WRIGHT, Sue Ellen, and BUDIN, Gerhard, eds. **Handbook of Terminology Management: Vol. 1 Basic Aspects of Terminology Management**. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997. 370 p. ISBN 90272-2154-5

1. Overview

The book under review is the first part of a two volume compilation of writings on and about terminology by a carefully selected variety of authors well-established in this subject field. Whereas the present volume covers the fundamentals of terminology management in five chapters as detailed hereafter, a second volume, already announced but still waiting for publication is dedicated to "application-oriented terminology management", offering three additional chapters on (6) Information Management, (7) Technical document production, handling and terminological resource tapping for quality assurance and translation, and (8) computer applications for terminology.

The present volume covers with great detail both theoretical and practical aspects of terminology work, such as, in that order, (1) Term Selection, concept representation, description and ordering, (2) Terminography and Standardisation, (3) Term-banks and language planning, (4) Intellectual Property issues, and (5) Training facets.

Supplemental information is provided in the form of 19 technical highlights called *Infoboxes*, pinpointing particular issues such as term collections, lexicography vs. terminography, LSP, standardisation, definition, word classes, acronyms, intension vs. extension, hypertext etc., whereby key concepts and at times controversial issues are clarified, thus permitting easy reference and underlining the user-friendliness of what turns out to be a true manual.

Appendices list extant terminology manuals, abbreviations, acknowledgement of sources, authors' mapping, and a final index.

2. Evaluation

The compilers and multiple co-authors set out by stating the aim of the book which is "to be a permanent companion of the working terminologist, a resource ... continuously at hand". We shall see how this compilation can live up to the expectation to be continually of interest, since exhaustiveness is not claimed and express reservations are made as regards the language specificity of the various authors. A terminologist's store is definitions and the manual does not deceive by underscoring "terminology management" as "... any deliberate manipulation of terminological information" whereby "management" is subsumed under the *genus proximum* of "deliberate manipulation", which seems to imply that manipulation could also be inadvertent or by accident. Although linguistically correct, the determinant looks rather of a philosophical order. However, the authors want to refrain from raising philosophical issues throughout, again deliberately not to scare off unprepared or unconcerned readers. The same consideration keeps documentary reference to a minimum to smooth the path of browsers. The practicality is underpinned by linking terminology with quality management in the form of a presentation which allows for easy hypertext navigation, crossing from marginal key words to where these are expatiated on. Indeed, thanks to these original navigation tools, quick cross reference ensures reader-friendliness.

The fundamental starting point of all terminological work, viz. **term identification** in source and validation texts is only touched upon in S.E. Wright's article on term selection, which skips the prior requisite to term selection, viz. appropriate text collection for term assessment, while giving a succinct overview of what a term is in its form, but not in its essence, again rightly eschewing the theoretical issue irrelevant to terminology management. However, the systematic discarding of such issues can lead to frustration when, in the same article, concept system creation is mentioned with the *nota bene* "to assign terms to the concepts making up those systems", leaving it up to the puzzled reader to figure out how such an assignment could possibly be made.

This riddle remains unsolved even in the following article by Juan C. Sager on **term formation** under the section "concept representation". The author, essentially self-contained, since he refers in his bibliography but to himself, shows only three types of term formation: extension and simile, modification of extant resources, and neonymy, without considering the need of new terms for new concepts, while loans result from inhibition of native speakers by the impact of source language from the original cognitive process that leads to concept naming. Indeed, here as elsewhere it is only implied that terms represent concepts and that terminology is actually a misnomer, since it is mainly concerned with concepts. This is again indirectly underpinned by the following article on **graphic representation** (of concepts) which says nothing on nonverbal forms of terms, nor on the verbal forms of objects, although *verbal signs* are mentioned in passing towards the end, while ignoring the equation sign = term.

As stated in the beginning, terminology like lexicography feeds on definition by motivation, since both term and definition deal with limits i.e. boundaries, within which meaning is established. The useful article on **definitions** by Bruno de Bessé reverts to the above mentioned riddle concerning the concept - term relation by stating that "terminologists ... clas-

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sify the objects of a subject field before proceeding to name one or several of them". It is clear that any ordering of a subject field proceeds on the concept and not on the object level (a confusion observed throughout that article), but then how can one handle concepts without naming them at the same time (and not afterwards)? This is so simply because thinking (concepts) needs language (terms) [Wittgenstein]. Formulation of logical propositions can be mathematical or linguistic, whereby the passage from one to the other has yielded computational linguistics, but meaning is first and foremost language-bound. And knowledge is acquired through meaning. Thus a definition conveying meaning helps cognition, which tends to show that terminology (operative via definition) is eminently a cognitive art. This aspect of terminology is not attended to in the whole book, for even in the not yet published second volume the section on "Information Management" does not cover knowledge engineering: information is not knowledge acquisition; it is hearing without seeing.

A good point made is the need to always refer to a subject field in any attempt at defining a term (p.67). Indeed, the subject field serves as a first filter to screen polysemic terms by giving them a narrower frame of reference and thereby a place within a concept system. This is not so clearly borne out in that article, which raises more questions than it gives answers, and those given refer back to 1983 as though terminology had stopped evolving ever since.

A more formal approach to definitions is ventured by R.A.Strehlow in his frame module for definitions preparing for AI. The contextual charge should help term identification, which Robert Dubuc's article dealing with contexts at large does not bear out. His contribution is largely outdated with a single bibliographical entry dating twenty years back (1970).

Section 1.4 deals with concept systems with another good article by the compiler S.E.Wright on multiple representation of such systems. In the following article on systematic concept analysis by a collective authorship, the confusion is made again between concept, information and knowledge, the latter being tagged "a slippery commodity". You cannot expect a naive reader to find his way safely over such banana peels, whatever the introductory disclaimers may wish to shove off. However, the article offers a clear picture of concept relations, characteristics as mapping input for concept systems and a good warning to would-be terminologists to the effect that terminological practice cannot dispense with subject-field expertise and what to do when preparing an appointment with the expert, cross-referred to a brief but capital article (2.2.4) spelling out "the do's and don'ts of terminology management", though oddly placed within standardisation.

Classification of concepts and building of concept systems are covered efficaciously through multifaceted and multidimensional models by Kyo Kageura and Lynne Bowker.

Chapter 2 deals with different types of terminology management, both for descriptive and prescriptive terminology, whether it is for technical translation at large or specific subject fields like medicine (with a useful resource list on p.169), patent law, social sciences. Standardisation is no red herring for terminology. In fact, terminology permeates the whole normative process from law to technology, and even language itself follows its own terminological rules, as transpires from Sager's article on term formation already mentioned. The 40-pages chapter on standardisation (section 2.2) provides a good overview from insiders of standard elaboration, mainly on the ISO-level. The pertinence of terminological standards for standardisation itself is brought out by ASTM's *Form and Style Guide* and ISO 10241: *Preparation and Layout of Terminology Standards* (p.198-200 and 2.2.2), as well as the use of standard definitions by some normative bodies, facilitating consensus-seeking endeavours of committee chairpersons.

Standardised terminology and definitions (chapter 2) rejoin language planning dealt with in chapter 3, and it is not always easy to draw a line between one and the other. The fact remains that the wish for uniform terminology in the name of efficiency and profit has not produced sufficient resources on which to rely. As a matter of fact, often standardisation efforts come up with compromise solutions which satisfy nobody, like the horse-defining committee producing a camel. The reason for this is the relativity of most standards and definitions whose validity is limited to a specific user-group. Clearly domain-bound terminologies, like in medicine, pharmaceutics or chemistry (2.2.5 with an impressive resource list) can afford and even call for standardisation mainly for security reasons.

It is striking to note that the avoidance of philosophical issues announced as a resolute policy in the beginning of the book seems to have been discarded in the part of chapter 3 on language planning which gives a broad cultural overview of authoritative sociolinguistic aspects over space and time. The normative approach to language has always been at odds with man's freedom of thought and expression, the only generally recognised legislator in this field being Usage. Chapter 3.2 shows these odds and ends very informatively, with an excellent article by John Humbley on the Francophone experience, showing that the fiercest defenders of authenticity are by the token of the name of the signatories of Francophone laws, generally those who can be the least expected to have authenticity. Language planning, as the article clearly

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shows, can only be successful if it motivates natives at large.

Chapter 4 covers copyright and terminology with an outstanding contribution by Christian Galinski and S.E.Wright showing the uncertain nature of copyrightability of terminological works by reviewing national and international legislation, including the European Database Directive (96/9/EC-1996-03-11),GATT-TRIPS and case law. The evolution of subject-field into digitisation renders protectibility even more hazardous with the introduction of interchange formats, while on the other hand the possibility of digital identification and the use of coding subsystems foreshadows a better control of data, including terminological DB, inasmuch as encoding and linkage of data can be construed as the fruit of intellectual creation and effort and thus become copyrightable. The copyright issue is a double-edged sword to the terminologist who is both user and provider of potentially copyrightable material as this article indicates, stressing the need for a better understanding of what merits protection and when.

Terminology training, covered in chapter 5, as a provider of terminology agents is marginal too, because upstream of terminology management. This relativity tinges this chapter which provides only a mere analytical list of types of training.

As mentioned in the beginning, the *Infoboxes*, which close the first volume, deserve full attention for they offer in a condensed form valuable information on head terms of terminology and constitute first-rate quick reference frames paying largely out the investment of authors and contributors.

3. Conclusion

Criticism preying on the good-will of authors is often resented as the worm in the apple, but it can also be a trumpet in the market-place. Let it be so.

The compilation constitutes a highly readable and thoughtful manual which presents a paragon of accessibility. The editors have done their best to accommodate the various contributors and to streamline their efforts into a rather homogenous practice-oriented work, even though individual contributions may differ in vistas of the area.

The bibliography is irregular, some articles rely on former works while others provide up-to-date extensive reference frames. The index including both names and head words is somewhat scanty on subject items but even that is something.

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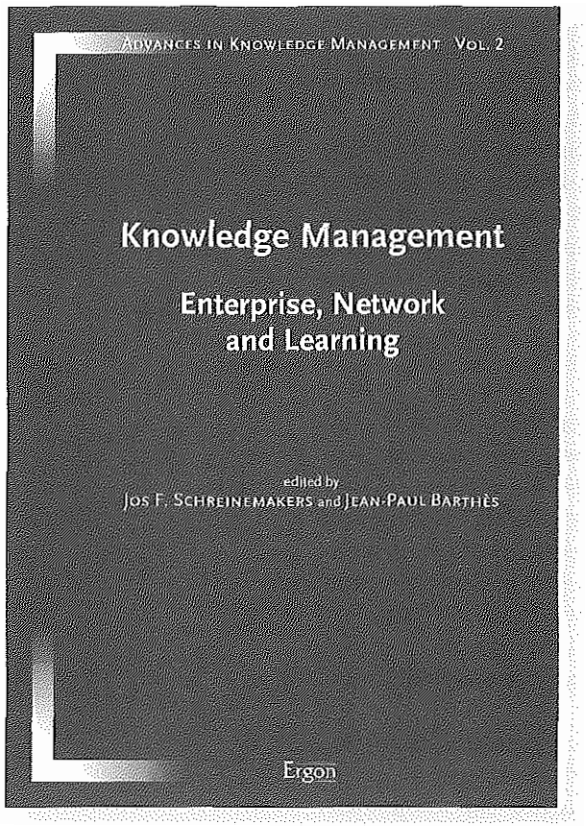

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Contents page

Fugmann, R. (1999). **The Empirical Approach in the Evaluation of Information Systems.**
Knowledge Organization, 26(1), 3-9. 17 refs.

ABSTRACT: The comparative evaluation of different mechanized information systems continues to constitute a controversial topic in the literature. Diametrically different opinions, seemingly corroborated through empirical evidence, have been presented since the time of the Cranfield experiments.

Similar situations have often been encountered in the history of science if reasoning has exclusively been based on empiricism. In the information scientific field, several "empirical laws" have been formulated, for example that of the alledgedly inverse precision-recall relationship in information retrieval, of the assumed direct relationship between consistency and quality of indexing, and of the alledged equivalence of automatic with intellectual indexing.

Empiricism is seen as only another variation of positivism, which has been abandoned in the natural sciences since the middle of this century for its evident inadequacy, but has latently survived in information science and even now dominates here. Here, it constitutes a source of continual confusion and an impediment to progress.

For literally anything an empirical "proof" can be submitted provided that suitable examples are selected and methods are chosen. Substantial advance in Library and Information Science requires abandoning empiricism. Budd`s "hermeneutic phenomenology" seems to constitute a promising substitute (1995).

Schmitz-Esser, W. (1999). **Thesaurus and Beyond: An Advanced Formula for Linguistic Engineering and Information Retrieval.**
Knowledge Organization, 26(1), 10-22. 2 refs.

ABSTRACT: This paper describes a proposal for a new approach to thesaurus design and construction that could have significant implications for change in the way multilingual thesauri are handled and integrated with each other. The formula presented here has its origin in the work of the German Thesaurus Committee and has had input from a number of scientists and practitioners in the field. The emphasis is on the various types of relationships found among concepts, notions and universals in languages. These relationships are analysed and refined beyond the approach taken in existing thesauri. This proposal is very much at the discussion stage and the author invites the assistance of interested readers through criticisms, discussion and dialogue. Applications of the proposed thesaurus are included and the major goal of this proposal is to provide the basis for improved design and integration of multilingual thesauri.

McIlwaine, I.C. / Williamson, N.J. (1999). **International Trends in Subject Analysis Research.**
Knowledge Organization, 26(1), 23-29. 14 refs.

ABSTRACT: This paper describes a survey of subject analysis research over the ten year period 1988 to 1998. Data are drawn from the "research environment" encompassing publications, conference papers, major bibiographic resources in the field of Library and Information Science and selective searches of the Internet. Findings reveal major and minor areas of research activity. Trends and developments are identified and conclusions drawn. Strengths and weaknesses in the approaches taken to subject analysis research are discussed and suggestions for improvements are made with a view to future research directions.

David, A.A. / Bueno, D. (1999). **User Modeling and Cooperative Information Retrieval in Information Retrieval systems.**
Knowledge Organization, 26(1). 30-45. 14 refs.

ABSTRACT: The main objective of an information retrieval system (IRS) is to provide relevant information in response to the user's query. On the one part, the relevance of a response concerns its exactness compared with the user's query. On the other part, it concerns its correspondence with the user's knowledge level and his preferences. One of the major contributions in this area of personalization of the system's response is by taking into consideration each user's specificity. We propose the use of explicit user model where the system's solution will be determined by the knowledge on the user. The user's activities are recorded as documents. The method we adopt for information retrieval combines query by criteria and information analysis. We have also proposed architecture for cooperative information retrieval. This architecture allows two users to share their experience in the process of information retrieval and for the interpretation of the system's result, on distant machines. The proposals were implemented in two systems: STREEMS and METIORE. STREEMS manages information on trees while METIORE manages information on bibliographic references.

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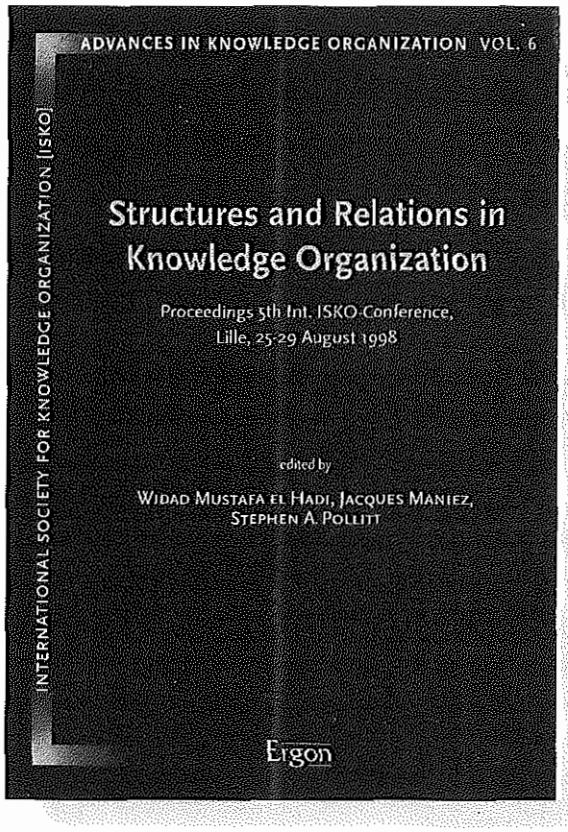

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