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LSP PLANNING AND THE ESTONIAN LANGUAGE IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY

The key to the present often lies in the past. A historical perspective is particularly appropriate if the spiral movement seems to have completed another cycle. This means that the question "To be or not to be?" faced by the Estonian special language at the turn of the past century, has recurred to us now, a hundred years later. Of course, no end of changes have meanwhile taken place in the world, in Estonia as well as in the Estonian language, and yet – there it is again, the old question. And like a hundred years ago, it is not one for the LSP planners alone to answer, but for the Estonian people. The answer depends on just what language policy and what national policy the people will choose in the new situation.

FORMATION OF THE NATION AND THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

The Estonian people (then calling themselves *maarahvas* 'country people') experienced its national awakening in the 1860s – 1870s. In Western Europe nationalism had become a politically motive force in the late 18th century. Soon those processes spread to Russia and to its Baltic provinces (Estonia, Latvia). Yet even the early 19th century knew but a couple of German Estophiles who sufficiently respected the language and culture of the Estonian people to believe in its future as a nation. It took the agrarian reforms of the 1840s – 1860s to prepare the ground for what had seemed unbelievable before.

Estonian life in the 19th century was characterised by strong cultural ties with Germany. The intellectuals of Estonia and Latvia received considerable increment in the person of young learned men out of German universities. In 1802, a university was re-established in Tartu (first working period 1632–1710). Little by little Estonians also began to be enrolled among its students. The years of the National Awakening (1860s – 1870s) are also the period when the Estonian intelligentsia was formed. Previously, when the social barrier used to run across the ethnic boundary, almost anybody starting up from the peasant class was assimilated by Germans, even though according to Russian intellectuals it would have been more natural for the population of a Russian province to become Russified.

The key to national self-identification was the Estonian language. The Estonians were fortunate in that language issues were topical in the major national states in Europe, incl. Germany. The efforts to develop the Estonian literary language drew on the Herderian mother-tongue ideology, which appreciated language as a manifestation of the spirit and character of the nation.

In the early 19th century there were still two literary Estonian languages – those of Tallinn and Tartu, or the North-Estonian and South-Estonian languages. (The oldest printed text is known to date back to 1525). In the early 1830s public discussion reached the conclusion that a common literary language was necessary. The 1850s – 1860s saw an upsurge of debates leading to the substitution of a new, more Finnish-like orthography for the old German-like one in the late 1860s. This meant that the time had arrived for language planning proper: in 1872 the first resolutions on the unification of the literary language were passed in the Society of Estonian Writers. By that time Estonian had already been discovered as an object of linguistics and by the mid-1880s the Estonians could boast three doctors, promoted in Leipzig and Helsinki, to take the lead in the research and development of Estonian. The most outstanding of them was Jakob Hurt, who did everything to persuade the 'country people' that the Estonians need not assimilate either with Germans or with Russians, as neither the Estonian language nor the people would certainly not disappear if only they could produce their own intelligentsia, Estonian-speaking and nationally spirited. His big project of the early 1870s of a vernacular school envisaged three stages: village school – parish school – county school, to be followed, if necessary, by an Estonian university in the future. (At the time the latter idea seemed crazy, yet it took less than 50 years to realise.)

The rise was followed by an interregnum of a score of years as the Russian tsarist government decided to take its Baltic provinces into a firm hand. Fortunately for the Estonians, the metropolis had grown too weak to achieve its aim, so that after the revolt of 1905 the situation eased off again. Note that this was accompanied by a liberation of the Estonian press and literary activities, which led to their rapid development.

EVOLUTION OF MODERN LITERARY ESTONIAN AND THE ESTONIAN LSP

In the early 20th century, the Estonian intellectuals perceived the abyss between the modern requirements and the homespun Estonian language even more clearly. The first to raise protest were writers. Soon the linguistically sensitive authors of the new generation formed a grouping. In 1911 Johannes Aavik designed a grandiose linguistic reform concerning both lexis and grammar. J. Aavik was a great idealist, whose fervent wish was to improve the Estonian language so that it would become more beautiful and thus worth standing as an equal among the civilised European languages. And once again the impossible became true. The neologist movement, which was at its height in 1912 – 1924, succeeded. This was due to (1) the favourable (revolutionary) social situation, (2) the youthful flexibility of literary Estonian, (3) the expediency and linguistic fitness of the neologisms, and (4) the powerful promotive effort of the initiator. True, J. Aavik considered himself a loser as half of his suggestions were rejected. And yet, the other half was accepted. The book "Introduction to a theory of language planning" (Uppsala, 1968) by Valter Tauli made the Estonian neologist movement known internationally. Note that, as we know, nothing can ever be obtained free of charge, at least in the long run. Some modern linguists consider that the resulting structural complication of the Estonian language was perhaps a little too high a price to pay for the successful innovation.

In parallel with J. Aavik, the other great man J. V. Veski was active in Estonian language planning. Although his views differed from Aavik's, they both had the same aim and thus, often similar results. It is certainly not correct to oppose them entirely as has sometimes been done. There is no doubt, however, that J. V. Veski's services to Estonian terminology stand towering high above the rest.

In the 19th century Tartu University taught in German. In 1889 (Russification time) it was replaced by Russian in all departments except Theology. It was not until the revolutionary year 1905 that better times arrived for Estonian-speaking societies, education and scientific research. In 1907 J. V. Veski issued a call for terminology development, adding the principles of how it should be done. As a response, several terminology commissions set out working. The first terminological dictionary was published in 1909 on mathematics. During the next decade, it was followed by dictionaries on geography, chemistry, medicine, botany, and physics (The process of the creation of basic terms had, after all, been going on since the 18th century).

The emergence of the Republic of Estonia brought a sudden awareness of the necessity of a vernacular university. How could a politically independent nation do without its own national university? So, on 1 December 1918 the university was taken over from the Germans. Owing to the war, however, lectures did not start until October the next year, and the official opening of an Estonian-speaking university took place on 1 December 1919.

Naturally, in the first years lectures were still allowed to be held in German or Russian as well. In ten years' time however, most of the lecturing was done in Estonian. The formation of a vernacular university went hand in hand with the development of the Estonian science language and this is exactly where the merits of J. V. Veski can hardly be overestimated. He was on all terminology commissions and participated in the compilation of 30 terminological dictionaries. This guaranteed the basic harmony of the terminology created. By the 1930s Estonian had become a genuine science language providing for research papers as well as an 8-volume encyclopaedia.

LANGUAGE PLANNING AND TERMINOLOGY IN THE PERIOD OF SOVIET OCCUPATION

World War II brought the Estonian Republic half a century of Russian occupation. Now, language planning is a field rather sensitive to social fluctuations. In the 1930s, it was developed in at least three directions, being rich in ideas as well as productive. The war meant a backlash. During the 1940s and 1950s, the aims of Estonian language planning dwindled down to a single requirement – the principle of popularity. The vulgar materialism of the interpretation of the requirement was due to the human resources left to keep language planning alive, as well as to the slogans of the time, such as "Down with the bourgeois linguistic innovation – it is hostile to the people!", "Soviet language planning should serve the people!", "Our linguistics should get a new foundation!" The loosening (however relative) of the grip of the occupation in the late 1950s and early 1960s was immediately reflected in language planning. The principles, methods, and expressions meanwhile forsaken were

highlighted again, the forgotten innovations were re-introduced, other methods than the previous ones of monopolist word-compounding were re-introduced into word-creation. The new wave was particularly fruitful in terminology and in LSP in general. Since the mid-1960s various terminological dictionaries, different in form and content, began to be published again.

The occupation had not been able to entirely erase the achievements of the two decades (1918 – 1940) of independence, especially the fundamental principles worked out then. Even though at times the pressure of Russification (Sovetisation) was particularly high, it served to unify the nation rather than split it up. The feeling of a common opposition helped to clarify the Estonian identity, the cornerstone of which was the Estonian language struggling to retain its specific features. This was the prime issue in the self-identification of the Estonians against the rest of the world, especially the Soviet Union. This is also why the Estonian terminologists never adopted the "principle of least differences" which was the main principle recommended to the Soviet terminologists, reading: the terminology used in the Soviet republics should sound as close to the Russian terms as possible. This was to work for the development of a unified Soviet terminology. The Estonian terminologists, however, based their work on another principle, notably: the best possible correspondence should exist between the planes of content and expression. This is why no move was to be made without considering the potential and specificity of the Estonian language. This did not mean, however, any scorn for other languages or borrowing as such. On the contrary, it was recommended *expressis verbis* to look at German, English, Finnish, Russian and other languages for loans as well as ideas for term creation. What was important was the principle that several languages were to be followed as examples, not just one. In 1969 Uno Mereste formulated the following principles:

- (a) A language adjusting the terminology of a specialism later than some other has done enjoys the advantage of the opportunity of discovering inadequacies and thus avoiding them.
- (b) It cannot suffice to translate terminology word by word; one should proceed from the conceptual system of the specialism, making full use of the creative capacity of the language in question, as well as borrowing where appropriate.

At the same time, linguists kept reminding everybody that the expressive means of Indo-European languages differ considerably from those of Estonian. True, throughout history Estonian has picked up a remarkable amount of Indo-European elements, and yet it has retained its Finno-Ugric nature.

LANGUAGE PLANNING AND TERMINOLOGY AFTER THE RESTORATION OF ESTONIAN INDEPENDENCE

Thus armoured, Estonian terminology passed through the occupation, perhaps not quite pure and undamaged, yet sound and capable of development. The Estonians used their chance in 1991, when the Soviet Union was in the process of disintegration, and restored their own statehood. The event and the Estonian language policy of the time have been described in

the 1991 issue of the present journal (Vol. 2, No. 2). A Language Law for the transition period had been passed in 1989, to be replaced by a new Language Law of the Republic of Estonia in 1995. Yet, the amendment and implementation of the Law is focused on the guarantees for the linguistic rights of non-Estonians and on teaching Estonian to them. This is the continuous concern of the EU officials, this is also what Russia is constantly keeping a vigilant eye on. How (and if) the Estonian language is recovering from the occupation seems marginal in this context. This is probably why a mere group of five, working at the Institute of the Estonian Language, Tallinn, is responsible for general language planning as well as for name planning and LSP planning.

In spite of that, the Estonian language planners have quite a few achievements to be proud of. The major effort of late is the normative dictionary published in 1999 (over 1000 pages, big format, ed. by Tiiu Erelt (Erelt 1999)). This result of ten years' work can be characterised as (1) a dictionary of literary language (dialect, slang etc. is little represented), (2) a dictionary of modern language (of the 1990s), (3) a recommending dictionary, and (4) a universal dictionary. Universality here means that the dictionary contains information on orthographic, morphological, and semantic issues as well as on the syntactic valence of words, their stylistic and terminological use etc. The user is invited to consult the dictionary in parallel with the Handbook of the Estonian Language), the 2nd revised edition of which was published in 2000 (Mati Erelt, Tiiu Erelt, and Kristiina Ross 2000).

World level in name planning is represented by Maailma kohanimed 'Place names of the world' compiled by Peeter Päll (Päll 1999). There is only one answer to the question which place names should be considered internationally commendable. It follows from the natural and indivisible right of every country to act independently in naming its own places. This is why the names used internally are also correct to use internationally. Estonia respects this principle, voiced at the 1967 UN Conference of Toponym Planning, as well as the place names current in other countries, hoping that our names will similarly be respected by other countries. In 1940 – 1990 names (like most other information from Estonia) reached the rest of the world via the Russian language. But on their way, they got distorted owing to the phonetic and alphabetic differences of the two languages (e. g. *Khiuma pro Hiiumaa*, *Pjarnu pro Pärnu*, *Tallin pro Tallinn*).

Terminologists have also been quite active. True, in the early 1990s there was some reason to fear that the young and poor state that had just regained its independence would perhaps consider terminologists not nationally important enough to be financed. Another realistic-looking fear concerned terminological commissions: would the work previously done out of enthusiasm, national spirit, opposition to Russian influence etc. still be able to continue, or would specialists from now on demand money for it, as for any normal piece of work done in a market economy. Such a course of events would have been fatal for terminology. Fortunately, it did not turn out that way. This is proved, for example, by the average 15 terminological dictionaries published annually over the past 10 years. True, not all of them qualify for a rich dictionary to advance its special field. And yet it is a clear sign of terminological work going on.

LSP SITUATION IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY

What is the situation of LSP today? Present-day Estonian life is dominated by the following factors: (1) Estonia is a country once again open to the rest of the world and living its own life together with other countries; (2) Estonia is working to join the EU and thus trying to meet its requirements in every walk of life; (3) Estonia has passed from a socialist planned economy to a market economy.

These circumstances have done the Estonian people a lot of good – but a number of grave social problems have also arisen. Leaving aside the latter, let us concentrate on linguistic problems, particularly those of LSP. Although those are not insoluble from the linguistic point of view, the solutions require a favourable social background depending on the language policy and national policy in general. Some problems just cannot be solved without some general terminological background, which is not always sufficiently available to this or that specialist, and even more so to the translators and editors.

The pattern of donor languages for the Estonian LSP has not always been the same. In the beginning, the Estonian LSP emerged and developed in the spheres of German and Russian influence. Of those two, German seemed particularly well suited for the purpose, first because its influence had long traditions, second because its way of expression is compact and clear, it is rich in compounds and derivatives, while the terms used are traditionally unambiguous. Throughout the second half of the 20th century Russian influence dominated. Although Soviet pressure was strong enough, the Estonians retained their sober mentality. Of course we could not help copying from the term systems (the level of expression) coming along with the notional system (the level of contents). Translation loans are, after all, quite popular in LSP as the motivation of the terms created is often the same.

Today we find ourselves amidst a pan-English influence. The massive advance of English influence began no later than the 1970s, when it became the world leading language of several special fields. Estonian has been exposed to the totality of English influence since the 1990s, while a few fields (pedagogy, local administration) fell under the influence of Finnish. In LSP, however, the Finnish influence has been surprisingly small, especially considering its extent in the common language. The present pressure of English is hard to bear mainly because of its different way of putting things, its different style of expression. This is particularly strikingly manifested in legal language, but many linguistic problems also appear in such a concrete and practical field as construction, for example. And yet, at present the necessity to translate from English is formidable, or to write on the basis of English documents. It is not impossible that even French would be more suitable for us, but the world-wide influence of English is much stronger than that of French and the number of Estonians competent in French is much smaller than of those working with English.

Again, the EU Directives, Regulations, Treaties etc. should be translated following the same old principle pointed out above, i.e. striving for a maximum possible adequacy between the planes of expression and contents, which requires a constant consideration for the potential and specificity of the Estonian language. This is really topical in the new situation. This is where we should put our foot down quite firmly, but instead we can see cases of careless

copying of English words practically every day. This can happen in two ways: either by (a) literal translation, or by (b) producing pseudo-foreign terms in the form of transcriptions from English. This proves that one should never stop repeating the fundamental principle of terminology: start from the concept, i.e. look at the thing, get the notion clear in your own mind and then say it in your mother tongue. Every language has its own ways and means of expression. Who could have anything against borrowing from other languages – after all, half of our terms are loans anyway. Yet, every case of "implementation", "creativity", or "cohesion" (an EU term) need not be translated as *kreatiivsus*, *implementatsioon*, or *kohe-sioon*, respectively. Instead, we have such nice Estonian words as *rakendamine*, *loovus* and *ühitekuuluvus*, understandable to every Estonian, translators and readers included. During the 20th century, Estonian terminology has developed its own rules and principles as to when and from what language to borrow. Thus, it is recommended to follow the good tradition in borrowing (as is done in bookkeeping, or in construction, for example), leaving room for neologisms as well.

At every stage of language development, language planning needs tactical flexibility to adapt to the situation. At present, our activities should be focused on the general attitude of the Estonian intellectuals. The Estonian language planners just cannot afford to complain that the Estonian language has been contaminated by Russian and English influences, that it is corrupt and bound to become extinct sooner or later etc. On this basis every man of reason would conclude that the solution is in the use of some other language. What the language planners should do is to explain and demonstrate the strong potential of the Estonian LSP, its readiness to meet any challenge of to-day, thus instilling ever more confidence in the people in that their mother-tongue will not let them down.

The question may arise why we Estonians, living in a country with an advanced literary language, should face the same problem of independent existence as we did a hundred years ago? The answer can be found in world history and is probably known to my readers, whatever their country of origin - Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany, or some other country. Estonia is just a small country, one of the smallest in Europe to have vernacular culture and science. Where should we find the strength to stand up to the dominance of English, while even the big powers are beginning to give way? It is common knowledge that in order to survive, smaller nations need a stronger sense of identity and a mission to live with. For us, the only guarantee would be the Estonian language and culture. At that, matching the Estonian identity with the European one is no problem for us, as throughout our national history – as I have been trying to explain above – our attitudes have been Europe-oriented.

GLOBALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION – LANGUAGE ISSUES

As has been mentioned above, our vernacular university was founded in the early 20th century, to be more exact in 1918, when the War of Liberation was in full swing. If the foundation had not taken place, where would we be now? This is a question hardly ever asked, for who, indeed, could even imagine the full answer. Instead, we have been discussing the future. Throughout the year 1999, the problem whether we still need Estonian in university and in science was a serious topic of discussion. Many articles were published in various

sources until, towards the end of the year, two international conferences were held. The first was a language planning conference organised in Tallinn by the Institute of the Estonian Language. According to most of the talks, the pressure of English tends to overshadow the other language planning problems. The language planners from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Latvia and Russia all spoke of the unsparing influence of English on their respective vernaculars and of a restriction of their sphere of use. Against the background of their own negative experience, they sincerely recommended that we had better develop a clever policy against Anglicisation at once.

On 30 November 1999, a conference on “Globalisation of Higher Education – Language Issues” was held at Tartu University. In addition to the Estonian scholars, speakers had been invited from Finnish, Latvian, Russian, and German universities. How to keep up one’s own language without losing close communication with other nations? This seems to be the common problem of many European countries.

The spectrum of opinions was very wide. Here I would like to point out a few ideas from those papers that supported my own identity as an Estonian terminologist and language planner. Prof. Els Oksaar from Hamburg, who has devoted her whole life to the studying of language contacts, invited the listeners to think about the mutual relations of language, science and society. Language is a part of culture, while its function is to verbalise this culture. Science is not indifferent to the language used to fix its results in. Globalisation of higher education does not mean that vernacular culture and science should be thrown overboard. One must not cut one’s roots, which are inseparable from one’s mother tongue. The spiritual atmosphere of universities should be based on the vernacular. The solution lies in multilingualism, as this stimulates the development of the vernacular as well. Always looking at the world through one and the same pair of spectacles, we may easily miss something.

Prof. Kari Sajavaara from Jyväskylä dwelt on the increasing role of English in the globalisation processes, as well as on the fact that an overriding of the vernacular will result in a poorer understanding of the contents of the subject. Academic education should provide professional competence, including adequate proficiency in those languages in which the best special literature of the field is available. As a professor of English, Kari Sajavaara criticised “Euro-English” for being superficial, at times even incomprehensible. He considered that the use of the vernacular in scientific research and publication serves state support.

Mati Ereli, Professor of Estonian, Tartu University, focused his talk on the necessity of higher education being still administered in the Estonian language. Like in the times of Humboldt, it is still important that science, teaching and learning should form an integral whole, i.e. it should still be possible to teach and learn by studying as well as to study by teaching and learning. If we want to train our youth to become really competitive in the modern world, they should naturally be taught their foreign languages well. Yet, out of pragmatic considerations the use of English should not cross certain reasonable limits. The University should be able to continue teaching students in Estonian, if they so wish, as receiving vernacular education is a constitutional right of Estonian students. The dangers requiring us to set a limit on the use of English in Estonian institutions of higher education are as follows:

Estonian might be banished “back to the kitchen”. Being one of the most essential parts of a literary language LSP also provides for its other sublanguages (press, fiction etc.). Together, however, the sublanguages form an integral whole, so that if one part were cut off, it would inevitably maim the rest of the subsystems. Now, if we worked for the extinction of university language, it would lead to the extinction of other sublanguages as well. (This is also why Estonian language planning has always striven for a harmonious development of both LSP and language in general.)

The quality of education may decrease. The quality of learning largely depends on whether the teaching is done in the students’ mother tongue or in a foreign language. Different languages, as we know, classify reality differently, the polysemy of words differs across languages, the metaphors used are different, etc. A full comprehension of what is being taught requires perfect competence in the language of teaching. The problem is obviously less disturbing in science than in the humanities.

Democracy may suffer. A democratic country should avoid situations in which its citizens are deprived of the opportunity to receive higher education and to have access to scientific results in their mother tongue. It is still less democratic if part of the people are deprived of the opportunity to have a say in issues concerning them all, like public health, environmental protection, etc. This will lead to the emergence of a bilingual Euro-élite who will decide practically every important thing for the people.

The conference stirred a lively discussion, which was dominated, after all, by the idea that one should not give up the use of the Estonian language, either in science or in higher education. We had better go on cultivating the Estonian spirit as well as sustaining and cultivating the Estonian science language.

DOES THE ESTONIAN LSP HAVE SUFFICIENT POTENTIAL TO HOLD OUT?

Do we have enough strength to resist the advance of English – that is the question. A revision of the state of the art seems to support a positive answer to this one. Most special fields have an advanced Estonian terminology to go by. Linguists together with specialists of other fields have developed an original LSP theory. Productive terminological work is going on, yielding both terminological dictionaries and term standards. The Estonian scientists are not indifferent to the Estonian language, which is a strong argument for the survival of Estonian in scientific research. However, it is necessary to study the linguistic processes going on in the Estonian society, the possible changes in the linguistic attitudes, how well Estonian copes with this or that function, what is the Estonian people’s level of foreign language proficiency, etc.

A step towards the clarification of the Estonian LSP situation was the LSP conference organised by the Mother Tongue Society in Tartu, June 2000. Of linguists I was the only one to talk there, as it was much more important to give the floor to other specialists, who do the main job in LSP cultivation anyway. The invited speakers had been chosen very carefully to

provide for the representation of traditional as well as newer specialities, more stable specialities vs. those considerably affected by social changes, both sciences and humanities. None of the fields chosen was any too specific or self-absorbed; on the contrary, their terminology usually reaches the public at large. Those fields were ornithology (Estonian names for the birds of the world), pharmacy (Estonian equivalents for the European pharmacopoeia), politics and political science, jurisdiction (esp. legislation), and computer science. All speakers gave a survey of the LSP situation in their own field and they all stated that Estonian is not at all inadequate for any of the fields represented; on the contrary: where there's a will, there's a way.

The following is a brief summary of the main points made by Arvi Tavast, who spoke about computer science. This field differs from many others by its having no long-standing traditions. Rapid changes in the field necessitate rapid lexical reaction. As computer science is one of the key fields of the information society, the state of its terminology is pretty eloquent as to the state of LSP in general. In computer science the name of the object is often written right on it and often the two cannot even be differentiated from one another (e.g. menu commands). This makes the English language visually present much more than in any other field. The problem is that many translators cannot actually comprehend the text to be translated. As a result, some user manuals consist of nothing but linguistically correct nonsense. Recent times, however, have witnessed a rapid spread of Estonian-language software: information systems of enterprises, freeware, a number of Microsoft products for the general population, and software for mobile phones, cash dispensers, and self-service gas stations. Now that the translation of software packages has begun, it is necessary to agree not only upon terms, but also on some other LSP issues. It is time to decide, for example, whether it is fit for a computer to be addressed familiarly as *sina* (2nd person singular), and the user more formally as *teie* (2nd person plural). The number of those people who agree that some things can never be translated into Estonian is decreasing, though. According to A. Tavast, the linguistic situation in the field of computers is improving slowly, but consistently.

Beside the LSP conference just mentioned, there is an annual Day of legal Language held alternately in Tallinn or in Tartu. This event is a joint effort of the Ministry of Justice and several institutions dealing with language, and its aim is to keep an eye on what is going on in legal language.

From May 2001 to April 2002, the Tallinn House of Scientists, in collaboration with the Mother Tongue Society, organised a series of discussions "Estonian scholarly language and the European Union". Seven discussions and a conference were held focusing on different fields of science. This series of events was organized by Elsa Pajumaa, secretary of the House of Scientists.

The current situation was analysed in the following fields: technical sciences, medicine, natural sciences, information technology, the humanities, economics and law, and agricultural sciences. All these fields of science have contemporary Estonian terminology. It was concluded that the situation was not critical. However, work has to continue to maintain and develop Estonian scholarly language; further collaboration between subject and language

specialists is necessary. It is important to establish a reasonable ratio for publishing one's research findings in English and in Estonian. Research papers should be assessed on the basis of their substance and not only on the basis of whether the journal is listed in CC (Current Contents).

A language forum was held on 13 December 2002. This event was organised by the Estonian Language Council, which presented the preparatory work on the Estonian language strategy to the public at large for the first time. The Estonian language, as the most important component of the Estonian national identity and the guarantee of the unity of the state, needs systematic care and development. Its action plan is "Strategy for the development of the Estonian language for 2004–2010", which proceeds from the current state of the Estonian language. In order to assess it, language surveys were compiled, which cover law and administration, science and higher education, schools, journalism and entertainment, information technology, banking, advertising, dialects, sign language, the language of Estonians living abroad, and the foreign languages used in Estonia. The preparatory work for the language strategy also includes surveys on the study of the Estonian language, language planning (including LSP planning), language technology, and language collections. The strategy will be completed in 2003, after which it will be open for public discussion with a subsequent approval by the Estonian Parliament.

ESTONIAN TERMINOLOGY SOCIETY (ETER)

The most serious drawback of Estonian terminological work is its vagueness, scattered nature, and isolation. However, it should be possible to improve the situation a small country as Estonia. For this purpose the Estonian Terminology Society was set up in 2001. Its aims are as follows: 1) to co-ordinate terminological work in Estonia; 2) to assemble the existing terminological collection, having in mind their integration and future development; 3) to offer terminological services (terminological advice, translation and editing of LSP texts); to spread information about LSP; 4) to further the development of terminological theory; 5) to offer LSP training; 6) to organise or to co-ordinate domestic and international terminology projects; 7) to join the international network of terminological organisations; 8) to publish terminological dictionaries and literature.

The most urgent task is to join international co-operation. In the computer era this should not be a problem even for a country that is located in Eastern Europe. Until now the main hindering factor was our own inertia, which has been overcome by now. Arvi Tavast, the chairman of ETER, has participated in international terminological events, and ETER has become a member of the European Association for Terminology. Much work has been done during this short period to make LSP training more efficient, both in the master's programmes of universities and the in-service training of persons involved in term standardisation. The evening discussions held on a regular basis by the society serve the same purpose.

ETER has launched an extensive terminology survey in order to obtain a more accurate picture of the state of terminological work in Estonia by different specialities (and even institu-

tions or societies). The results of this survey will be used for the co-ordination and guidance of terminological work as well as for the Estonian language strategy.

CONCLUSION

The first half of the article was an attempt to demonstrate how some hairbreadth miracles were made to happen: the Estonian nation was formed together with its own intellectuals, in a few decades an advanced literary language was developed together with LSP and a vernacular university. Hundreds of enthusiasts have been cultivating the Estonian LSP for a whole century by now. What a pity should all this turn out to have been in vain at the turn of the 21st century, now that the foundation for progressive development has been laid. Now everything depends on the young generation with their hierarchy of values. The dominating educational ideal is everyday success. The educational expectations of young people are more concerned with how to be better off in future than with mental and spiritual development. Of course, there is nothing new in the problem. Albert Schweitzer, in his time, also expressed his concern over cultural ideals being confused by ephemeral interests. Cultivation of the spirit is pushed aside by worldly worries. Many young people take education as a mere means to success in the everyday struggle for existence, while national ideals are regarded as old-fashioned abstractions. This should prove the paramount importance of the state policy practised by the Republic of Estonia in the domains of culture, science and education, as well as the necessity of emphasising spiritual values in social life.

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