

Hans Kristian Mikkelsen:

Two new bibliographies about special language research

Introduction

In 1987 the Danish Research Council for the Humanities initiated a major research program, carrying the title "Special Language Communication", in order to advance Danish contributions in this area of linguistics. As one of the first projects it was decided to map the existing results of Western and Eastern, especially Russian, special language research in the shape of a bibliography. Now the results of this project are available as two works: an **elaborate** bibliography, including about 10000 references to articles, books and journals, and a **selective** bibliography with a little more than 1100 references. The selection has been made to cater for Danish students of special languages, and the book is provided with an introduction where the selection criteria are explained.

This small article intends to draw attention to the elaborate bibliography. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, this bibliography is not in the same way as the selective one adapted to a special audience, and can therefore be useful for **everybody** who is in some way concerned with the subject. Secondly, this bibliography is not a bibliography in the traditional sense: it is not a book, but a **database**. Therefore it might be of interest to point out some of the advantages connected with this kind of information storage.

Hardware and software

At present the database is readable together with the Borland-application "**Reflex Plus**", which can be run on a **Macintosh** computer. The database has been created in this application, but soon it will be possible to transfer the data to an application which can be used with IBM-computers. It is likely that the IBM-version of **Reflex** will be used for this. On the other hand, it is always possible to export all the data to an ASCII-file and further to import it into other applications.

Apart from this the database, as it is now, can only be used from a **hard disk**, because of its range of 5 MB.

If you want to use the existing **Reflex Plus** version of the database your Macintosh needs two applications to treat the material: **Reflex**

Plus and HFS Backup (in order to transfer the content of 8 disks to the hard disk).

Information available

While an ordinary bibliography (as the small selective one) is characterized by having a fixed structure, the electronic one is, if not "unstructured", then at least more flexibly constructed. What this means is that in a book you are always bound to follow the structuring principles put in by the authors of that work. I.e., the main principle lying behind the selective bibliography is a certain system. This has the effect that all the bibliographic data are primarily distributed into a subject-oriented skeleton invented by the authors. Apart from that you can use a name index to get to the information you are looking for.

The flexibility of the electronic bibliography is vital, especially when we are talking about an extensive material as in the elaborate bibliography. It means that you can choose the systemic organization, the author name, the title, the year of publication, the language or special language concerned, and so on, as your starting point. Of course, the selection itself of material for the database and the distribution into different information fields remains with the authors. But the difference from the book is that you do not have to follow a certain structuring of these fields.

How to search

As already mentioned you can start your search wherever you want, i.e. from the kind of information you have already got, or the information you are looking for. In order to search successfully it is necessary to know the fundamentals behind the structuring of the bibliographic data.

All the material is distributed into 3 different databases: one for single works (books and articles with authors), one for collective editions, and one for journals. These databases are interrelated in such a way that you can obtain data from more than one database at the same time. If you get information about an article in the database for single works, you are at the same time informed of the journal or the collective work in which it is published.

Each database has a number of fields, each of which can be made the starting point for a search. If you e.g. know some words, or just a sequence of letters from a title, author's name or the like, you can ask the computer to find all the records which contain exactly this string.

You can define your search in different databases at the same time. E.g., you can ask the computer to provide you with all articles in a certain journal written by a certain person - or written about a particular special language in a certain span of years, and so on.

How to obtain the database

You can get the database if you contact

Henning Bergholtz
Handelshøjskolen i Århus
Fuglesangs Allé 4, DK-8000 Århus C

who has kindly offered to take care of the distribution.

Together with the database you get the font with which the database was designed. Also, you get a document with an instruction and search examples. This document can be read in any text processing application.

Conditions for using the database

The database is free, but you are asked to promise

- 1) that you will not use the information stored in the database for commercial purposes, and
- 2) that you will not give the material to others without the permission of the authors.

Litterature

Hans Kristian Mikkelsen, Hans-Peder Kromann: *Fagsprog og fagsproglig kommunikation* ca. 1970-1988. En udførlig systematisk bibliografi på database. (Floppy Disk 3 1/2", til installering på Macintosh med harddisk, Macintosh-program: Reflex Plus), København 1988.

Hans-Peder Kromann, Hans Kristian Mikkelsen: *"Fagsproglig kommunikation. En selektiv systematisk bibliografi* ca. 1980-88." ; ARK 45, (Handelshøjskolen i København, 1988)