

Kosztasz Panajotu

Some Issues of the Harmonisation of English Military Terminology

A Resumee of PhD Thesis

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Introduction

After several years of preparation Hungary joined NATO on 12 March 1999. In the framework of the Partnership for Peace Program, launched five years before, inter alia an intensive linguistic preparation was also initiated within the Hungarian Defence Forces in order to provide high-level training in the official languages – primarily that of English – of the Alliance. Parallel to that the process of studying Western military doctrines was also on since in the post-Cold War period NATO underwent tremendous changes and Hungary intended to join an Alliance previously regarded as enemy.

The adoption of manuals, doctrines, and NATO Standardisation Agreements for Procedures and Systems and Equipment Components (STANAGs) required military officials with a good command of English and practical support materials usable in daily work.

The analysis of the theme identified in the title of the present dissertation is mainly based on the analysis of training materials of these military officers and on the linguistic support materials used by them on daily basis. Since English is the official language only in three NATO Member States (the USA, Canada, and the UK) the analysis of the selected military terminology was conducted from non-native aspects.

The special features of military terminology, its specific rules, development trends and tendencies and the required scientific background and organisational structure for its potential standardisation were also examined.

Hypothesis for research

As experience shows the users of military terminology have a large number of various support and supplement materials at hand. However, there are significant differences between such materials because of:

- their extremely fast amortisation due to the rapid technical development and because of various political-military events;
- the significant delay of special language training materials from the terminology development, preventing them from being used for linguistic training over STANAG 3 levels;
- there is no standardised system in Hungary (even in NATO) in the field of military terminology;
- military terminology should be based on scientific grounds;
- there is a need for a panel maintaining Hungarian military terminology;
- terminology harmonisation is much more complex than translation therefore it cannot be limited to a mere set of translation-technique issues.

The structure of the dissertation

The PhD dissertation comprises three chapters.

Chapter One provides a brief overview of the history of military terminology research and its literature, stating that it is a grey zone of linguistics and military science. Until recent times terminology as such was only sporadically examined and its systematic analysis was necessitated by the high speed of technical development. The language teachers of the Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University focused on the pedagogical aspects of military terminology analysing the process and history of language training. There have been articles written on the translation-related difficulties of military terminology tracking the main problems back to the differences in linguistic characteristics, structures, systems, and doctrines. The analysis of course books used in military language training is also provided in Chapter One as there are many off-the-shelf course books of military English able to meet the requirements of beginners or higher-level language learners. Their common feature is the strive for the development of communicative skills and capabilities, the use of the results of modern language training methodology, highlighting the training and exercising of vocabulary, and creating information gaps necessary for creating realistic communication situations. Thanks to

their up-to-date audiovisual supplementary materials such teaching materials are extremely appropriate for the use in communicative language use.

Chapter Two contains the comparative analysis of several dictionaries of military English. These were published mainly by the NATO Standardisation Agency, ministries of defence, national defence universities, defence academies, or general staffs, with the aim to provide support to officers and civil employees in their daily work and also to promote linguistic and terminological standardisation in the armed forces of NATO Member States. The analysis of the use and structure of monolingual dictionaries highlights their advantages and disadvantages, focusing of their terminological precision. This chapter also contains the analysis of bilingual dictionaries. The compilation of English-Hungarian and Hungarian-English military dictionaries became particularly urgent after the Hungary's NATO accession. Therefore, simultaneously with the involvement of Hungary in the PfP, the examination of English military terminology began and the compilation of new dictionaries and glossaries necessary for the translation of doctrines, manuals, and STANAGs started. This process has not been over yet because the military terminology is in a constant development which can be identified mainly through the changes in military terminology.

Chapter Three contains the problems related to and generated by the translation of military terms, also introducing potential solutions. In the present dissertation translation is approached only as an issue of interpretation and translation techniques disregarding all teaching-related aspects. The chapter includes the analysis of abbreviations and acronyms used in English military terminology, highlighting the characteristic features of major groups, the possible rules, tendencies, and development trends. The models and examples taken from both general and special military terminology clearly illustrate the nature of abbreviations and help identify the guidelines. Such work can only be done by a panel temporarily named by the author as Terminology Board. The chapter outlines its scope of activities, tasks, responsibilities, structure, and role. The task of the Board would be to coordinate and conduct terminology research. The issue of information technology support to the Board has a specific importance as that would be a fundamental tool of the

efficient work of the Board. Such proactive activities of the Board can be supported by the terminology research of military press. The chapter gives an overview of the top English-language military journals and magazines which can play an important role in terminology research. Terminology and the opportunities to study it in various periodicals and their supplements comprise the primary aspect of the analysis. For the present dissertation military periodicals are significant because of the terminology – the latest and most up-to-date terminology – used in them. Therefore the professional information is of secondary importance from the aspect of terminology research. The context necessary for outlining the semantic fields of new terms and thanks to the thorough editing their linguistic level normally are continuously high, the published information is fresh, moreover, the contents of articles can often be checked in Hungarian too.

Research methodology

Methods used during the elaboration of the dissertation:

- studying of related domestic and international special literature;
- analysis and comparison of related materials, terminology supplements (dictionaries, glossaries, encyclopaedias and course books);
- the application of the research findings of corpus linguistics;
- integration of the author's own experience and professional skills; and
- consultation with experts in this particular field.

During the research objectiveness and a critical approach to current trends were high priority.

New scientific findings

On the basis of the research and that of the dissertation the new findings are the following:

1. **A summary** of the characteristics of English course books used in military language training highlighting their strengths and weaknesses, analysing their limitations in NATO-certified linguistic training, preventing their users from acquiring a command of English above STANAG 6001 level 3.
2. **An analysis** of military English dictionaries and glossaries based on AAP-6, and dictionaries published by civil publishing houses including technical dictionaries by Hungarian publishers. It was proved that currently there is no complex dictionary of military English and proposals were made for further development of dictionaries with special regard to the opportunities and circumstances in Hungary.
3. **An analysis** of terminology, – in particular military terminology – of translation-related problems at various levels of military terms and the significance of proper use of terms by media – particularly by military media – which is an important transmission of terminology. This part also includes the assessment of the role of abbreviations and acronyms in military terminology with a special stress on their ways of production. It is indicated that clear and reliable communication heavily depends on the appropriate application of abbreviations and acronyms and this is particularly true for the air forces.
4. On the basis of the research findings **the outline** of the structure of a workable **future Terminology Board** with its advantages, and the analysis of the options of further terminology research of Hungarian military terminology. It is stated that the mere adoption of NATO terminology is not possible for several reasons therefore a system matching the specific features of Hungarian military terminology should be elaborated, fine-tuned, and introduced. An **assessment** of off-the-shelf military periodicals was also conducted, with their typical features were examined, their web pages analysed, and their characteristics highlighted from the aspect of terminology research as such periodicals can serve as a source of new English military terminology.

The application potentials of the research findings

The present dissertation can be of help primarily to experts using, teaching, or learning military English as it provides help with orientation in the system of military terminology but other experts can also utilise it with the aim of compiling a military English course book or dictionary.

The proposal for the establishment of a board (Terminology Harmonisation Committee) responsible for managing military terminology was based on the current state of affairs in the Hungarian Defence Forces. If it improves in the future, the board can be further developed which may result in the acceleration of terminology research and the integration of results.

List of the Author's Publications on the Subject

1. PANAJOTU, Kosztasz: Abbreviations and acronyms in military English. In: AARMS 2010, Volume 9 Issue 1. pp. 159-165.
2. PANAJOTU, Kosztasz: Teaching English in multinational classes. In AARMS 2007, Volume 6 Issue 1.
3. PANAJOTU Kosztasz: Angol nyelvkönyvek a katonai szaknyelv oktatásában. In: <http://hadtudomanyiszemle.uni-nke.hu/?q=hu/2012/5-evfolyam-1-szam/tarsadalomtudomany/angol-nyelvkonyvek-katonai-szaknyelv-oktatasaban> (2012.07.16.)
4. PANAJOTU Kosztasz: A NATO törzstiszti terminológiai tanfolyam tapasztalatai. Kard és toll 2006/2. 52-58. old.
5. PANAJOTU Kosztasz-Szabó Miklós: Katonai oktatás a változó biztonsági környezetben. Új Honvédségi Szemle. 2006 augusztus. 5-11 old.
6. PANAJOTU Kosztasz-Besenyő János: A NATO törzstiszti terminológiai tanfolyam első évének tapasztalatai. Katonai logisztika 2007/1. 254-267. old.
7. PANAJOTU, Kosztasz: The use of the NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions: Allied Administrative Publications – 6 (AAP-6 (2010) in language training. In: AARMS 2011, Volume 10 Issue 4.
8. PANAJOTU Kosztasz: A Magyar Honvédségben rendelkezésre álló kétnyelvű katonai szótárak összehasonlító elemzése. In. Sereg szemle 2012/2. 88-98. old.
9. PANAJOTU Kosztasz: Angol nyelvkönyvek a katonai szaknyelv oktatásában. In: Hadtudomány 2012/1-2. 126-134. old.

Curriculum Vitae

Mr PANAJOTU, Kosztasz

Place of birth: Budapest

Date of birth: 26 July 1957

Marital status: widower

Children: 3

Education

- | | |
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| 2007 – | PhD training at PhD School of Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University |
| 1995 | Translator Diploma at Eötvös Lóránd University |
| 1991 – 1994 | Eötvös Lóránd University, teacher of English |
| 1976 – 1981 | Eötvös Lóránd Tudományegyetem, teacher of history and Russian |
| 1971 – 1975 | Révai Miklós Secondary Grammar School, Győr |

Professional training courses

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|------|---|
| 2005 | Skopje, Macedonia, 2-week NATO Staff Officer Military Terminology Course, |
| 2003 | Schwarzenberg, Switzerland, 2-week teacher training seminar, |
| 2001 | Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, Marshall Center, FLTC, 2-week testing seminar, |
| 2000 | San Antonio, USA, Defense Language Institute, 8-week training course in course material development, |
| 1995 | Edinburgh, UK, 3-week British Council training course in course material development and methodology, |
| 1994 | Oxford, UK, ITS, 3-week professional methodology training course, |
| 1993 | London, UK, Academy International, 8-week language training, |

Work experience

2009	teacher of English at Partnership for Peace Military Language Training Center of Zrínyi Miklós National Defense University,
2004 – 2009	Deputy director of the Institute for Foreign Language Studies, teacher of English at Partnership for Peace Military Language Training Center of Zrínyi Miklós National Defense University,
1998 – 2004	Teacher of English at Partnership for Peace Military Language Training Center of Zrínyi Miklós National Defense University,
1995 – 1998	Language teacher and director of studies at Oxford-Galló Ltd. Budapest,
1988 – 1995	Teacher of English and Russian at Teacher Training College of Eötvös Lóránd University,
1983 – 1988	Teacher of Russian at Department of Foreign Languages of Zrínyi Miklós Military College,
1981 – 1983	Teacher of history and Russian at Könyves Kálmán high school, Budapest,

Foreign languages:

English: Advanced

Russian: Advanced

Other activities

1981 – 1985	Work as a part time tour guide;
1983 – 1988	Proof reading and literary translation for Európa Publishing House;
Since 1985	Proof reading, translation, and interpretation for various companies and government agencies.