



THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE TERM AND ITS DEFINITION IN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT

AUDRONĖ DAUBARIENĖ, DAINORA MAUMEVIČIENĖ

Kaunas University of Technology

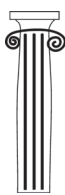
audrone.daubariene@ktu.lt; dainora.maumeviciene@ktu.lt

Keywords: *technician, term, definition, cognitive definition, project.*

The meaning of the word is usually analysed through its relationship with other words and the way the society uses it. Dictionaries and encyclopaedias define the meaning of a particular term / word, yet the perception of the content of the definition might differ from the meaning used by the society. Language is a social phenomenon, therefore, the meaning of words usually originates in a particular discourse. This article discusses the problem related to definition of the term *technician* that is provided in dictionaries and encyclopaedias and the meaning of the term *technician* that prevails and is used by members of societies in Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland and Spain. The article is based on the results of the empirical research that aimed to find out how the term *technician* is defined both by dictionaries in the languages of the countries mentioned above and is actualised in communicative situations by members of these societies.

Introduction

The main aim of the language is to transfer some specific information which should / could be understood in any communicative situation. Only then language performs its function. The message of any communicative passage is conveyed by means of words (lexemes), phrases (syntagmas) and sentences (predicatemas), not to mention smaller units that carry some specific meaning, i.e. phonemes, morphemes. The study of meaning is considered to be the central aim of semantics (Breál 1900, Baker 2000, Widdowson 2000, Maumevičienė 2010). It is generally assumed that semantics focuses on “the study of meanings of words as lexical items” (Widdowson 2000, 53). All words compose the lexicon of a particular given language, part of which is made up of professionalisms, i.e. terms specifically that belong to the level of special lexis (Jakaitienė 2009). Terms might be defined as words that convey and denote special concepts of some professional area. They are usually used by professionals and experts of a particular field and ensure mutual communication and the sa-



me perceptions of the subject matter between the professionals who use and employ the terms. Therefore, when carrying out any research working definitions of particular keywords and concepts are introduced not only to find out what definitions are about but also to ensure that people achieve “an adequate level of knowledge” (2012, 2). Even though the terms are supposed to embed a clearly defined, fixed unambiguous meaning that is not contextually bound, the usage of the term and its perception might lead to some confusion. The definition of a specific term in dictionaries or encyclopaedias might be completely different from the meaning and perception of the same term used by the society. Members of the society who employ the term might assign a completely different meaning.

Taking into the consideration the problem of different term usage, the article **aims** to examine and compare if the definition of the term *technician* provided by dictionaries coincides with the definition of the same term used in a multicultural context by members of the society and technicians themselves. The article **focuses** on the definition of the term *technician* provided in dictionaries and the actual usage of the term *technician*. The aim of the article is related with the **hypothesis** that the encyclopaedic and dictionary definitions of the term *technician* do not correspond to the one used by members of the society. The main **methods** that are applied to prove the hypothesis involve generally applied descriptive and analytical research methods. In addition to that the empirical research to collect the data for the analysis was based on face-to-face interview and survey that employed open-ended questions. The data were collected during the implementation of Leonardo da Vinci project *Lang2Tech: Language to technicians* implemented during the period of 2011–2013.

Theoretical background

The empirical research related with the definition of the term *technician* is grounded and applies cognitive or as Geeraerts uses “usage-based” approach (2011, 8) to meaning. The study of meaning becomes the main focus of language studies in Cognitive Linguistics that emerged in 1970s and was based on the research works of J. Lakoff, R. Langacker, Ch. Fillmore and L. Talmy (Croft and Cruse 2004, Ungerer and Schmidt 2006, Geeraerts 2011, Evans 2012). This article adheres to the main tenets of cognitive approach that are used to study the language and, respectively, meaning. The main principles of cognitive approach claim that “language is not an autonomous faculty, grammar is conceptualization, and the knowledge of language emerges from language use” (Croft and Cruse 2004, 1). Cognitive approach to the study of meaning reflects the relationship between language and perception since the content that is expressed by means of language, is inseparable of cognitive abilities and thinking. In other words language expresses some knowledge that is shared and analysed by the members of the society. Therefore, the meaning might be defined as a social and mental phenomenon or something what can be discussed with and by the members of some particular discourse community, i.e. society that uses the meaning in a particular discourse (Teubert, Čermáková 2007).



When cognitive principles are applied to the study of meaning, it becomes treated as a structure of some experience in human consciousness. Meaning is primarily not only an objective reflection of the world around but is it also the way human beings construe the world. That is why meaning is perspectival, i.e. meaning embeds a particular perspective of the world that is usually expressed by means of particular words and expressions (Croft and Cruse 2004, Ungerer and Schmidt 2006, Gudavičius 2009, Geeraerts 2011, Evans 2012). Further on, the meaning becomes dynamic and flexible, therefore it constantly changes. The objects around human beings constantly change, therefore the perception of the world, which is usually rendered by means of words, changes as well. Human beings assign new meanings to some particular objects that they talk about. Therefore meaning becomes something what can be phrased, paraphrased and communicated verbally (Teubert, Čermáková 2007) and expresses the experience of people. Due to this feature meaning becomes “non-autonomous <...> and experientially grounded-rooted on experience” (Geeraerts 2011: 3). The way human beings use words depends on perception, imagination, other encyclopaedic knowledge and experience human beings possess. Moreover, the experience of using some words depends on the real use of that language.

The perception of the meaning of some word is based on a definition that renders the meaning of that particular word. A definition could be described as a phrase of sentence that reveals exactly what a word, phrase or idea means. When cognitive approach to meaning is applied, definitions become broader and entail both linguistic and extra-linguistic aspects of the word that might be experience or culture-based and become of crucial importance to language users of a particular society. Common knowledge and the categorisation of the world¹ allow perceiving the denotative, signified and connotative meaning of the word or a term. In this respect the meaning and definition of some word becomes more explicit, yet sometimes its connotative or denotative meanings unfold only within a particular context and a communicative situation. Moreover, when cognitive approach is applied to the meaning of words and their definitions, definitions become vehicles that reveal how specific societies perceive the world around them, certain objects and things, their qualities and characteristic features. Thus, under the circumstances mentioned above, the understanding of meaning depends on personal experience, cognitive activity instead of encyclopaedic knowledge. However, when cognitive definitions are provided, they might become too long. Since both necessary and typical features of some objects or things are embedded, the definitions become rather explicit. Yet on the other hand, such definitions reveal the meaning of the word more evidently.

Empirical research

Background of the empirical research. The description of the cognitive approach that underpins the empirical research leads to the presentation of the empirical research that was carried out during the life cycle of project implementation. When

¹ The subdivision of the world into categories of things / things by means of the best characteristic examples of that category, defined as prototypes.



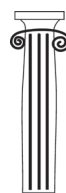
Lang2Tech: Language to technicians a multi-national project funded under Leonardo da Vinci transfer of Innovation Grant in the Lifelong Learning Programme (the reference number is UK/11/LLP-IdV/TOI-466) was implemented, one of the tasks and difficulties of the project implementation team was to define the notion of the term *technician* since the meaning of the noun *technician* varies across the project partner countries, i.e., Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland (UK) and Spain. Following usage and experience-based approach to the study of meaning, entrenched in Cognitive Linguistics, it was decided to carry out an empirical research in all project partner countries with the aim to find out how the term *technician* was defined there and come up with a generalised and consolidated common definition of the term *technician* that could be further used during the entire lifetime of the project. The empirical research was carried out during a six month period from 1 October 2011 to 1 March 2012.

Design of the research. Since the meaning of words is entailed not only in dictionaries and encyclopaedias but is coined by the society, it was decided to analyse dictionary definitions in all project partner languages and also rely on the definitions of the term *technician* provided in *National Classification of Occupations* that follow the *International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO88*, *European Classification of Occupations ISCO-88(COM)* and *ISCO-88(CIS) for the Commonwealth of Independent States*. Therefore, the **corpus of the empirical research** was made of:

1. *National Classification of Occupations*, following the *International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO88*, *European Classification of Occupations ISCO-88(COM)* and *ISCO-88(CIS) for the Commonwealth of Independent States*;
2. Dictionary definitions provided in both hardcopy and online dictionaries such as *Merriam-Webster*, *Longman Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary*, *Dictionary of Contemporary Lithuanian*, *Duden* and *Woxikon* for the German Language and the definition of *technician* provided by the *Royal Spanish Academy*;
3. Encyclopaedia definitions, i.e. *Treccani* (Italian Encyclopaedia), *Wikipedia* for English and Russian definitions;
4. *Google* as a corpus and the *Corpus of Contemporary Lithuanian*.

The data of the empirical research were collected by means of a questionnaire with open ended questions, presented below:

1. Please provide a dictionary definition of the term *technician* in your language and its appropriate translation into English.
2. Please provide a definition of the term *technician* that is provided in your *National Classification of Occupations*.
3. Does your *National Classification of Occupations* follow the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO88)*? If yes, what is the number of professions that fall under the category of the *technician and associate professionals* (Category 3)? If no, does it follow *ISCO-88(COM) for the*



European Union (Eurostat) and ISCO-88(CIS) for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS Statistical Committee)?

After the collection of the data by means of the questionnaire above, it was resolved to examine the way the term *technician* is employed by members of societies in all project partner countries and to analyse if definitions of the term *technician* in dictionaries and *National Classifications of Occupations* are the same as definitions of the term *technician* in actual use. The final stage of the research aimed to test the hypothesis of the empirical research and it was conducted by means of face-to-face interviews with technicians, who are singled out as a group in the *International Standard of Occupations* as well as *National Classifications of Occupations*.

Dictionary definitions of the term *technician*². During the analysis of dictionary definitions of the term *technician* in English, German, Italian, Lithuanian and Spanish, it was observed that definitions of the term usually emphasise:

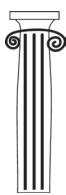
1. the semantic component of *technician* as a person / worker / specialist / expert who works with the technical details of a subject / occupation or the field of technology);
2. the semantic component of *technician* as a professional title granted by a college diploma or any other vocational education and training (VET) institution (this was explicitly indicated in German, Lithuanian and Spanish dictionaries).

For example, in **Germany** the term *technician* on the online dictionaries *Duden* and *Woxikon* is defined by means of describing *technician* as an expert in the field of technique, or a person, who works in a technical profession. Moreover, the dictionaries emphasise that the term *technician* also embeds the meaning of a concrete professional title, which means that a person has a degree of a technical school / technical college in conjunction with the stipulated practical experience.

In **Italian dictionaries** the term *technician* is defined as a person who is particularly competent in art, science, discipline or other activity chiefly in its practical use. Currently, the definition of the term *technician* also entails the meaning of specialised independent workers, artisans and workers, troops and non-commissioned officers in the army, whose competence is based not only on the experience and traineeship but also on short educational classes with practical purpose. In the educational sector, a *technician* is defined as a specialised person working for the upkeep and operation of the equipment that are necessary to teach some subjects, or cooperate within the University in order to implement the medical, scientific, didactic and administrative activities.

Lithuanian definitions of the term *technician* define technician as a technical specialist of an average rank, or someone who works in any technical field, for example, medical and dental prosthetic technicians. Whereas in **Scotland (UK)** the term *technician*, according to online *Longman* and *Webster Dictionaries*, characterise

² This article presents translated definitions of the term *technician*. Original definitions of the term *technician* in German, Italian, Lithuanian, Spanish and Russian languages are available on the Internet dictionaries. The websites of the dictionaries are presented as references at the end of the article.



technician as “someone whose job is to check equipment or machines and make sure that they are working properly“, “someone who is very good at the skills of a particular sport, music, art, etc.“ and “a specialist in the technical details of a subject or occupation“ as well as the “one who has acquired the technique of an art or other area of specialization“.

And finally, in **Spain** the term *technician* is characterised as someone who belongs or is considered to be related to the world of science and arts. Moreover, the term is used to refer to people with extraordinary abilities in the performance of a task. In addition to this, the definition of the term *technician* in Spanish also embeds the meaning of a person who has skills or abilities to perform different tasks on the basis of knowledge s / he has.

Since *Wikipedia* might be also regarded as a type of corpus where certain knowledge and information is presented, it was decided to look for a definition of the term *technician* there and compare with the definitions that were found in native language dictionaries of all project partner countries. The definition of the term *technician* on *Wikipedia* defines and describes the term in the following way:

A **technician** is a worker in a field of technology who is proficient in the relevant skills and techniques, with a relatively practical understanding of the theoretical principles. Experienced technicians in a specific tool domain typically have intermediate understanding of theory and expert proficiency in technique. As such, technicians are generally much better versed in technique compared to average layman and even general professionals in that field of technology. For example, although audio technicians are not as learned in acoustics as acoustical engineers, they are more proficient in operating sound equipment, and they will likely know more about acoustics than other studio personnel such as performers. Technicians may be classified as either skilled workers or semi-skilled workers, and may be part of a larger (production) process. They may be found working in a variety of fields, and they usually have a job title with the designation “technician” following the particular category of work.

(*Wikipedia*, 2012)

The definition of the term *technician* provided on *Wikipedia* is similar to the definitions found in the project partner countries. However, the definition on *Wikipedia* is broader and in addition to the components of meaning that describe *technician* as someone who is *a worker in a field of technology*, has *relevant skills and techniques* and *understanding of theoretical principles* identifies characteristic features, attributed to the category of a *technician*. For example, *technician* is characterised as someone who *is experienced in a specific tool domain* and *understands theory*. In addition to this, the definition of the term *technician* on *Wikipedia* singles out certain categories of technicians, i.e. *skilled workers*, *semi-skilled workers*. This subgrouping is not self-evident in definitions of *technician* in dictionaries of project partners mentioned above. In addition to this, if definitions of the term *technician* in dictionaries of project partner countries embed necessary features that characterise and describe *techni-*



cians, the definition provided in *Wikipedia* seems to evidently correspond to a kind of a cognitive definition. Since it indicates both necessary and typical traits that are attributed to a technician, it becomes broader, more explicit and generalises common wisdom of the society that uses the lexeme *technician*.

However, summarising all the definitions above the following generalised and consolidated definition was provided for the aims of the project. The consolidated definition of the term *technician* describes a *technician* as a person who works in the field of technology and has relative practical skills of a particular technical field or occupation. When the generalised definition of the term *technician* was provided, it was decided to analyse the definition of the term in the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)* and compare it with definitions found in *National Classification of Occupations* of all project partner countries.

Definition of the term technician according to national classification of occupations. Within this stage of the research an **assumption** that National Classifications of Occupations in Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland (UK) and Spain should comply with the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)* and *ISCO-88 (COM) for the European Union (Eurostat)* and *ISCO-88 (CIS) for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS Statistical Committee)* was made since all project partner countries are members of the EU.

The *International Standard Classification of Occupations* provides a system for classifying and aggregating occupational information obtained by means of population censuses and other statistical surveys, as well as from administrative records. According to the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)*, the category of *technician and associate professionals* make up one of the major groups of occupations. The definition given in the classification entails and characterises tasks, skills and knowledge that *technicians* and *associate professionals* must possess. The description of the category is presented below:

This major group includes occupations whose main tasks require technical knowledge and experience in one or more fields of physical and life sciences, or social sciences and humanities. The main tasks consist of carrying out technical work connected with the application of concepts and operational methods in the above-mentioned fields, and in teaching at certain educational levels. Most occupations in this major group require skills at the third ISCO skill level. This major group has been divided into four sub-major groups, 21 minor groups and 73 unit groups, reflecting differences in tasks associated with different fields of knowledge and specialisation.

(*International Standard Classification of Occupations 2012*
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/publ4.htm>)

The analysis of the description of the term *technician* reveals that the description of the term is similar to the definitions presented on *Wikipedia* and dictionary definitions in English, German, Italian, Lithuanian and Spanish. According to the *International Standard Classification of Occupations* *technicians* and *associate pro-*

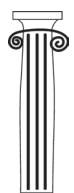


professionals must have *technical knowledge* and *experience in certain fields* and *carry out technical work*. This definition is similar to the consolidated definition generated after the analysis of various definitions of *technician* found in project partner countries that describes a *technician* as a person who works in the field of technology and has relative practical skills of a particular technical field or occupation. Both definitions emphasise the semantic components of *technical knowledge*, *experience* and *practical skills* used for carrying out *technical tasks* and *work*. The only difference observed during the comparison of both definitions is such that the definition in the *International Standard Classification of Occupations* defines not as a single occupation but a group – a category of occupations under which four sub-major groups, i.e. physical and engineering science associate professionals, life science and health associate professionals, teaching associate professionals, and other associate professionals, that constitute 21 minor groups and 73 unit groups fall. The picture below indicates the four sub-groups and 21 minor groups.

- Major Group 3 Technicians and associate professionals**
- 31. Physical and engineering science associate professionals
 - 311. Physical and engineering science technicians
 - 312. Computer associate professionals
 - 313. Optical and electronic equipment operators
 - 314. Ship and aircraft controllers and technicians
 - 315. Safety and quality inspectors
 - 32. Life science and health associate professionals
 - 321. Life science technicians and related associate professionals
 - 322. Modern health associate professionals (except nursing)
 - 323. Nursing and midwifery associate professionals
 - 324. Traditional medicine practitioners and faith healers
 - 33. Teaching associate professionals
 - 331. Primary education teaching associate professionals
 - 332. Pre-primary education teaching associate professionals
 - 333. Special education teaching associate professionals
 - 334. Other teaching associate professionals
 - 34. Other associate professionals
 - 341. Finance and sales associate professionals
 - 342. Business services agents and trade brokers
 - 343. Administrative associate professionals
 - 344. Customs, tax and related government associate professionals
 - 345. Police inspectors and detectives
 - 346. Social work associate professionals
 - 347. Artistic, entertainment and sports associate professionals
 - 348. Religious associate professionals

Picture 1. Major Group 3: Technicians and Associate Professionals
(Source: the *International Standard Classification of Occupations*)

Further on, the analysis of the definition of the term *technician* in National Classifications of Occupations in all project partner countries revealed that all partner countries have their own classification of occupations that slightly differ from the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)* but are generated on the basis of the *International Standard Classification of Occupations and ISCO-88 (COM) for the European Union (Eurostat)* and *ISCO-88 (CIS) for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS Statistical Committee)*. Therefore, **the assumption**



that the National Classifications of Occupations in Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland (UK) and Spain should comply with the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)* and *ISCO-88 (COM) for the European Union (Eurostat)* and *ISCO-88 (CIS) for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS Statistical Committee)* was confirmed.

In **Germany** *ISCO-08* (the latest version after *ISCO-88*), which is mainly used for the international comparisons is applied. However, inside Germany a slightly different classification system, named *KldB2010* (German classification of economic activities 2010) is used when tackling different national questions. The system is more specific and differentiates the specialties of the German labour market, although the basic principles are almost the same. The main difference is that the German *KldB2010* classification characterises all professions, while the *International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-2008* classifies activities and duties of a person. Therefore, in Germany it is currently recommended to use the *International Standard*, but many of the institutions refer to the German system, therefore *technicians* in Germany might be defined and classified after two systems (i.e. the International and the German).

In **Italy** the *National Classification of Occupations* was adapted to be in line with the *International Standard Classification of Occupations*, therefore, the definitions given in the Italian National Classification of Occupations are similar to the ones presented in the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)*. According to the National Classification of Occupations, there are several categories of technical professions. After describing the two main groups, i.e. legislators / entrepreneurs / executives, and intellectuals / scientific / highly specialized, the general definition of the term *technician* given is the following:

The third group comprises the professions requiring technical and subject matter related knowledge, in order to select and use operationally protocols and procedures - predefined and predetermined - in production or service activities. Their tasks include: to cooperate with specialists in scientific, health, humanistic and social field, pertaining to quantitative (physics chemistry, engineering) and natural sciences, life and health science, management and administrative science; they also include the supervision, control, planning and ensuring of the effective functioning of the production process and organizing the correspondent production factors; the provision of social, public and entertaining services; the performance and supporting of sporting activities. The level of knowledge required for the professions included in this group shall be acquired by completing the high secondary school, post-secondary or first university level (BA), or through learning paths, even not formal of equal complexity.

(Italian National Classification of Occupations, 2012)

The **Lithuanian** National Classification of Occupations was developed following the *International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-88* and the *European Classification ISCO-88(COM)*. The National Classification of Occupations is



used to collect, classify, analyse and internationally compare the information about occupations of Lithuanian citizens. The National Classification System is also used to solve various employment related issues and problems. According to the Lithuanian National Classification of Occupations, the major group of *technicians and associate professionals*, i.e. group 3, is defined in the following way:

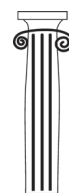
Technicians (laboratory workers) and associate professionals perform mostly technical and related tasks connected with research and the application of scientific and artistic concepts and operational methods, and government or business regulations, and teach at certain educational levels. Most occupations in this group require skills at the third ISCO level. Tasks that are performed by associate professionals and technicians are typically such: technical work related to research methods and application of conceptions and physical sciences (including engineering and technologies), natural sciences (including medical professions), social sciences and humanities. The tasks performed by technicians also involve teaching in elementary and primary schools; teaching and training of the disabled; the provision and organisation of various technical services related to commerce, finances, administration, implementation and supervision of governmental laws and regulations, and social work; provision of art, sports and leisure activities; and provision of some religious tasks.

(Lithuanian Classification of Occupations, 2012, <http://db.stat.gov.lt>)

The main sub-groups within the National Classification of Occupations are four, i.e. physical and engineering science associate professionals; life science and health associate professionals; teaching associate professionals; and other associate professionals. However, the number of minor groups is reduced to 19 (21 minor groups in *the International Standard of Occupations*), and 70 unit groups instead of 73 unit groups indicated in the International Standard. The total number of professions indicated in the Lithuanian National Classification of Occupations that fall under the major group 3, i.e. *technicians and associate professionals*, is 596.

In **Scotland (UK)** the definition of *technician* presented in the National Classification of Occupations defines the major group of technicians as a category. According to the definition, *technician* is a category meaning that people in a specific occupation may be theoreticians, workers in abstract definitions, or they may be technicians, people with practical skills enabling them to bring theoretic conclusions into practice. The definition and the category of *technician* derive naturally from the lexeme *technique*, which means practical skill of operation and originally. Finally the Spanish National Classification of Occupations is also arranged in line with the *International Standard of Occupations* and emphasises similar features of *technician* both as a profession and category like in National Classifications of Occupations presented and examined above.

Summarising all that has been mentioned within the chapter, the following conclusion could be drawn. The *National Classifications of Occupations* in all partner countries, i.e. Germany, Italy, Lithuanian, Scotland (UK) and Spain were adapted to be in line with the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)* and the *European Standard ISCO-88 (COM)*. Therefore, the *National Classifica-*



tions of Occupations, likewise the *International Standard Classification of Occupations*, provide wider characterisation of the term *technician* and become similar to cognitive definitions. Yet, the *National Classifications of Occupations* are slightly different. For example, different number of minor groups, unit groups and professions, in comparison to the *International Standard* is indicated in the *Lithuanian Classification of Occupations*. The *German National Classification of Occupations KldB2010* classifies professions, while the *International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-2008* categorises activities and duties of a person, however both the *International Standard* and the *National Classifications* are used to comparing data internationally, regionally and internally.

The definition of *technicians* and *associate professionals* describes a *technician* not as a single occupation but a major group / category 3 which includes up to 600 occupations. The main tasks technicians perform require “technical knowledge and experience in one or more fields of physical and life sciences, or social sciences and humanities. The main tasks consist of carrying out technical work connected with the application of concepts and operational methods in the above-mentioned fields, and in teaching at certain educational levels” (*ISCO-88*). Such a description might be used to provide a definition of the technician since it characterises both tasks that technicians perform and features that might be attributes to technicians in a definition of the term *technician*.

Interviews with technicians. The last stage of the research related to the definition of the term *technician* aimed at finding out if the generalised and consolidated definition of the term *technician* that was provided on the basis of dictionary definitions, National Classifications of Occupations and *International Standard Classification of Occupations* matched up the definition of the term *technician* in actual use. The final stage of the empirical research was intended to test the hypothesis, i.e. the encyclopaedic and dictionary definitions of the term *technician* do not correspond to the one used by members of the society.

The data were collected during face-to-face interviews with technicians in all project partner countries. The total number of technicians with whom the interviews were conducted was 44. The groups of respondents were composed of men and women in the age range from 33 to 60. All the respondents were representatives of the category of technicians, as indicated in the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)*. They were mainly the representatives of engineering, manufacturing and production, information technology, biotechnology and educational fields. When the selected technicians were contacted with an aim to arrange a meeting for an interview, the majority of them, i.e. IT specialists, laboratory workers and assistants, book-keepers and the like, did not associate themselves with the category of *technicians*. All of them stated that they did not regard and describe themselves as technicians. And when the respondents were asked to define a *technician* and provide a definition of the *technician* according to their perception, the following definitions were provided:



Technician is a worker of the lowest level and who has some specific knowledge and practical experience to work and use machinery.

Technician is someone who works with mechanisms.

A book-keeper is a kind of technician.

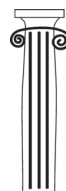
Technician is a specialist who has specific technical knowledge, maintains, repairs or configures technical equipment and other technical devices.

Technician is someone, who is a graduate of a technical vocational school but is not a graduate of a university or a college.

Technician is someone who is not an engineer, i.e. the one who is a graduate of a professional vocational school and, therefore, earns less than an engineer.

The analysis of the definitions, provided by technicians themselves, indicates that the main features to distinguish technicians from not-technicians are related with semantic components of technician as *a worker / specialist*, since such characteristic as *worker of the lowest level*, *a specialist who has specific technical knowledge* or *someone who is not an engineer* were provided. Moreover, the feature of a technician as *someone who is a graduate of a technical vocational and professional school* is also embedded in the definitions provided above. If to compare the definitions of the term *technician* provided by technicians and definitions of the term *technician* in dictionaries and standard classifications of occupations, it becomes obvious that all the definitions tend to emphasise the semantic component of the lexeme *technician* as a *worker, or specialist, who has some specific technical knowledge and some practical experience*. Therefore, such attributes of the lexeme *technician* could be described as the necessary features to characterise the word *technician*. Yet the definitions of the term *technician* that were uttered by technicians also pointed out other features that describe the lexeme *technician* and that were not observed in dictionary and encyclopaedic definitions.

The qualities of technician as *someone who works in the lowest level, works with mechanisms, is a graduate of a vocational / professional school rather than a university or a college, is not an engineer, gets less than an engineer* are not mentioned in dictionary and encyclopaedia definitions and both international and national classifications of occupations. Such features that are attributed to the lexeme *technician* and are based on actual and experience-based usage of the word. The actual usage is usually grounded by personal knowledge, experience that differs across language users and social context language users live in. Different characteristic, i.e. *a technician as someone who does manual, sometimes dirty work, a technician is someone who is good at technical tasks with machinery, equipment, a technician is someone who does not have higher education, or a technician is a bookkeeper*, demonstrate the way particular members of the society employ the term *technician*. This, at the same time, provides some evidence that the actual use of the word / term deviates from the usage of the word / term in a dictionary, encyclopaedia or standardised



documents, i.e. classifications of occupations, since dictionary and encyclopaedic definitions entail only necessary and adequate features of the word / term *technician* but do not embed experience-based features.

In addition to this, the members of society who fall, according both international and national classifications of occupations, under the category of technicians do not associate themselves with technicians due to a clear educational subdivision between technicians and non-technicians. Many of the respondents had university degrees, therefore, according to their perception, they were not technicians. Many of the respondents believed technicians to possess no university or college degree and diplomas and to obtain training in vocational and professional schools. Such findings lead to a conclusion that information about education of a technician that clearly indicates the fact that technicians might be graduates of both professional / vocational schools and universities / colleges needs to be explicitly included into the definition of the lexeme *technician* in dictionaries, encyclopaedias and standard classifications of occupation, since this becomes one of the main and necessary features to describe the term *technician*.

Conclusions and recommendations

The analysis of the data collected during the empirical research yields the following conclusions. Dictionary definitions in all partner countries (Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland (UK) and Spain) define the term *technician* similarly and indicate the semantic components of *technical and practical skills, knowledge and experience of technicians necessary to carry out technical works and tasks* within the definition of the term *technician*. Yet, in some partner countries, i.e. Germany, Spain and Lithuania the term *technician* is also defined as a professional title indicated in a diploma of a college / school or other VET institution. This provides evidence of different experience embedded in the term of *technician*.

The *National Classifications of Occupations* are adapted and prepared according the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)*, *ISCO-88(COM) for the European Union (Eurostat)* and *ISCO-88(CIS) for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS Statistical Committee)*. The National Classifications of Occupations in all five partner countries define *technician and associate professionals* as a major group / category under which up to 600 occupations are enlisted. The definitions of the term *technician* in the *International Standard of Occupations* and National Classifications of Occupations might be treated as cognitive definition of the term *technician*, since they are rather broad and entail many features that might be attributed to the term *technician*. Yet the definition of the term *technician* in dictionaries, encyclopaedias and classifications of occupations differ from the definitions of the term *technician* in actual use. Members of the society, i.e. technicians, embed the same semantic components of the meaning of the term *technician* as *a worker and specialist, who has some technical knowledge and practical skills*. However, the respondents add up new and personal experience and knowledge-based information about a *technician* which is not present in dictionary, encyclopaedia and standardised



documents-based definitions. Such findings verify the hypothesis of the empirical research and prove it to be true, i.e. the encyclopaedic and dictionary definitions of the term *technician* do not correspond to the one used by members of the society. This leads to a final conclusion - recommendation that definitions of the term *technician* should be reviewed and updated, since members of the society attribute new semantic components to the term *technician*. And these new semantic components of meaning could complement necessary and adequate features, attributed to the term *technician* in dictionaries, encyclopaedias and even standardised documents.

References

- Breál M. *Semantics: Studies in the Science of Meaning*. New York: Dover, 1900.
- Croft W., Cruse, D. A. *Cognitive Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos žodynas*. <http://www.zodynas.lt/terminu-zodynas/T/technikas> (January 2012).
- Duden: Standard German Dictionary*. <http://www.duden.de/> (January 2012).
- Evans V. *Cognitive Linguistics*. <http://www.vyvevans.net/CogLingReview.pdf> (December 2012).
- Geeraerts D. *A Rough Guide to Cognitive Linguistics*, 2011. <http://degnatal.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/a-rough-guide-to-cognitive-linguistics-dirk-geeraerts.pdf> (December 2012).
- Gudavičius A. *Etnolingvistika (Tauta kalboje)*. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla, 2009.
- International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO88*. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/index.htm> (January 2012).
- Jakaitienė E. *Leksikologija*. Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2009.
- Lithuanian National Classification of Occupations*. <http://82.135.219.213/mod/klasifikatorius/?p=0> (January 2012).
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online*. <http://www.ldoceonline.com/>.
- Maumevičienė D. Prototipų teorija ir semantika. *Kalbų studijos (Studies about Languages)*, 17, 2010, 11–18.
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>.
- National Classification of Occupations follow the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO88)*. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/index.htm> (January 2012).
- Online Lexikon: Wörterbuch und Übersetzung*. <http://www.woxikon.de/> (January 2012).
- Real Academia Española*. <http://www.rae.es/rae.html> (January 2012).
- Teubert W., Čermáková, A. *Corpus Linguistics: A Short Introduction*. London: Athenaem Press, 2007.
- Treccani: L'Enciclopedia Italiana*. <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/> (January 2012).
- Ungerer F., Schmid, H. J. *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics*. Harlow: Longman University Press, 2006.
- Widdowson H. G. (ed.). *Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia in English*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page (January 2012).

Audronė Daubarienė, Dainora Maumevičienė

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE TERM AND ITS DEFINITION IN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT

Summary

Keywords: *technician, term, definition, cognitive definition, project.*

The meaning of the word is usually analysed through its relationship with other words and the way the society uses it. Dictionaries and encyclopaedias define the meaning of a particular term / word, yet the perception of the content of the definition might differ from the meaning used by the society. Language is a social phenomenon, therefore, the meaning of words usually originates in a particular discourse. This article discusses the problem related to the definition of the term *technician* that is provided in dictionaries and encyclopaedias and the meaning of the term *technician* that prevails and is used by the members of societies in Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland and Spain. The article is based on the results of the empirical research that aimed to find out how the term *technician* is defined both by dictionaries in the languages of the countries mentioned above and is actualised in communicative situations by the members of the societies mentioned above.

Audronė Daubarienė, Dainora Maumevičienė

TERMINO IR JO TURINIO ATITIKTIS TARPKULTŪRINIAME KONTEKSTE

Santrauka

Žodžio reikšmė dažniausiai tiriama sąsajoje su kitais žodžiais bei sąsajoje su ja vartojančia visuomene. Žodynai apibrėžia tam tikro termino / žodžio reikšmę, tačiau jos turinio suvokimas gali skirtis nuo visuomenėje įsigalėjusios sampratos. Kalba yra socialinis reiškiny, todėl termino turinys, pasak tekstynų lingvistikos atstovų W. Teuberto ir A. Čermakovos (2007), gimsta tam tikroje socialinėje terpėje, t. y. jį vartojančios visuomenės diskurse. Straipsnyje bandoma pateikti termino ir jo turinio atitikties problemą, kai termino turinys, pateikiamas žodynų, enciklopedijų ir tarptautinių profesijų nacionaliniuose klasifikatoriuose, skiriasi nuo termino supratimo tarp jį vartojančių žmonių tarpkultūrinėje aplinkoje, t. y. skirtingose šalyse. Straipsnis grindžiamas empiriniu tyrimu, atliktu pasitelkiant apklausą, kokybine rezultatų ir kitų dokumentų analize. Empirinis tyrimas buvo atliktas Italijoje, Ispanijoje, Lietuvoje, Vokietijoje bei Jungtinėje Karalystėje. Tyrimo objektas – termino *technikas* apibrėžtis pagal kalbos norminius dokumentus (žodynus ir enciklopedijas) bei standartinius profesijų klasifikatorius ir apibrėžties palyginimas su (Italijos, Ispanijos, Lietuvos, Vokietijos bei Jungtinės Karalystės) visuomenėje įsigalėjusia samprata. Tyrimas buvo vykdomas pagal Europos Sąjungos remiamą Mokymosi visą gyvenimą programos Leonardo da Vinci paprogramės projektą „Lang2Tech“ (*Užsienio kalba technikas*) 2011 10 01–2012 03 01. Tyrimo metu gauti duomenys atskleidė faktą, kad visuomenėje plačiai vartojama termino *technikas* samprata skiriasi nuo žodynuose pateikiamos apibrėžties ir griežtai reglamentuoto termino aprašo profesijų klasifikatoriuje.

