Reinhart Herzog (IBM Germany):

Computational Studies in Terminology

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Terminology, as a field of applied linguistics, is gaining
increasing importance, since in recent years striking new
developments of technology and the sciences have taken
place. Terminologists have their own international congresses;
linguists and standard associations try to build up and
control the specific vocabularies of all different fields,
in order to have them compiled and printed in up-to-date
dictionaries. Industry also shows remarkable interest in
this work, because those great international companies
heavily depend on the means of a fixed and standardized
vocabulary in order to achieve the necessary communication
(to go along with its products), either by publication or
by translation.

For various reasons, the task of documenting and controlling
the growth and structure of terminological vocabularies
cannot satisfactorily be accomplished without the application
of computers. Insight into the structure of terminologies
has been gained by functional, computer prepared statistics
of vocabularies and validations of texts. Linguists, for
their part, have programmed computers in order to isolate
relevant lexical items from terminological texts, as well
as to determine the various meanings and shades of meaning
of specific terms, by means of special procedures.

Several linguistic methods and procedures, as originally
developed for automatic sentence analysis and mechanical
translation, can successfully be employed in the field
of computer assisted research and control of terminologies
This holds especially true with regard to automated
compilation procedures, as to be used within the process
of preparing bilingual and multilingual technical dictionaries.