Until the mid 19th century Latin was the official language of education on the territory of Croatia. The development of linguistic terminology in the Croatian language was based on the Latin terminology, usually as a result of translation (loan translation). The first Croatian linguistic terminology refers to the graphic and orthographic areas because writers needed to explain the spelling principles that were used when writing in Croatian, such as Bartol Kašić did providing notes on graphic issues and spelling in his religious works. Kašić was followed by Jakov Mikalja in his writings on grammar and vocabulary. The Pauline order (the Order of Saint Paul the First Hermit) with their own university had a significant influence in the 17th century north-western Croatia, Istria and Primorje. Ivan Belostene, one of the Pauline Fathers, compiled a great encyclopaedic Latin-Croatian and Croatian-Latin dictionary. The work was published in 1740, 65 years after Belostenec died, and in 1742 the Jesuits published another great Latin-Croatian dictionary, which was compiled by Andrija Jambrešić. Both these monumental lexicographical works abound in linguistic terminology.

In the territory of the Kingdom of Dalmatia, Slavonia and Croatian in the 17th and 18th centuries, two variants of literary Croatian coexisted languages Shtokavian and Kajkavian and so, consequently, two parallel corpora of linguistic texts developed. In the mid 18th century the Empress and Queen Maria Theresa decided to regulate education in her empire, including Croatia. As a result of such a policy, the first two official linguistic manuals were released in 1779: ortographies of Croatian Kajkavian literary language and of Croatian Shtokavian literary language. It was also the first attempt at a linguistic standardization of the Croatian language.

At the end of the 18th century, for the needs of the Croatian education system, more grammar books were published, i.e. grammar books of the Croatian, German, Latin and Italian languages. The richest terminological resources are those works where the language of description (metalanguage) is Croatian, regardless of the language described. The aim of our research is to examine the beginnings and the development of Croatian linguistic terminology and to compare terms provided by linguistic works of the Croatian Kajkavian literary language and the Croatian Shtokavian literary language.

For the purposes of our comparison we will analyze examples of terminology found in handbooks published by the end of the 18th century and written by Bartol Kašić, Jakov Mikalja, Ivan Habebelić, Ivan Belosteneć, Andrija Jambrešić, Toma Babić, Lovro Šitović, Ardilio della Bella, Blaž Tadijanović, Matija Antun Reljković, Marijan Lanosović, Ignacije Szent-Martony, Franz Kornig and Josip Jurin and by two spelling handbooks, Uputjenje k’ slavonskomu pravopisanju i Kratki navuk za pravopisane horvatko.