

The Bank of Finnish Terminology in Arts and Sciences – a new form of academic collaboration and publishing

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Our poster presents the multidisciplinary research infrastructure project “Bank of Finnish Terminology in Arts and Sciences (BFT)” (“The Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences [HTB]” from 2018) as an innovative form of academic collaboration and publishing. The BFT, which was launched in 2011, aims to build a permanent and continuously updated terminological database for all fields of research in Finland. The project maintains a wiki-based website (<http://tieteentermipankki.fi>) which offers an open and collaborative platform for terminological work and a discussion forum available to all registered users. The BFT has been acknowledged as an innovation due to its unique combination of wiki-based technology, concentration on research terminology, and communal, open and democratic working methods in the academic context.

The BFT thus opens not only the results but the whole academic procedure where the knowledge is constantly produced, evaluated, linked, discussed and updated in an ongoing process. The BFT also provides an inclusive arena for all the interested people – students, journalists, translators and enthusiasts – to participate in the discussions relating to concepts and terms in Finnish research. Based on the knowledge and experiences accumulated during the BFT project we will reflect on the benefits, challenges, and future prospects of this innovative and globally unique approach. Furthermore, we will consider the possibilities and opportunities opening up especially in terms of digital humanities.

Content for the BFT is created by niche-sourcing, where the participation is limited to a particular group of experts in the participating subject fields. Niche-sourcing invites the research community to take responsibility for the availability of up-to-date terminology in their research fields. Sharing this responsibility among experts has its advantages: it is possible to get the best specialists involved and thus guarantee the quality and accuracy of the content. Furthermore, when shared among the group of experts the task is not too large for any individual participant. This is also a more democratic way of carrying out terminology work: there is no single gatekeeper in the field. Using the BFT for online discussions the expert groups are also able and encouraged to create their own plans of action and general guidelines concerning the terminological work in their field.

Today, the BFT includes 40 subject fields, and the database contains over 40 000 concept pages and 300 000 terms/lemmas. The amount of traffic in the BFT website has been growing steadily in terms of both visits and users, and at the moment there are over 18 000 weekly visits. However, the BFT is still in the construction phase, when it comes to its contents. In regard to that, we are aiming for extensive expansion during the next three years. Our objective is to have at least ten new subject fields included in the bank each year. As the content of the BFT increases, the usability, reliability and validity of the BFT as digital resource and data for research also improves.

The potential and future prospects for the BFT are various. The BFT as digital resource could be useful for instance in designing and developing applications, such as automatic text genre recognition or term extraction tools; or in analysing and comparing conceptualisations and discourses in and between the different fields of research; or examining the method of niche-sourcing in the academic context. There is also need for multilingual and international

cooperation in terminology work for which the BFT offers a platform. Therefore, we are constantly looking for partners focused especially on research terminology.