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LSP of tourism: Ways of lexicographic description

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Abstract. The article presents an attempt to systematize the main parameters of the lexicographic description of tourism terminology. The analysis of the existing English printed and electronic dictionaries of tourism was carried out with special reference to lexicographic needs of various groups of users. The dictionaries were examined from the perspective of word selection criteria, possible ways of language material presentation in the corpus and characteristics of their mega-, macro- and microstructure. Investigation of a wide range of special texts on tourism belonging to different genres made it possible to build up external and internal logical-conceptual schemes of the domain under study as well as to describe semantic, syntactic and pragmatic characteristics of tourist terms to be fixed in the dictionary. The user perspective survey helped to define the information categories that potential consumers of lexicographic products – specialists in the tourism sphere, professionals-to-be, translators and interpreters – would like to find in the dictionary. The results of such a multi aspect study served as a basis for elaboration of the fundamental principles to compile a new dictionary of tourism.

Keywords. Dictionary of tourism, entry, languages for special purposes, logical-conceptual modeling, LSP of tourism, specialized discourse, term, terminological dictionary, tourism domain.

1. Introduction

The professional context in which the language of tourism is employed was not defined clearly until quite recently. This fact influenced the late acceptance of this language as LSP. Actually, the status of tourism itself as a separate field of academic research was established in the 70-s of the XXth century, and even now there is some ambiguity in its definitions and concepts. However, the existence of LSP of tourism as a professional language, different from any other LSP, is currently recognized, and there are a lot sufficient linguistic, economic, pedagogical and historical reasons to justify it.

Tourism is one of the world's largest generators of wealth and jobs, getting billions of dollars in revenue each year. Due to its importance for global economies, it is essential, from a pedagogical perspective, to provide the work-force with first-class professional training. And in this respect language is the key issue.

From a historical point of view, tourism activities are as old as time. Modern tourism, as we see it now, dates back to the second half of the XXth century. But travellers have always existed, and thus there has always existed a necessity for bilingual glossaries and dictionaries. There has always been a need for certain specific terminology; it began with the specialized terms related to travel and transport to a wider demand ranging from accommodation and facilities terms, to more specific vocabulary related with many subcategories (health, art, tourism management, law, geography, marketing, sport, climate, catering, entertainment, insurance, etc.). This vocabulary has not been stable throughout the history but has evolved at the same pace as the tourism industry, adapting to developments and to the discourse community needs. Specialized dictionaries and glossaries have also been adapted to these demands.

Tourism activities are essentially performed through communication, the tourist and the service provider being its two main participants, and the interpreter/translator being a mediator when necessary. In this respect the language is, on the one hand, a key that could open the doors to effective communication and, on the other hand, it might create an obstacle in the understanding of the specialized discourse.

Understanding the type of language used in tourism business is a real challenge for the uninitiated – newcomers to the industry, students of tourism, or outsiders. It can be explained by both the vocabulary amounts (terminology, abbreviations, clippings, codes, professional jargon) and the difficult formal structures that are often created in numerous tourism genres, such as contracts, procedures, bookings, complaints, and guiding. (Speckens 2011: 133)

Scientists have been trying persistently to structure the given subject area. Lexicographic description of tourism terminology requires a thorough investigation both in the sphere of functioning and in the sphere of fixation. The first printed dictionaries of tourism date back only to the end of the last century; they are usually monolingual, encyclopedic texts that include definitions of central concepts of the subject field. Online tourism dictionaries appeared later as pdf-documents or web pages that gave simple lists of terms as well as their translations into one or more foreign languages. All these facts certify a wide demesne for lexicographers.

2. Sources of terminological dictionaries of tourism

It is a well-known fact that one of the primary tasks set before a terminological dictionary compiler is to specify possible dictionary sources. Traditional ones have long been the already existing reference books and written texts of the given domain. Special texts must meet certain requirements. While selecting texts, it is absolutely necessary to stick to the principle of complete and adequate coverage of special vocabulary of the subject field, as well as that of authenticity and chronology. Besides, types of texts must be user-oriented, and the communicative situation must be taken into consideration.

As established practice confirms, the sources of tourism terminological dictionaries are special textbooks, study guides and manuals, as they contain most of the key terms and their definitions. An important place in tourism terminology formation belongs to written documents of international tourism organizations (publications, conference proceedings, projects, statutes and charters). Nowadays there is a wide range of official websites of various tourism organizations (*World Tourism Organization; Travel & Tourism Research Association; World Travel & Tourism Council; National Tour Association*, etc.) which can enhance the possibilities for term selection.

Encyclopedic texts are provided in specialized encyclopedias, for example, Johri's *Encyclopedia of Tourism in 21st Century*; Speake's *Literature of Travel and Exploration: an Encyclopedia*; Pizam's *International Encyclopedia of Hospitality Management*; Fritze's *Travel Legend and Lore: an Encyclopedia*, etc.

Together with an increasing interest to tourism as a separate branch of knowledge there has considerably grown the number of periodicals on the topic. Special thematic journals that appeared in the 70-s of the last century (*Journal of Travel Research, Annals of Tourism Research, Tourism Management, Tourism Recreation Research, The Journal of Tourism Studies*) and online journals of today (*Tourism Review; Travel Daily News*) provide authentic texts on tourism – scientific articles, reviews and commentaries.

Tourist brochures, booklets, traditional printed and multimedia travel guides, official tourism portals of various countries and blogs that unite tourism-lovers are additional but by no means less significant dictionary sources.

Investigation of such a variety of special texts of different genres having their own stylistic peculiarities makes it possible to build up a logical-conceptual scheme of the domain as well as to describe to the fullest semantic, syntactic and pragmatic characteristics of tourism terms to be fixed in the dictionary. Since the quality of a dictionary is directly subject to the range of sources it is based on, it is absolutely necessary to provide a terminological dictionary with a list of sources that might help the user to estimate terms authoritativeness and currency.

Unanimously recognized criteria for term selection are those of frequency of their use, precision/unambiguity of the term meaning, and combinatorial stability.

3. Logical-conceptual modeling of tourism domain

Logical-conceptual analysis of a certain sphere of scientific knowledge is an obligatory condition to reduce subjectivism in dictionary making.

Inclusion of a logical-conceptual scheme as an appendix into the dictionary megastructure is gradually but persistently becoming a must for terminological dictionary compilers, a fine example of that kind being the work of Finnish terminographers. It might help to enlarge the user's knowledge of the professional sphere and to estimate the dictionary quality.

Traditionally, two types of logical-conceptual scheme are distinguished: external based on the linkage of the given subject field with other domains and internal used to show interrelations between various subsections within the given subject area. Logical-conceptual schemes make it possible to evaluate the sphere that will be covered by the dictionary, its volume, and the quality of information presented in it.

Logical-conceptual modeling is necessarily accompanied by consultations with qualified specialists in the sphere, practitioners, teachers of 'International Tourism' courses at the universities, etc.

The external logical-conceptual scheme (Fig. 1) is built up to show that allied sciences and applied activities have a certain impact on the described domain. Tourism can never exist in isolation from other spheres of human activity. Thus it interacts with Economics, Politics, Advertising, Publishing, Culture Studies, Education, Ecology, Sociology, to mention just a few.

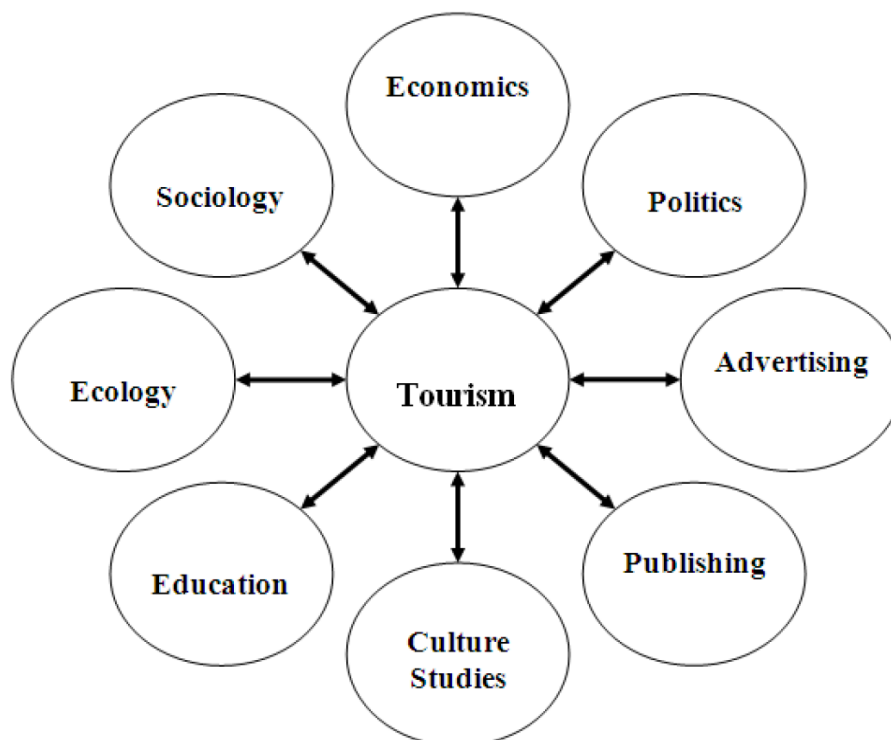


Figure 1: External logical-conceptual scheme of tourism domain

While elaborating an internal logical-conceptual scheme (Fig. 2), that helps to outline the borders of the lexis under study for its further lexicographic description, we proceed from the assumption that there are three main components in the structure of the tourism industry, namely subjects (specialists in tourism industry, providers of tourist services), objects (those to whom the subjects' activity is directed, i.e. consumers of tourist services, tourists, tourist groups) and contents (tourism industry with its services and products).

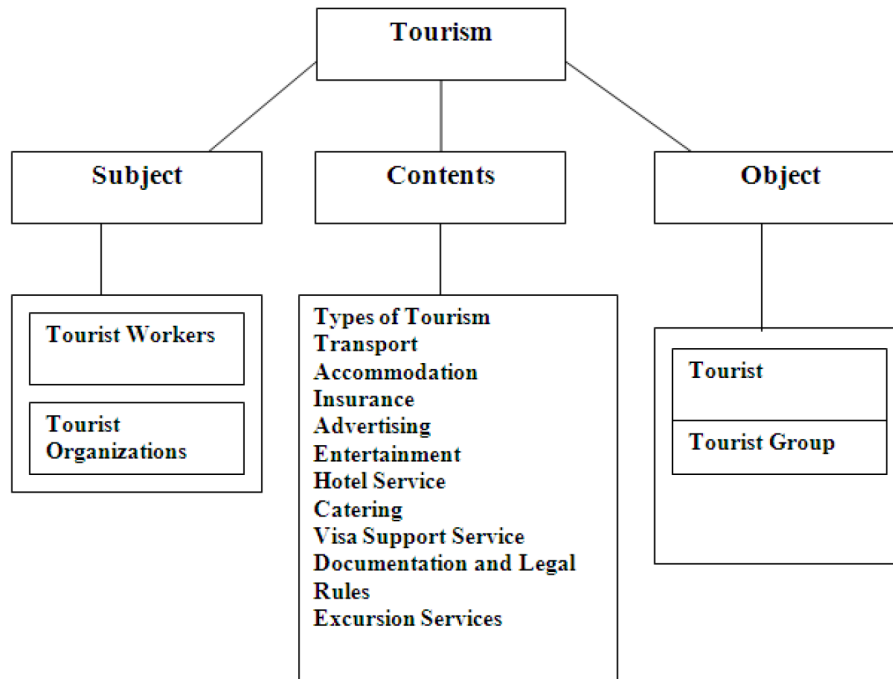


Figure 2: Internal logical-conceptual scheme of tourism domain

The internal logical-conceptual scheme can also be built up on the traditional principle of satellite modeling (Fig. 3).

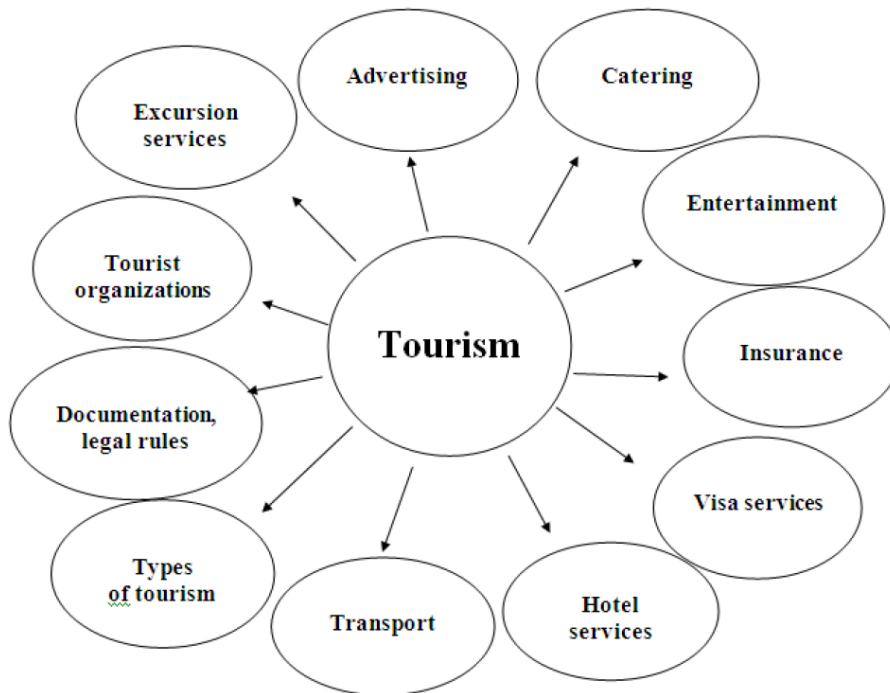


Figure 3: Internal satellite logical-conceptual scheme of tourism domain

The internal logical-conceptual scheme lets us make a conclusion that tourism lexicon consists of highly specialized vocabulary and words and expressions belonging to the general core vocabulary of the language but frequently employed in the given specialized field with an added specific sense.

4. Prospective users of tourism dictionaries

Talking about prospective users of tourism dictionaries, we can easily single out four distinct groups:

- specialists in the sphere (i.e. service providers),
- translators/interpreters,
- would-be professionals (i.e. students taking ‘English for Tourism’ or ‘International Tourism’ courses),
- tourists as service consumers.

The first two groups mostly resort to terminological explanatory dictionaries that contain descriptive articles on travel and tourism concepts which cover a great spectrum of topics within the subject field (accommodation, visa service, insurance, transport, catering, etc.) as well as a wide list of appendixes. Since there are a great many of governmental and official bodies that lay down laws, rules and regulations applicable to tourism, dictionaries meant for professionals usually identify these organizations and professional associations (sometimes providing their contact information), sketch out their main functions and describe related terminology.

Some of the existing tourism dictionaries are designed to support the learning process in the wide-ranging nature and variety of tourism courses offered nowadays. Besides definitions accompanied – if needed – by graphic illustrations (pictures, diagrams, charts), they offer a repertoire of different labels (phonetic transcription, grammatical, functional, stylistic and regional markers), examples of contextual use of the word intended to help students to use the language in an appropriate way. Learner’s dictionaries benefit from all sort of appendixes included in the dictionary megastructure: substantial listings of brands, acronyms and abbreviations that always cause problems for laymen, geographical information, models of documents and letter samples.

A-Z Handbooks as a certain lexicographic “genre” are perfect companions for students. Fully up-to-date, as a rule, they provide the latest information in a very user-friendly format. Basic terms are explained very clearly, fuller explanations of more ambiguous concepts help in doing homework and coursework assignments, detailed lists of key terms assist in test revision. Such handbooks resemble very much of a workbook with a vocabulary review section, a link area to interesting web pages, a grammar practice area and a systemic real-like situation tasks segment.

Both new entrants to tourism sphere and specialists in the professional area appreciate websites that can be featured in the entry of modern tourism dictionaries and a bibliography section containing an extensive list of reference sources enabling users to get more information on the topic.

Most of the existing lexicographic references on tourism are a fine example of combination of different dictionary types that can be helpful for all the above mentioned user groups regardless of the level of their proficiency in the sphere.

Tourists represent another – very specific – kind of dictionary users. This target group’s needs differ to a great extent from those of professionals in the tourism industry. There are a number of sources lexicographically structured to satisfy their needs. These are mostly tourist guides with integrated glossaries, phrase books, online glossaries and dictionaries. All of these tools are pragmatically designed and offer the user specific assistance in certain social situations. They mainly aim at providing concise and understandable information on thousands of travel items and touristic places and might be effective for ordinary people when planning their vacation, choosing a hotel to stay at or an airway company to fly with.

Now we have a chance to witness the rise of a new tendency in treating tourism which is regarded as a powerful tool to promote knowledge. More and more people are seeking for tourism based on values, not on consumer services. A term “substantive tourism” appeared a short time ago,

bearing the idea that tourism has an important potential to convey substantive information about cultural heritage to target audiences. New attitude to tourism gives birth to brand new types of user oriented dictionaries. In their want to obtain in-depth knowledge, tourists start searching for encyclopedic, intercultural and interlingual information. This necessitates compiling a novel type of dictionary, namely, “information-referential”. (Alekseeva, Karpova 2010)

Compiling a dictionary for an industry as complex as tourism is an extremely challenging undertaking. However, there have been many attempts and some of them have turned out very successful. Within the limits of this article only some of the printed and electronic English language dictionaries can be mentioned with the aim to provide a reliable user-guide for both specialists in the sphere and would-be professionals.

- Beaver, Allan (2005). *A Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology* (2nd ed.). Oxon: CABI Publishing.
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- *Travel Industry Dictionary* // URL: <http://www.hometravelagency.com/dictionary> (accessed 10.10.2013)

5. Results of tourism dictionaries lexicographic analysis

The performed analysis of the existing English language printed and electronic lexicographic references from the perspective of the word selection principles, peculiarities of their mega-, macro- and microstructure let us systematize the main parameters of the lexicographic description of tourism terminology.

It's a noticeable fact that the majority of dictionary makers are neither professional lexicographers nor linguists at all; they are mostly specialist in tourism sphere, both practitioners and theorists.

Tourism dictionaries mostly explain common terminology used in the professional sphere and covering a wide spectrum of topics within the domain, such as transport, types of travelling, ticketing, hotels and staff, catering, health and safety, insurance, entertainment, visa support service and many others. Most of the terms are characteristic of English-speaking countries which can be easily explained by the beginning of a global bilingualism era and the fact that the

English language knowledge becomes an indispensable component of a successful professional career; moreover, English is adopted as a working language of most international tourism bodies. However, tourism terminology is inevitably affected by other cultures as it is used by various linguistic communities to provide effective professional communication. Lots of non-English words are commonly used by tourism practitioners in Britain, North America and Australasia as tourism is inherently diverse, its laws, customs and practices varying greatly in each country. That is why major terms of non-English origin are obligatory for lexicographic description.

As the dictionary analysis (known as dictionary criticism in the world lexicographic practice) shows, priority is put to tripartite dictionary structure (introduction, corpus and appendices) and traditional alphabetical order of entries. The compilers mainly focus on term definition, undeservingly narrowing down the repertory of possible labels. The most typical markers are orthoepic (phonetic transcription) and grammatical (part of speech indication) while stylistic, functional and regional are rather rare, if not random at all. Only a few dictionaries provide illustrative examples to the entry word, which is very important for those studying English as a foreign language since it contributes to better understanding of contextual use of the word. Some examples are given below.

- (1) **guide** /gaid/ TOURISM *noun* **1.** somebody who shows tourists round a site or house ◦ *Our guide took us into the castle chapel.* ◦ *The guide to the museum spoke so rapidly that we couldn't understand what she was saying.* **2.** a guide book ◦ *This is the best guide to the region.* ◦ *You can get a small guide to walks round the town at the tourist information office.* ■ *verb* to show tourists round a site

(Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism, 2006)

- (2) **add-on** US term for optional items that can be bought with a tour or other travel arrangements. For example, it may be as little as travel insurance or can be the rail or air fare to get to the start point of the main arrangement, such as a cruise.

(A Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology, 2005)

- (3) **fresh off the boat.** *Slang.* Just arrived in the country. A derogatory way of referring to a recent immigrant or any foreigner. Sometimes abbreviated FOB and used as a noun.

(Travel Industry Dictionary, 2009)

Many compilers include nomenclature units, i.e. names of various organizations or programmes, as well as toponyms, names of physical and political geography phenomena, words and word combinations describing cultural realities such as names of national dishes, holidays and traditions of certain countries.

- (4) **Notting Hill Carnival** /,nɒtɪŋ 'hɪl/ *noun* ENTERTAINMENT a big carnival held every year in August in Notting Hill, in the west of London ◦ *Thousands of people take part in the Notting Hill Carnival every year.*

(Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism, 2006)

Sometimes cultural and encyclopedic notes are inserted which prove the general tendency for encyclopedization of the dictionary entry.

Some dictionaries include terms from the sphere of leisure and sport, and even titles of these lexicographic references reflect it (*Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism; Leisure Management A to Z: a Dictionary of Terms*), treating sport as an integral part of leisure time.

In fact, word selection into the dictionary corpus depends on many factors, target audience and compilers' own preferences being among them. However, the latter seems doubtful as it leads to an unjustified enlargement of the dictionary corpus.

Acronyms and abbreviations are a stumbling block for non-professionals in the tourism industry. Each separate sphere of tourism business has its own set of conventionalized abbreviations that require special lexicographic description.

- (5) **GDS.** *Abr.* Global Distribution System. *See also,* CRS, computerized reservation system.
(Travel Industry Dictionary, 2009)
- (6) **pppn abbreviation** HOTELS per person per night
(Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism, 2006)

There is a new tendency about modern tourism dictionaries to include basic IT-terms into the corpus which can be explained by the introduction of certain innovations in the promotion of tourist products activity caused by revolutionary achievements in the IT-sphere.

- (7) **application packages** Computer programmes tailored to handle the user's particular requirement, for example, preparation of an agent's sales returns.
(A general technical term.)
(A Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology, 2005)

Professional texts are abundant in brands, often used without any indication of the corresponding organizations. They also find their reflection in dictionaries.

- (8) **Amtrak** The brand name under which the National Railroad Passenger Corporation operates 265 US intercity passenger trains daily, under contract with individual railroads. Although operating over 22,000 route miles, it only owns
(A Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology, 2005)

It is considered good practice to include into the microstructure links to thematic Internet sites providing detailed information concerning related concepts.

- (9) **APTG** Association of Professional Tourist Guides in the UK. *See* www.aptg.org.uk
(A Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology, 2005)

Most of the analyzed dictionaries clearly reflect the newest tendencies in the lexicography of the XXIst century, namely, creation of a new dictionary format by combination of various types of dictionaries, user's perspective study, and use of electronic data banks for dictionary making.

6. Conclusion

The language of professional communication – and LSP of tourism is by no means an exception – requires constant monitoring of its state, its conformity to the level of information transmission fidelity, and the univocal correspondence between concepts and designating terms. The whole complex of these requirements is ensured by terminology standardization which, in its turn, should draw on the analysis of the modern tendencies in the development of the given subject field.

We cannot but admit that terminology will always be one jump ahead of lexicography. New times set new rules to dictionary making practices. The dictionary itself must constantly develop and upgrade itself. Its architecture must become more innovative, understandable, attractive, and friendly for the prospective user. It is worth mentioning again and again that lexicographic data must be specifically adapted to the user needs and competences. The factual, linguistic and even cultural competences of the intended users can greatly affect the way in which concepts should be explained and represented in dictionaries. Unfortunately, many existing dictionaries fail to provide the necessary help in communicative situations for many different reasons, one of them being the fact that they do not take into consideration that domain specific meanings can be culture- and structure-dependent. So there is still much to be done to fill in the gap in the lexicographic panorama of tourism domain.

The macrostructure of a new tourism dictionary offers the following approaches to the vertical organization of the middle matter of the dictionary. It must contain separate sections in accordance with autonomous aspects of the terminological field. Thus we can avoid the overload of the dictionary microstructure (i.e. each horizontal terminological entry) with information concerning the term aspectual attribution. The word-lists within the thematic sections are to be organized alphabetically.

The megastructure should present general information about the dictionary, its authors, and sources of terminology included in the dictionary corpus. The introduction must contain detailed, clear and at the same time very laconic verbal and graphic representation of logic-conceptual system of the described domain that will demonstrate the interplay of its autonomous parts as well as its connections with various allied disciplines. The main purpose of such inclusion is, on the one hand, to identify the place of tourism and its terminological system in the structure of the humanities knowledge and, on the other hand, to justify the thematic organization of the dictionary macrostructure. Lexicographic description of tourism domain in detail along with its logic-conceptual modeling makes it easier to establish the basic systemic connections in its terminology.

The microstructure should contain at least the following minimum of labels specified by the potential dictionary users as desirable: phonetic transcription; a grammatical marker to indicate the part of speech; a functional marker to point out a particular sphere of tourism industry; a regional marker to signal that a word is limited in use to one of the countries of the English-speaking world; a stylistic marker to show that a word is not part of the standard vocabulary of English. Verbal illustrative examples are to be supplied with the source of their borrowing which could be a link for further reading.

All in all, a tourism dictionary of a new generation must be more encyclopedically informative, more purpose- and user-oriented.

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