1844 po czasy współczesne)

Artykuł przedstawia rozwój i specyfikę działalności terminologicznej w Słowacji na przestrzeni ostatnich 150 lat w powiązaniu z kontekstem historycznym. Ograniczona objętość niniejszego tekstu pozwala zarysować jedynie ogólny obraz i zaprezentować najważniejsze postaci i ich dzieło. Autorzy opisują początki kształtowania się teorii i praktyki terminologii w okresie kodyfikacji języka słowackiego, następnie rozwój słowackiej terminologii w XX wieku, szczególnie w latach pięćdziesiątych, nazwanych „dekadą terminologii”, po zarządy terminologicznej w początkach XXI wieku. Jeden z rozdziałów poświęcony jest słowackiej teorii terminologii.

Introduction

The modern Slovak terminology started to develop hand in hand with the shaping of the standard Slovak and in the shadow of the Czech models, in particular, as analysed in the 1st part of the article. Due to the changing political situation of Slovakia in the 19th and 20th centuries the terminological planning became a political tool especially during the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic, which is covered in the 2nd part of the article. The 1950s saw an unprecedented boom of terminological activities that became widely accepted and enabled coining and refining Slovak terminology in many fields, that is why this period is presented in more details including the information on terminology theory developed and practised in Slovakia. As a

¹ The article was written in the framework of the VEGA project 2/0114/15 Analysis of terminology work of Ján Horecký as an inspiration for the terminology management of the 21st century in Slovakia.

conclusion, the last part of the article is devoted to the present-day Slovak terminology efforts as well as challenges.

1. Origins of Slovak terminology theory and practice in the mid-19th century (at the time of Štúr's codification of standard Slovak)

The Slovak language was considered a minority language in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, spoken by ordinary people in Upper Hungary. The first attempts to standardize it came at the end of the 18th century in the context of reforms introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II. Because the codification efforts started by patriotic Catholics and Anton Bernolák (1762–1813) in particular failed to meet the needs of Slovaks, it was the mid-19th century revival movement, led by the versatile personality of Ľudovít Štúr (1815–1856), that was able to overcome confessional disputes and propose a standard Slovak based on the Central Slovak dialect. The language standard was officially approved at the first assembly of the Tatrín Association held in Martin in 1844. Until that year, Slovak revivers and the intelligentsia had suffered from a difference in opinion regarding national unity and language; either they supported Czech, or more precisely biblical Czech, as the literary language of Slovaks (these were Slovak Protestants who also advocated the so-called “tribal unity” with Czechs as well as Slavic mutuality due to their intellectual and confessional tradition) or they more or less adhered to Anton Bernolák's codification and professed Slovaks to be an independent “tribe”.²

The political situation in Austro-Hungary in the second half of the 19th century was particularly propitious for the development of national or vernacular languages, as legal regulations were issued in 1851 “for instruction in the native language at secondary schools”³. As a consequence, three private secondary schools were established by Slovak patriots in the 1860s with Štúr's codified Slovak as the teaching language which required textbooks in Slovak in various subjects.

Shortly after Štúr's codification, the first articles discussing Slovak scientific terminology appeared in Slovak periodicals⁴. But the first real attempts to regulate and develop Slovak terminology came in 1861 with the establishment of *Matica slovenská*, a nationwide cultural society. Although the organization ceased to exist in 1875, it represented not only the symbol of Slovak national particularity but on a more practical level its various sections promoted education and science in Slovak. Moreover, editors and proof-readers at the *Matica slovenská* publishing house also managed to partially influence Slovak lexical usage.

During this period, several terminology glossaries were compiled that focused e.g. on mathematics, logics, geometry, linguistics and general scientific terminology. They were published mainly in the journal “Letopis Matice slovenskej”, however,

² For more information on the complex history and development of the standard Slovak see P.Žigo/R. Krajčovič (2002), *Dejiny spisovnej slovenčiny*, 1. ed. Bratislava: Univerzita Komenského, 249 p.

³ Bartl, J. et al. (2002), *Slovak History. Chronology and Lexicon*. Wauconda/Bratislava: Bolchazy-Carucci Publishers, Inc./Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo, p. 304.

⁴ See for example Godra, M. (1851), *Príhovor ku vedecko-slovenskému názvosloví*, (w:) „Slov. pohľady“ II, 92–103.

some of them remained in manuscripts⁵. For instance, in 1868 Ivan Branislav Zoch (1843–1921) had his *Slovár vedeckého slovenského názvoslovia* published in 1868 by *Matica slovenská* in “Letopis”⁶. This amounted to two glossaries containing 700 terms in German and Slovak from the field of mathematics. In a short foreword, Zoch criticised variations in terminology as resulting from the creation of terms by different authors or parallel usage of German, Latin and Czech loan words. Even though sequels to these two glossaries were supposed to follow and would map or propose Slovak terminology of natural sciences in Slovak, they failed to appear.

Blanár⁷ believes that opinions on the development of Slovak terminology were far from uniform in the second half of 19th century. On one hand there was the pragmatic tendency by Zoch and Michal Godra (1801–1874) to prefer commonly used words etymologically related to other Slavic languages (especially Czech) or to use those internationalisms, which had been derived from Latin and Greek roots, while on the other hand Ignác Slušný as the representative of the New Slovak School (*Nová škola slovenská*) movement rejected all calques and promoted coining “pure Slovak terms” disregarding contemporary productive term creation processes⁸. In addition, Slušný’s guiding principle was to keep terms short (V. Blanár 1963: 261).

Slovak terminology can be characterised in those years as varied and unstable since the written sources feature a great amount of synonymy. Sometimes several words were derived from the same root by means of different derivative suffixes in order to denote the same concept, although only one member of a synonymic series would subsequently remain, usually the one closest to Czech. As for the influence of other languages, Slovak terminology was naturally coloured by Czech⁹, German (especially in the domain of mining or city culture due to German colonization between the 12th and 15th century) and to a lesser extent by Hungarian and Russian in the 18th and 19th century. However, in contemporary industry and science the terminologies had to be constructed from scratch. The most frequent and productive term forming processes included derivation, syntactic creation of multiword terminology units and borrowing. The German influence, sometimes mediated by the Czech language, can be seen in the 1860s in the proliferation of terminological compounds made of two nouns, which Zoch among others criticised. Instead of compounding, he proposed the creation of multiple word units with a substantive post-modifier (*zámena látky, sbierka príkladov* instead of *látkozámena, príkladosbierka* for “substituting substance” and “collection of examples”, respectively; V. Blanár 1963: 261). He would be proved right as the Slovak language developed.

⁵ See for example the manuscript of the Slovak political and legal terminology by M. Mudroň mentioned in Blanár, V. (1963), *K terminológii v matičných rokoch*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ n. 2, p. 257–274.

⁶ Zoch, I. B. (1868), *Slovár vedeckého slovenského názvoslovia*, (w:) „Letopis Matice slovenskej“ V, vol. 1, p 14.

⁷ Blanár, V. *ibid.*

⁸ Slušný-Zahorlov, I. (1869), *O terminológii*, (w:) „Slovenské noviny“ II, n. 26–28, p. 30, 32, 37–39.

⁹ The Czech language started to penetrate on the territory of Slovakia as early as the 15th century. It was used either as a religious language of Protestants (in some communities employed until the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic) or as a literary language, however, progressively influenced by Slovak.

2. Slovak terminology in the Czechoslovak Republic and wartime Slovak Republic

Though the establishment of the independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 held the promise of the development and usage of the Slovak language in all walks of life, it was in fact hampered by the concept of Czechoslovakism, “the ideological and political current that was based upon the conviction that the Czechs and Slovaks made up one nation”.¹⁰ In the 1920s, thousands of Czechs, especially public servants and teachers, came to Slovakia to settle and work, which naturally implied prevalent usage of Czech in schools and in state and public institutions. This situation was in a way mirrored by the official standpoint of contemporary linguistics that was not favourable to Slovak as a separate standard language.

This attitude caused Slovak to penetrate somewhat slowly and at random into industry, professional education and specialised literature. In some domains, Slovak terminology developed at the initiative of enthusiastic individuals translating textbooks into Slovak mainly from Czech.

In this respect, an exception to the general rule was Slovak legal terminology, whose development was necessitated by day-to-day practice. Already in 1917, the scholarly journal “Právny obzor” started a terminology column that two years later enabled the publication of *Návrh slovenského právneho názvoslovia*¹¹, a useful terminographical tool for Slovak lawyers and clerks featuring almost no Czech influence due to the lingering Hungarian legal system which had differed from the one used in Austria, including the Czech Kingdom.

As in the mid-19th century, it was the freshly revived *Matica slovenská* that assumed care for the Slovak language. Shortly after it was restored on 1 January 1919, *Matica slovenská* established a special commission for “terminological and linguistic analysis of official forms”¹². This commission would be later transformed into the Legal Terminology Section¹³, whose members also cooperated with commissions at Slovak ministries. Their terminology work and discussions were quickly translated and compiled into the *Legal Terminology Dictionary* published in 1921, which reflected the merging of the different Hungarian and Austrian legal systems and terminology as well as the growing impact of Czech.

The lack of proper Slovak terminology prompted the Society of Czechoslovak Engineers to appeal to *Matica slovenská* in November 1922 for the establishment of a section or department covering engineering terminology as well. *Matica slovenská*

¹⁰ In fact, the constitutionally based Czechoslovakism was a key argument that helped promote the idea of the Czechoslovak Republic in post-war international politics. The transformed idea of Czech-Slovak tribal unity, cherished especially in the 18th and 19th centuries, was transposed into the 1920 Czechoslovak Constitution, whose preamble reads “We, the Czechoslovak nation...”. In addition, the 1921 census officially indicated only Czechoslovak nationality“ (J. Bartl et al. 2002: 218).

¹¹ Stodola, E./ A. Záturecký (1919), *Návrh slovenského právneho názvoslovia (Maďarsko-slovenská právnická terminológia)*. Turč. Sv. Martin.

¹² Geguš, I. (1980), *Vedecké odbory Matice slovenskej a ich časopisy*, downloaded from matica.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Obsah_Gegus_1980.doc [02.08.2016].

¹³ Jóna, E. (1976), *Spisovná slovenčina a Matica slovenská*, (w:) J. Mistrík (red.), *Studia Academica Slovaca*, p. 146.

responded affirmatively and asked Ivan Viest to organize this department, which remained active until 1939 and managed to compile two volumes of electrotechnology terminology¹⁴ and four volumes of general engineering terminology¹⁵ in cooperation with Czech colleagues.

Although *Matica slovenská* renewed the Natural Sciences Department in 1935 to launch the terminology work in the field of medicine, biology, botany, zoology, chemistry and mathematics, the Department failed to meet its original objective.

However, at least partial terminology work was being done in the field of zoology outside *Matica slovenská* by Oskár Ferianc who compiled *Slovenské ornitologické názvoslovie* (Ornithological nomenclature in Slovak)¹⁶. In the field of medicine, Július Ledényi-Ladzianski (1903–1943) published in 1935 a revised and unified Slovak anatomic nomenclature (*Nomina anatomica*¹⁷) that represented a major achievement and caused a professional linguistic dispute (see part 4.). However, the quality of the proposed terminology in anatomical and trilingual technical dictionaries left a lot to be desired as their authors “failed to respect properly the contemporary situation of the Slovak language and in many cases they seemed helpless” (J. Horecký 1954: 193).

As far as terminology work in the wartime Slovak Republic (1939–1945) is concerned, in spite of political declarations emphasising the need to develop Slovak as a cultural language, terminology work experienced a downturn with two exceptions – booklets issued by the Commission for the legal terminology at the Ministry of Justice and paperback sequels of the Slovak-Czech war terminology, compiled and published by a terminology commission at the Ministry of Defence (J. Horecký 1956: 33).

3. Decade of Slovak terminology

3.1. Institutional background

The 1950s can be labelled in the history of the Slovak language as the decade of terminology, due to fast-growing, intense and high-quality terminological efforts¹⁸. 1950 saw the creation of a specialised terminology department at the Institute of Linguistics in the Slovak Academy of Sciences and Arts¹⁹, comprising three terminologists – Ferdinand Buffa (1926–2012), Viera Dujčíková-Slivková (1926–2005) and Ján Horecký (1920–2006). Concurrently with the terminology

¹⁴ Mikulík, S. (1930), *Strojnícky slovník německo-česko-slovenský. Díl I. Elektrotechnika*. Prague, vol. I 1930.

¹⁵ Krouza, V., *Strojnícky slovník německo-česko-slovenský, Díl II. Všeobecné strojnictví*. Prague, vol. I A–F 1935, vol. II G–M 1938, vol. III N–S 1941, vol. IV S–Ž 1948.

¹⁶ Ferianc, O. (1942), *Slovenské ornitologické názvoslovie, s obrázkovým kľúčom pre určovanie slovenského vtáctva*. Turč. Sv. Martin.

¹⁷ Ledényi-Ladzianski, J. (1935), *Nomina anatomica*. Turč. sv. Martin.

¹⁸ The renewed Czechoslovak Republic no longer professed Czechoslovakism and the 1948 Constitution stipulated the existence of two “brother nations”, “two equal Slavic nations, Czechs and Slovaks”.

¹⁹ The Institute as well as the Academy changed their names in the years that followed, in 1952 the Institute became the Institute of the Slovak Language and in 1966 it was renamed again to bear the name of L. Štúr – L. Štúr Institute of Linguistics, Slovak Academy of Sciences. However, we will consistently use the shortening EŠIL hereinafter regardless of the time reference.

department's establishment in 1950, 15 terminology commissions²⁰ were also organised (J. Horecký 1950)²¹, with 21 in place by 1951²² and in 1953 as many as 25.

Almost in no time, the terminology department together with the General Terminology Commission of the Institute of Linguistics (also established in 1950) became the central body for terminology planning and regulation in Slovakia. It organised terminology work and preserved and archived terminology outputs. As Horecký summed it up: "In all fields unified terms have been introduced almost authoritatively" (1954: 195). In addition, cooperation with the Terminology Department at the Ľudovít Štúr Institute of Linguistics (ĽŠIL) and with the Standardisation Office enabled some of the approved terms to be included in Slovak versions of Czechoslovak standards.

3.2. Activities of the Terminology department

3.2.1. Terminology commissions and terminographical work

As for practical workflow, a single session of a terminology commission was able to discuss up to 40 terms and related information, such as an approximate definition or explanation, other used terms or foreign language equivalents. Approved data underwent another revision and was sent to respective field experts interested in terminology work and was also published to stimulate broader professional discussions²³. Only after discussion had ended and all comments and remarks were analysed, could terminology material be published as a separate terminographical work to be included in the book series *Terminology*. In 1952–1953 intense terminology work produced eight dictionaries: *Dictionary of Legal Terminology* (1952), *Basic Linguistic Terminology* (1952), *Terminology of Metalworking* (1952), *Terminology of Machine Parts* (1952), *Dictionary of Forestry Terminology* (1953), *Dictionary of Aviation Terminology* (1953), *Terminology of Galenic Pharmacy* (1953) and *Terminology of Water Management* (1953). Altogether, as many as 30 dictionaries were published by 1965. Though their quality and treatment were uneven, still the number and extent of the subjects covered remains most remarkable.

²⁰ They consisted of 5 or 6 field experts and one linguist or terminologist. Some of these commissions were established at ministries or other public institutions.

²¹ After World War II and before any terminology department existed, a Commission for legal terminology had already been established (headed by Adolf Zátarecký) and in 1948 the Commission for the unification of the Slovak chemical and technological terminology (headed by Prof. Teodor Krempaský) as well as the Commission for Forestry Terminology. Other commissions were gradually formed in linguistics, economy, music, fine arts, Marxist ideology, psychology, archaeology, physical education, chess, engineering, construction and waterworks, electrotechnology, television, architecture, geodesy, mining, metallurgy, shipping, welding, railways, chemistry (including a sub-commission for chemical fibres), paper, pharmacy, food, inorganic natural sciences, mathematics, physics, nuclear physics, optics, photography, botany, medicine, genetics, agriculture, viticulture, forestry and hunting.

²² "Zpráva o činnosti terminologického oddelenia Ústavu slovenského jazyka SAV, Slovenské odborné názvoslovie" 2, 1954, p. 159–160.

²³ At the beginning, they were published in mimeographed booklets entitled "Odborné názvoslovie (Specialised Terminology)" and later in the scholarly monthly "Slovenské odborné názvoslovie (Slovak Specialised Terminology)". For more details see part 3.2.3.

3.2.2. Terminology counselling and raising terminology awareness

Members of the Institute were very active in enhancing the linguistic culture of the professional and lay public by publishing articles in various newspapers and magazines on a regular basis, including issues covering terminology planning, regulation and unification. Many articles written by LŠIL linguists and terminologists were aimed at promoting and spreading newly-coined terminology. In addition, they served as terminology counsellors for authors, translators and especially editors of all Slovak publishing houses.

The abovementioned articles, amounting to dozens of texts, started to appear after 1945 and their frequency culminated in 1960–61 (L. Dvonč 1967). The list below mentions a few of them:

- 17 articles published in 1948–50 by the scholarly journal “Chemické zvesti (Chemical News)” in a column called *O správne chemicko-technologické názvoslovie (For the correct terminology in chemical technology)*;
- A column featured in the newspaper “Technická práca (Technical Work)” called *Za novú slovenskú technickú terminológiu (For new technical terminology)* (vol. 5, 1953–6, 1954), later renamed *Odborná slovenčina v technike (Specialised Slovak in technics)* (vol. 7, 1955–10, 1958) which published articles by Buffa, Slivková, Horecký etc.;
- *Terminologický koutek (Terminology corner)*, a column in the Czech magazine “Papír a celulóza (Paper and Cellulose)” (vol. 8, 1953–vol. 9, 1954) which published several articles by Slovak authors;
- A language section published in the Czech magazine “Účetní evidence (Accounting Records)” during 1954–55 (which continued irregularly into the 1960s) that featured articles by members of the LŠIL terminology department as well as a field glossary of accounting;
- A column in the magazine “Zváranie (Welding)” (vol. 3, 1954–vol. 4, 1955) entitled *Za novú zvaračskú terminológiu (For new welding terminology)* where Buffa, Eliáš, Horecký and Chlebuš contributed;
- Discussion of Slovak wine production and growing terminology in the Czech magazine “Vinařství (Viticulture)” (49, 1956) under the section *Jazykové okienko (Linguistic section)*;
- Terminology was included in a column of the first issue of the Czechoslovak magazine “Ropa a uhlie (Oil and Coal)” published in 1959 and later also an orthographic section co-authored by Slovak linguists and terminologists (Sabo, Stehlík, Veselý and Vranek);
- The magazine “Les (Forest)” started a section called *Terminologická hliadka (Terminology Guard)* in 1963, which was written by Papánek, Magic, Majkút, Zachar and the Slovak forestry terminology committee.

Regular columns focusing on language issues and terminology were usually published once a week and amounted to one or two pages. Their aim and the language and style used in the columns followed the format employed in popular science. The most frequent questions discussed were issues of orthography and the coining of new

terms as well as the rationale behind using a specific term. In general, these short texts aimed at unifying the language and preventing the usage of non-standard or faulty expressions and terms.

3.2.3. Terminology journals

In the beginning, terminology outputs were published in two issues of “Odborné názvoslovie” published in 1951 and 1952 (J. Horecký 1960: 255), but in 1953 the monthly scholarly journal “Slovenské odborné názvoslovie” was launched, with pages devoted to contributions from all terminology commissions as well as from the LŠIL terminology department. Beside decisions and resolutions passed by the terminology commissions, the journal included shorter bilingual glossaries, usually focusing on Slovak-Russian pair, although later issues also featured glossaries that included world languages. Each issue of the journal opened with a specific theoretical problem while minor problematic issues were treated in the section for discussion. The rest of the journal was devoted to linguistic, stylistic and terminology reviews of professional books, textbooks and monographs in Slovak language, and finally to information about terminographical and bilingual dictionaries (J. Horecký 1954: 160). The chief editor of the journal was Horecký.

However, in 1962 “Slovenské odborné názvoslovie” was replaced with a new terminology journal – “Československý terminologický časopis”²⁴, created in the wake of the recently established Czechoslovak Central Terminology Commission. Its aim was to publish theoretical papers on both Slovak and Czech terminologies, the relationship between them as well as information on the work of individual commissions²⁵. In fact, the scope of the journal, published in Bratislava, was much broader and in the five years of existence this bimonthly managed to publish several articles on major topics such as the term and definition²⁶, structural analysis of terms²⁷, synonyms in terminology²⁸, criteria of terminology²⁹, motivation of terms³⁰, terms and specialised text³¹, while tackling issues such as terms in context, negation in Slovak terminology, dynamics of domain terminologies and addressing conceptual systems and semantic principles of terminology. The journal was structured like its predecessor with the emphasis placed on one or more theoretical papers followed by discussion, news and reviews. The editorial board consisted of leading Czech and Slovak terminologists and linguists: Jaromír Bělič, Ján Horecký, Milan Jelínek, Eugen

²⁴ All the issues of the journal are accessible on-line on <http://www.juls.savba.sk/ediela/CSterm/>

²⁵ Horecký, J. (1962), *Nový terminologický časopis. (Československý terminologický časopis, 1, 1962.)*, (w:) „Slovenská reč“ 27, p. 185–186.

²⁶ Kocourek, R. (1965), *Termín a jeho definície*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ 1, p. 1–25.

²⁷ Horecký, J. (1963), *Pokus o štruktúrnú analýzu termínov*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ 5, p. 274–288.

²⁸ Kocourek, R. (1965), *Synonyma v terminológii*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ 4, p. 201–219.

²⁹ Horecký, J. (1965), *Kritéria terminológie*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ 4, p. 193–201.

³⁰ Isačenko, A. V. (1964), *K otázke motivácie termínov*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ 5, p. 257–265.

³¹ Hausenblas, K. (1963), *Termíny a odborný text*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ 1, p. 7–15.

Jóna, Jaroslav Kuchař, Ivan Masár, and Štefan Peciar. The chief editor was Ján Horecký while Ivan Masár held the post of the executive editor.

When “Československý terminologický časopis” ceased to be published in 1966, terminology issues found their way afterward to the pages of the linguistic journal “Kultúra slova”. This new monthly has been publishing occasional terminology glossaries and smaller dictionaries in sequels (e.g. astronomy, botany and zoology)³².

3.2.4. Reviews

Terminology was unified and coordinated by terminologists of the LŠIL’s terminology department, who also peer-reviewed and edited textbooks in cooperation with the *Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo* publishing house. Naturally, their countless reviews analysed scientific literature that other publishing houses were producing, most of them represented translations from other languages. The reviews analysed translated books basically according to three principles: accuracy, understandability and linguistic correctness. But the reviewers mostly criticised inconsistencies and the lack of cooperation the translators had with linguists and experts in different fields. In terminology issues Horecký was frequently pointing out that terminology should not be translated literally but instead substituted³³ with either already existing Slovak terms or properly formed neologisms.

3.2.5. International cooperation

The final step, and not the least important by any stretch, was LŠIL’s terminology department becoming involved in international cooperation, especially with Slavic countries. Horecký spent thirty years (1968–98) as a member and long-term chairman of the terminology commission affiliated with the International Committee of Slavists, which started in 1960 to map Slavic linguistic terminology. Based on the list of entries compiled by Slovak terminologists³⁴, the Commission published in 1977 the *Dictionary of Slavonic Linguistic Terminology* which is a contrastive terminographical work offering basic linguistic terminology in all Slavic languages as well as English, German and French. The dictionary’s two volumes include 2,266 entries and indexes in all languages.

In addition, LŠIL terminologists began building contacts with the International Organisation for Standardization³⁵.

4. Slovak terminology in the context of the Czech language

As stated in part 2., the Czech language has always had a considerable impact on Slovak and Slovak terminology due to its historical, cultural and confessional

³² The archives of the journal are accessible on-line on <http://www.juls.savba.sk/ediela/ks/>

³³ See for example *O prekladoch odbornej literatúry* in „Slovenská reč“ 18, 1952/53, p. 270–274 or *O našich prekladoch technickej literatúry* in „Technické noviny“ 1, 1953, n. 1, p. 10.

³⁴ *Slovník slovanské lingvistické terminologie. Словарь славянской лингвистической терминологии. Dictionary of Slavonic Linguistic Terminology*, Alois Jedlička (red.) – Prague: Academia, 1977. – vol. 1. – 553 p.; 1979. – vol. 2. – 483 p.

³⁵ Horecký, J. (1959), *Československá normalizačná komisia*, (w:) „Slovenské odborné názvoslovie“ 7, p. 256.

significance to Slovaks. The development of Slovak terminology over time can also be seen as the continuing attempt to set limits both to uncritical incorporation of loan words and complete refusal of Czech words in Slovak vocabulary. The first articles dealing with terminology clearly reflect the ambivalent and sometimes embarrassed attitude (J. Horecký 1956: 74) Slovak authors have had towards Czech. For example, Godra only rarely referred to Czech models and tried to differentiate Czech and Slovak terms. Zoch emphasised the need to develop Slovak terminology in accordance with the Slovak word-formation system because the meaning of “many Czech words do not correspond [to Slovak words]. Moreover, some of those words tend to mean something completely different and in many cases they can nowise be clothed in Slovak robes” (I. B. Zoch 1868: 14) but at the same time he orthographically slovakized Czech denominations, sometimes borrowed Czech derivative suffixes, and could not help but glorifying the perfection of the Czech terminology, which “will serve as the basis for the terminology of all Slavic languages, especially in the field of chemistry” (I. B. Zoch 1868: 14).

In contrast to the first Slovak legal dictionary (see part 2.), the trilingual railway dictionary compiled by Viest³⁶, which Horecký referred to as the first ever Slovak terminographical work, shows a strong tendency towards indiscriminate “unification” with Czech terminology, complying with the political idea of the Czechoslovak tribal and political unity.

The presence and contribution of Czech intelligentsia in Slovakia during the inter-war period naturally translated into unnecessary borrowings and usage of Czech terminology in spite of the existence of deep-rooted Slovak equivalents in subjects such as zoology and botany.

The first efforts to unify Slovak medical terminology, and in particular anatomic nomenclature, resulted in a public discussion and response because Július Ledényi-Ladzianski had based his work (*Nomina anatomica*) on folk sources as well as on older Slovak medical dictionaries³⁷ which some critics including reviewers and professors of Comenius University in Bratislava mostly of Czech origin, considered to be an expression of an anti-Czech attitude. In the process of drafting terminology guidelines the commission approving new Slovak anatomical terminology formulated the principle that the Slovak terminology should not differ unnecessarily from the Czech one (see part 5.).

After World War II and re-establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, terminology work in Slovakia was more intense and varied than in Bohemia³⁸, since “there were no corresponding Czech terminology commissions in many fields” (J. Horecký 1954: 195). The common state and economy as well as day-to-day contacts of Czechs and Slovaks necessitated the coordination of terminology planning in both

³⁶ Viest, I. (1919), *Maďarsko-nemecko-slovenský železničný slovník*. Turč. Sv. Martin.

³⁷ Especially on Polakovič, V. (1920), *Lekársky slovník*. Malacky, P. Halaša (1926), *Lekársky slovník*. Turč. Sv. Martin.

³⁸ For example, contrary to the situation at the end of the 19th century when Czech chemical terminology was imitated by Slovaks, Slovak terminology work related to chemistry served as a model for Czech colleagues in the 1950s and 1960s.

languages. Horecký called for the creation of a central terminology authority for the Czech language and a coordinating institution or body for Czechoslovak terminology relations and projects.

Relations between Czech and Slovak terminology³⁹ were analysed in several articles written by Horecký who on one hand affirmed the “identical development of the lexicon and terminology”, while on the other hand emphasised significant differences between these two closely related Slavic languages in terms of general lexicon, including terminology and nomenclature, which echoes Zoch’s previously quoted statement on formally identical but semantically different words. Horecký also drew attention to the fact that the borrowings from Czech are to be considered in a more complex way including the perspective of paradigmatic relations, the absence of word-formation models in Slovak (such as the Czech word-formative suffixes -čí, -tko), derivative specificities (namely Czech adjectival suffixes -ní and -ný and prefixes pře-, pro-, prů-) and last but not least stylistic differences between the two languages. Horecký’s guiding principle became the lexical motivation, i.e. Slovak and Czech terms and names must first of all correspond in their motivation, but this principle should not violate the inherent rules of any of the two languages.

Horecký’s wish came true in January 1962⁴⁰, when the Czechoslovak Central Terminology Commission was established with the aim to assure terminology planning and coordination of terminological activities in Slovak and Czech and he became the head of its Bratislava branch. Common discussions and work enabled a draft of a working document entitled *Zásady koordinácie českej a slovenskej terminológie (Principles of Czech and Slovak Terminology Coordination)* to be published in “Československý terminologický časopis” in 1964. The opening paragraph of the document states that “printed scientific and professional literature keeps growing as well as the need for easy and precise communication of professionals not only in one domain but also across domains [...] and between the members of our two nations. The care for the coordination of Czech and Slovak terminology represents one of the key political tasks [...]” and has “a significant economic and social impact”⁴¹. The working document analyses corresponding points and most of all differences, in particular orthographical, phonetic, grammatical, and lexical differences between the two languages that must be taken into account in coordination between the two languages⁴². However, the document stipulated that, in unifying or coining new terms, terminologists should avoid opting for differing words. In addition, a major part of the document addresses the system and organisation of terminology work within terminology commissions and offers guidelines for the structure of terminology dictionaries and nomenclature standards. Its last two

³⁹ See the article *Vzťahy medzi slovenskou a českou terminológiou*, (w:) „Slovenské odborné názvoslovie“ 2, 1954, p. 257–261 or *K otázke českej a slovenskej terminológie*, (w:) „Informační bulletin pro otázky jazykovědné“, n. 3, 1962, p. 45–47.

⁴⁰ Minutes from a meeting of the *Československá ústředná terminologická komisia*, (w:) „Slovenská reč“ 27, 1962, p. 369–370. (The meeting was held in Prague on 26 January 1962).

⁴¹ *Zásady koordinácie českej a slovenskej terminológie*, (w:) „Československý terminologický časopis“ 3, 1964, p. 129).

⁴² For more information and details, see Horecký, J. (1956), *Základy slovenskej terminológie*, II, 74–83.

theoretical parts address basic concepts and definitions necessary for terminology work – term, concept, conceptual system, conceptual features, conceptual structure of the term and definition, as well as processes of denomination, term formation, motivation and synonymy.

Concepts and terms in legal terminology were successfully harmonised, and in fact preceded the establishment of the common terminology commission and its guidelines, when the new Civil Code, Act 141/1950 introduced correspondent terms in both languages, such as “sales contract” becoming in Slovak *kúpna zmluva* (instead of the older term *kúpnopredajná zmluva*) as opposed to the Czech equivalent *kupní smlouva* (instead of the older term *trhová smlouva*).⁴³

Until 1989, the terminology work in the Czechoslovak context more or less followed the coordination guidelines mentioned earlier. But the change in Czechoslovakia’s political and economic situation after 1989 and especially after the country ceased to exist in 1993 has had a significant impact also on the development of terminology in both languages and the relationship between them. However, the detailed analysis of convergent and divergent tendencies of terminology in Czech and Slovak in the era of mass media and internet is beyond the scope of this article.

5. Terminology theory in Slovakia

The 1935 publication of the anatomical nomenclature mentioned earlier in this paper set off not just the process of systematic unification of Slovak medical terminology but also launched a significant effort to formulate theoretical principles for standardising terminology in practice within the context of Slovakia. These guidelines, which resulted from discussion and the work of a special commission comprising both professors from Comenius University in Bratislava and members of the linguistic section at the Šafárik Learned Association, were summarised in the eight principles outlined below:

1. Approving deep-rooted words regardless of their word-formation.
2. Not approving spoken words, especially those whose connotation is vulgar or emotional.
3. Creating terms different from general words.
4. Enhancing the creating of terms by derivation.
5. Promoting an international identity concept.
6. Generally giving preference to international terms or their calques.
7. Maintaining a relationship to other scientific terminologies.
8. Following terminology usage developed at Comenius University over the past 17 years.

⁴³ Luby, Š. (1953), *Slovenská právna terminológia – vývin, stav, výhľady*, (w:) „Právnické štúdie IV“, 165–228.

Similarly, efforts had begun in 1939 by Jozef Fundárek to formulate theoretical principles for forming legal terms⁴⁴ which Ján V. Ormis continued a year later⁴⁵. Their articles featured principles of accuracy, unambiguity and shortness. Ormis particularly emphasized the need to have decent terms and the ability to produce adjectives from them.

However, the comprehensive work solely dealing with terminology theory and practice was first pioneered in 1956 by Ján Horecký in articles published during the *decade of terminology* that drew from his prolific terminology activities and know-how. *Základy slovenskej terminológie (Foundations of Slovak Terminology)* was a basic textbook that summarised the experiences and knowledge achieved by all members of the LŠIL terminology department. Contrary to what Eugen Wüster (1898–1977) as the founder of the general terminology theory and Vienna terminology school had postulated, Horecký considered terms to be an organic part of the general lexicon of the standard language, although situated on its borders, and thus subject to changes. In other words, he did not set boundaries between terminology and lexicology and devoted a lot of his attention to the linguistic characteristics of terms, especially semantic and word-formation processes (described in the Chapter III of his book) and to the usage of terms in the standard written and spoken Slovak (Chapter IV). The first, historiographic part of his *Základy* outlines the development of Slovak terminology from 1843 until the 1950s, while the second chapter on terms and their characteristics defines the object of terminology study⁴⁶ on the basis of his critical revisions of older theories. In addition, Horecký postulated and analysed seven attributes of correct terms in separate sub-chapters. These are systematic use, fixity, unambiguity and accuracy, derivability, preference for folk language and their international character. But most of all he claimed that a term has to express a concept so that its “formal acoustic aspect shows what is being denoted” (J. Horecký 1956: 45). He devoted a lot of space to the relationship between Slovak and Czech terminology that is richly documented and includes many details. Reviewers have pointed out that Horecký never simplified complex issues of terminology. On the contrary, he managed to disclose all complexity and present a systemic theory of terminology that included aspects of social context and domain differentiation⁴⁷. Horecký’s theory was closely interlinked and influenced by practical terminology work, where he established solid foundations for further theoretical and practical terminology activities in Slovakia.

⁴⁴ Fundárek, J. (1929), *Vývojová tendencia slovenského právnického názvoslovia*, (w:) „Právny obzor XXII“, 205–211.

⁴⁵ Ormis, J. V. (1940–1941), *K slovenskej právnej terminológii*, (w:) „Linguistica Slovaca I – II“, 272–285.

⁴⁶ “[...] when coining denominations for concepts it is not the reflection but the way these concepts (reflections) are expressed by linguistic, in fact acoustic means” (p. 41); “The term denominates a concept in the system of a certain scientific or industrial domain” (p. 43).

⁴⁷ Jedlička, A. (1957), *Základní příručka o slovenském odborném názvosloví*, (w:) „Naše řeč“, vol. 40, n. 5–6, p. 159–165.

Horecký's interest in terminology continued beyond the 1960s and, in addition to other books⁴⁸, he published several remarkable terminology papers addressing issues he did not discuss in his *Základy*, such as homonymy in terminology (1957), criteria of terminology (1965), basic issues of terminology (1974), semantic relations in the terminology system (1981), systematic approach to terminology (1982), present-day Slovak terminologization (1985), neologisms (1986), terminologization and determinologization (1989) and intension and extension of the term (1999).

However, the most remarkable papers of Horecký's terminology thought focus on the relationship between the concept and the term, published in two papers in 1960⁴⁹ and 1974⁵⁰. Horecký believed this relationship results from the concept's content being determined by a set of characteristics or features and from the ability of a language to express at least one of these characteristics by its forms. Horecký specifically characterised the concept as the object of thought, and the term, as the object of language, with philosophical categories of content and form. Moreover, he goes even further and differentiates four structures of a term: conceptual (the "logical spectrum" of a concept), semantic (semantic features of the concept), onomasiological (semantic features of the concept used to motivate a specific denomination) and onomatological (realisation of a denomination by means of specific linguistic forms). Horecký pointed out that the linguistic form expresses only the most distinctive characteristics of a concept, while the others usually remain implicit, expressed by the place of the concept and term within the terminology of a specific field.

In 1989, Horecký and Ivan Masár published a short guidebook for the public in "Kultúra slova" called *Pomocný materiál k ustaľovaniu terminológie (Guiding Tool for the Terminology Unification)*⁵¹ which summarised four decades of terminology work and thinking in Slovakia and partially echoed the structure of *Zásady koordinácie českej a slovenskej terminológie*.

Two years later, Masár followed up on issues of Slovak terminology with the publication of a second comprehensive theoretical work entitled *Príručka slovenskej terminológie (Handbook of Slovak Terminology)*⁵², again based on his rich knowledge and experience in the field. The book's sixteen chapters focus on the history of Slovak terminology, organisation of terminology work, Slovak and foreign terminology-related activities and pure theoretical issues drawn from articles that were published by the LŠIL terminology department and especially those written by Horecký. Here Masár outlined the relationship between terms and concepts and also the attributes of terms. He devoted more attention to terms in specialised and non-specialised texts than to the conceptual aspect of terminology and logical relations between concepts (which featured in contemporary foreign terminology handbooks). However, Masár also provided an extensive analysis of how terms are defined, starting with their

⁴⁸ Ján Horecký's bibliography in the field of terminology exceeds 1500 items.

⁴⁹ *Vzťah pojmu a termínu*, (w:) „Jazykovedný časopis“ 11, 1960, p. 97–102.

⁵⁰ *Obsah a forma termínu*, (w:) „Kultúra slova“, vol 8, 1974, n. 10, p. 321–324; published also in English: *On the Relation between Concept and Name*, (w:) „Fachsprache“ 1, 1979, p. 17–19.

⁵¹ Masár, I. (1989), *Pomocný materiál k metodike ustaľovania termínov*, (w:) „Kultúra slova“ 23, p. 132–144.

⁵² Masár, I. (1991), *Príručka slovenskej terminológie*. Bratislava, 192 p.

understanding as units of language for specialised purposes and ranging all the way to the semiotic perspective offered by authors from the Vienna school. Of course, he offered his own definition when he finished his analysis, saying “a term is an element of the lexicon denoting a concept restricted by a definition and a place in the conceptual system of a specific scientific discipline, technique, industry or other activities”⁵³. A separate chapter focuses on the borrowing of terms, with Masár taking a pragmatic standpoint to supporting functional loan words in terminology and acknowledging lexical elements of Greek and Latin origin in modern European terminology. The traditional linguistic perspective of Slovak terminologists was transposed into Masár’s analyses of non-standard terminology units (professionalisms in particular), dynamic processes in the specialised lexicon and linguistic culture in terminology. The final pages indicate new horizons for terminology work with the development of information technologies.

In 2000 Ivan Masár published a terminology booklet *Ako pomenívame v slovenčine. Kapitoly z terminologickej teórie a praxe (The way of denoting in Slovak. Chapters from the Terminology Theory and Practice)*⁵⁴. This is a concise form of his theoretical publications aimed at the general public as well as professionals building their own domain terminologies.

6. Terminology work in Slovakia after 1989

Even before the socio-political changes that happened in 1989, Slovak domain terminologies were experiencing a great deal of variety, synonymy and ambiguity which called for thorough analysis and intense coordination of terminology. But both the Velvet Revolution and the changing economic situation did not provide the environment for a rebirth of the 1950s coordination activities conducted by LŠIL.

As for university education, terminology has been included in Slovak language curricula and translatology study programs at art faculties in Bratislava, Nitra, Prešov, Košice, Trnava and Banská Bystrica. Naturally, the focus of translatology studies is on contrastive and comparative terminology which results in a production of a number of bachelor, master and doctorate theses. In this respect it is important to mention the Transterm Project (2013–2015) carried out by departments at the Faculty of Philosophy at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra whose aim was to build an on-line database of bilingual terminological glossaries compiled by students⁵⁵.

In addition, IT technologies are helping to develop and maintain a number of other noteworthy terminology projects, such as the Explanatory glossary of electronic communications (*Výkladový terminologický slovník elektronických komunikácií*)⁵⁶, which contains Slovak and English standardised terms together with definitions from electronic communications. This flagship of terminology activities in Slovakia was launched in 2003 and has each year grown significantly.

⁵³ Op. cit. p. 29.

⁵⁴ *Ako pomenívame v slovenčine. Kapitoly z terminologickej teórie a praxe*. 1st ed. Bratislava, 2000, 60 p.

⁵⁵ <https://portal.ukf.sk/transterm/>

⁵⁶ Available on-line at <http://www.vus.sk/iecd/new/Vyklad.asp>

Terminology can be discussed at several Slovak conferences – biannually at the Terminology Forum, which is the only regular conference series specialising in this subject, as well as occasionally at terminological seminars and conferences organised by the Ľudovít Štúr Institute of Linguistics⁵⁷. Some terminological issues are also discussed at translatic conferences such as *Preklad a tlmočenie* (Translation and Interpretation Conference) in Banská Bystrica and the *Letná škola prekladu* (Translation Summer School) organised by Slovak translator associations. Networking of experts in terminology in Slovakia and in EU institutions enables the Slovak Terminology Network that “aims at advancing the Slovak language by unifying its expert terminology, pooling and providing access to up-to-date knowledge and organising cooperation of those who create Slovak terminology”⁵⁸.

Individual scientific initiatives aimed at gathering and presenting specific field terminology have not been scarce in Slovakia. Approximately fifty terminology dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual, have been published since 1989, although they are no substitute for institutional care and coordination. Attempts to concentrate the terminology sources in order to promote the unification of Slovak terminologies were launched by the LŠIL in 2007 with the on-line Slovak Terminology Database (STD)⁵⁹. The STD was conceived as a resource providing users with both conceptual and linguistic information. In order to satisfy the needs of professionals, the general public and last but not least translators and interpreters, the STD term records include as many as 13 data categories, especially term, field, definition, context, related terms and sources for both definition and context. As of July 2016, the STD offers more than 7000 term records from 19 different disciplines.

Conclusion

Concentrated efforts within the STD framework, alongside a revival of terminology committees at Slovak ministries initiated in 2014 by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, could imitate the 1950s model and facilitate specialised communication of professionals and the general public in Slovakia.

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⁵⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation/sts/about_en.html

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