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Electronic Terminological Thesaurus-Type Vocabularies in the Computerization of Education in the Humanities

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The structure of electronic terminological (encyclopedic)
thesaurus-type vocabularies in the field of social sciences
is discussed. They constitute very useful instruments for
the organization of knowledge in the social sciences and
the humanities. (Author)

The concept of electronic terminologic (encyclopedic) thesaurus type vocabularies with hypertext elements originated within the framework of the Russian State program of education in the humanities. These vocabularies should essentially be concise encyclopedic dictionaries in different fields of the social sciences and the humanities, possessing paradigmatic relationships of the thesaurus type.

We suggest the following structure for the dictionary entry: 1) head term (descriptor), 2) explanation of its etymology, 3) its English equivalent, 4) synonyms of the head term, 5) generic terms, 6) specific terms, 7) associative terms (correlates), 8) a definition (or a number of definitions in keeping with the traditions of different schools and directions), 9) examples of usage of the term from authoritative works in a given field, 10) bibliography of the main publications where the given concept is discussed. For some disciplines specific relations are possible.

The relations between the dictionary entries are realized not only through the explicitly presented specific, generic, and associative concepts, but also through their terms encountered in the definition. Thanks to hypertext technology (the Guide-type packet), navigation throughout the entire vocabulary from each term, which is a component of the definition, if it is included in some other definition or if it appears in other entries in another status, is possible.

This vocabulary is particularly useful in those disciplines of the humanities which have a multitude of different definitions and interpretations of the main concepts with homonymous and polysemic lexical units.

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Establishing an Information Service for Indexing Languages

The "REKTOR" Scientific and Technological Centre and VINITI are together developing an information service which will select, analyze, compare and disseminate data of information classification systems and other indexing languages. The activities of the service will be based on a full text data bank of the major domestic and international classification systems in the fields of science, technology, industry, and trade. By now full machine-readable files of the State Rubricator of Scientific-Technical Information and the VINITI Rubricator have already been prepared. For the first time ever, a truly full standard of the UDC in the Russian language is being developed.

It is planned to introduce into the data bank a number of systems, including: the International Classification of Inventions, the Classification of Standards, the Products Nomenclature of VED, the Harmonized System of Commodity Coding, the EDIFACT Nomenclature, etc. All these systems will be furnished with the system of correspondences based on conceptual search in the data base and the alphabetical indexes. The lexical multitude of concepts reflected in the classification systems will make up the specific thesaurus with paradigmatic relationships founded on authoritative sources. The materials of the service will be regularly published in the bulletin "Information Retrieval Languages".

The information service for indexing languages will permit VINITI to contribute to the jointly coordinated development of the IRL in its capacity as the Russian national centre in the field of scientific and technical information.