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THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CHARACTER OF TERMINOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Terminology has a twofold meaning: 1. it is the discipline concerned with the principles and methods governing the study of concepts and their designations (terms, names, symbols) in any subject field, and the job of collecting, processing, and managing relevant data, and 2. the set of terms belonging to the special language of an individual subject field. In its study of concepts and their representations in special languages, terminology is multidisciplinary, since it borrows its fundamental tools and concepts from a number of disciplines (e.g. logic, ontology, linguistics, information science and other specific fields) and adapts them appropriately in order to cover particularities in its own area. Linguistic aspects of term formation are of major interest to terminologists, terminographers and subject field specialists, but also to translators, interpreters and technical writers; especially when translators happen to work with less widely used languages such as Greek, where the lack of adequately developed reference tools such as specialized dictionaries and glossaries very often compels them to become neologists.

1. Introduction

Multi-dimensional characters have several layers, facets, or **dimensions** to them. They are more complex and harder to figure out than one-**dimensional characters**. Once again, as Jay pointed out, **multi-dimensional characters** can take several lines to sum up, because they have several different **characteristics.**

Every **protagonist** in a book (who should always be multi-dimensional) needs two basic parts: strength and inner conflict.

Strength

A lot of people like to focus on making sure their characters are flawed. This is fine, but what they seem to forget is that we have to like the characters too. Who wants to read about someone we don't care about?

Main characters need a strength, some quality about them that the reader can root for. Honesty, integrity, humility, humor, thrift, etc. The list goes on and on. The strongest of strengths are self-sacrifice and forgiveness (notice: they are both selfless qualities).

Inner-Conflict

Your hero needs strength, but with nothing else, he will still bore the reader. As @Filip has pointed out with Harry Potter, this is because they need something more: Inner Conflict.

Inner Conflict can manifest in two ways: either two opposing desires in direct opposition to each other, or sides of the protagonist (dimensions) that are incompatible, and therefore conflict.

An example:

During a war, a woman seeks vengeance against the enemy for the murder of her parents. At the same time, her sister is sickened by the war. Out of love for her sister, the woman seeks to end the war entirely.

The woman both wants to be a part of the war, and end the war, simultaneously. Her Inner Conflict pulls her in two opposite directions, both unrelenting.

Back to your question. Making a character multi-dimensional is not an easy process. One-dimensional characters often have a single purpose, determined by the plot, and a physical appearance. Multi-dimensional characters have a physical appearance, ways that they act, ways that they *interact* with others, and why they do what they do. If your character is a main character (but not the antagonist) they will also have inner-conflict; if he is a protagonist, he will also have strength *and* inner-conflict.

To form characters, you need to start with your protagonist.

Determine what makes your protagonist who he is. What defines him? What strengths are central to his very being? What inner conflicts keep him awake at night? Defining these two things alone will highly develop your protagonist. Then get in his head, figure out how he thinks, and from there, how he acts and interacts.

2. Main part

Once you have your protagonist down, all other characters are secondary. No matter how large of a part they play, they have a reason to exist, a reason that is linked to the protagonist. Maybe one helps him realize something he otherwise wouldn't. One is holding him back. One is pushing him forwards. One spreads doubt. One fans the inner conflict. One simply acts as a target for the protagonist's strength. One may see things the protagonist can't. (This is a different PoV character, and often acts as a

secondary protagonist. This character needs strength as well.) The reason that you need side characters will determine who they are. You can then assign them inner conflicts (not necessarily strengths, unless they are very large characters in the story), and get inside their heads.

The further away you get from the protagonist, the less you will have to develop characters. Eventually you won't need inner-conflict anymore, and soon you won't even need to get inside a character's head and figure out who they are. You've arrived at one-dimensional characters, those people that pop into the story, perform their purpose, and then are never seen again.

Despite the importance of this line of work, it became clear that modeling cultural information as a single binary attribute was somewhat limiting. Axelrod (1997) proposed a multi-attribute model of cultural information that has become a pre-eminent platform for cultural diffusion modeling. In his model, cultural information is represented as a vector with more than two (and often more than five) elements, each of which can take one of more than two values (and again often more than five values). At any given point in time, each agent has a certain pattern of cultural information as specified by this vector. The process of cultural diffusion is also somewhat more complex – when two agents interact, one element in their culture vectors is changed, so that they become culturally more similar. This change models cultural transmission – one agent's cultural element is transmitted to the other agent, and as a result, the latter's culture vector changes. The likelihood of transmission, however, depends on how similar their cultural patterns are to begin with. The more similar they are, the more likely they exchange cultural information. Nothing in the model promotes divergence of the interacting agents' culture vectors, and so they tend to form clusters of agents with the same culture, and often the whole population of agents end up having the same culture. However, more often than not, the agents form different cultural clusters, preserving cultural diversity.

There have been an explosion of research based on the Axelrod model (A search on June 12, 2014 returned 422 citations on the Web of Science), and the citing papers are found not only in social sciences, but also in evolutionary biology, computer science, physics, and the like (see Castellano et al., 2009, for a review). For example, some research examined cultural dynamics and long term formation of cultural diversity by exploring the effects of mass media (e.g., González-Avella et al., 2005; Rodríguez and Moreno, 2010), different models of cultural transmission processes (e.g., Kuperman, 2006; Flache and Macy, 2011), and implications of static (e.g., Klemm et al., 2003; Xiao et al., 2009; Guerra et al., 2010) as well as dynamically changing social networks and agent movements within space (e.g., Centola et al., 2007; Gracia-Lázaro et al., 2009). Some have considered the implications of the model for the possibility of maintaining cultural diversity in the face of globalization (e.g., Greig, 2002; Pfau et al., 2012).

Similarities and Differences Among Research Designs

The four broad classes of research designs discussed so far differ in at least three important respects: time scope, level of analysis, and direction of inference. Table 1 presents a rough summary of similarities and differences. Cross-temporal methods are typically used to examine long- to medium-term, macro-level trends and trajectories of cultural dynamics. Some have documented cultural changes over centuries, and others, decades. Cross-generational methods are used to examine cross-generational transmissions of cultural information medium-term – from one generation to next, or at most three generations. Experimental simulations are typically for investigations of the micro-level mechanisms of cultural transmission in a short-term although some have attempted to generalize their findings to longer-term processes, namely, cultural transmissions across generations (e.g., Caldwell and Millen, 2009). These three are all empirical research designs in that they are for collecting empirical observations and testing theoretical propositions. In contrast, formal models and computer simulations are not for data collection, but for generating theoretical propositions. Starting with a set of assumptions and propositions about the mechanisms of cultural dynamics, their macro-level, typically long-term, and global implications (e.g., prevalence of cooperation, cultural diversity) are examined. In this sense, they are deduction machines that enable researchers to explore implications of their theoretical assumptions and propositions, but they cannot be used to test their theory.

The term "ορολογία" (terminology) has two meanings: the scientific field pertaining to the study of relations between concepts and their designations (terms, names and symbols) and the formulation of principles and methods governing these relations in any given subject field; and the task of collecting, processing, managing and presenting terminological data in one or more languages, as well as the set of terms belonging to the special language of a specific subject field. Fundamental for the theory of terminology is the distinction between objects, i.e. entities in the external world, concepts, which are the units of knowledge that constitute the mental representations of objects, and designations of concepts, which can be terms, names and symbols. Concepts are further determined by means of the relations they have to other concepts, as well as by definitions, which constitute the descriptive, metalinguistic denotation of concepts. Regardless of disagreements among researchers as to whether or not terminology is an autonomous academic field (cf. Cabré [1999]) or rather a set of methodological tools for processing terminological data(cf. Sager [2000], Dubuc [1985]), its interdisciplinary character is recognized by all. Not only because terminology is the intersection of various fields of knowledge, but mainly because it borrows the fundamental instruments and concepts of several different disciplines (e.g. logic, ontology, linguistics, information science, and others), adapting them accordingly in order to cover its own specific requirements. The relation of terminology to these disciplines results from the multi-dimensional character of terminological units as linguistic entities Æ linguistics, as concept entities Æ ontology, cognitive sciences, and as communicative units in the more restricted framework of scientific & technical discourse, but also in the wider context of general language. Consequently, the theory of terminology is defined with relation to three different dimensions (Sager [1990: 13]): 1. the

cognitive dimension, which examines the concept relations and thereby how the concepts constitute structured sets of knowledge units or concept systems in every area of human knowledge, as well as the representation of concepts by definitions and terms, 2. the linguistic dimension, which examines existing linguistic forms as well as potential linguistic forms that can be created in order to name new concepts, and 3. the communicative dimension, which examines the use of terms as a means of transferring knowledge to different categories of recipients in a variety of communicative situations and covers the activities of compilation, processing and dissemination of terminological data in the form of specialized dictionaries, glossaries or terminological databases, etc. 3 Recognizing the multidimensional character of terminological entities (concept Æ term Æ communication unit) in the context of conveying specialized knowledge significantly influences the character of contemporary theory and practice of terminology and contributes to redefining the relationship between terminology and contemporary linguistics as well as technological and information sciences4 . Some of the changes involved are the following:

• Standardization, commonly known from the technical and technological fields, has been extended to engage the theory of terminology5 as well, providing methodological tools for the systematization of terminology work and communication, in the context of terminological activities.

• The cognitive dimension of terminology, i.e. the organization of knowledge within a field of knowledge, is not regarded as an end in itself reserved for scientists or subject field specialists, but rather as a means contributing to precision and systematicness on transferring knowledge in various pragmatic situations.

• The linguistic dimension of terminological entities is not an exclusive subject of study and proposals of subject field specialists, but also of terminologists, who are recognized in their dual capacity of language consultant and terminological data documentalist.

• The reduction of differences between terminology and linguistics can be summarized on the one hand in the prescriptive approach of terminology with respect to selecting one single correct linguistic form to represent a concept, and on the other hand in the descriptive approach of linguistics with regard to the identification of all possible linguistic variants of a single linguistic form. The current trend in the theory of terminology allows for the existence of synonymic expressions and term variations, thus rejecting its narrow prescriptive attitude of the past, which insisted on connecting one concept to one term. It has now been recognized that one concept – above andbeyond the narrow context of standardization – can correspond to a variety of linguistic representations, which can serve various communication needs. Terminology today has adopted an approach to collecting lexical data that is based on corpora. According to Sager [1990:58], “by being studied in the context of communicative situations, terms are no longer seen as separate items in dictionaries or part of a semi-

artificial language deliberately devoid of any of the functions of other functional items. The increasing tendency to analyse terminology in its communicative, i.e. linguistic context, leads to a number of new theoretical assumptions and also to new methods of compilation and representation."

3. Conclusion

The linguistic dimension of the theory of terminology lies in the principles governing the connection between a term and a concept and, mainly, in the linguistic mechanisms of the term itself as a lexical unit. The linguistic aspects of term formation are of interest not only to terminology specialists, terminologists and subject field specialists, but also to translators and interpreters, in particular when the latter, due to a lack of dictionaries and glossaries in less widely used languages, are obliged to go beyond the call of duty as a translator and become namers and/or neologists.

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