

Terminology: a communicative and academic approach

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Abstract

The Terminology Coordination Unit of the European Parliament has an original approach among the Coordination Services of the 10 EU Institutions. It has opened up EU terminology to the science and industry aspects of the field.

This presentation will focus on:

- the access to EU terminology that TermCoord offers through a public website and free tools, through the Interinstitutional Terminology Portal EurTerm and its expert collaborators, through traineeship opportunities, study visits, open seminars, the publication of studies, university courses, terminology projects based on the interactive IATE template, participation in major international terminology networks, etc.
- the constant improvement of the content and functionality of the EU database IATE; including free access to its content , cross-referencing features, as well as TermCoord's cooperation with several universities in order to explore possibilities for adding an ontological dimension to its structure of more than 100 domains.

Key words: Terminology, Cooperation, Communication, Access, IATE, Universities, Portal, Ontologies.

I. Communicating for Terminology

1st Level: Internal Communication and Awareness Building

Coordinating Terminology Management in a Multilingual Public Institution

The European Union issues legislation in 24 languages and works with 552 language combinations. Among the tools used for translation on an interinstitutional level, the EU regrouped all separate databases in an interactive database permitting permanent input by the some 5000 translators of the participating Institutions. The management of this database requires a very complex system of rules and guidelines (i.e. a handbook for best terminology practices in referencing and creating definitions, legal notice addressing copyright, ownership and responsibility issues) to ensure linguistic quality and consistency between the legislative texts in all languages. In the European Parliament, which gradually obtained more and more power in the legislative process until it became the final legislator under the Lisbon Treaty, the input of terminology is created mainly from the thousands of amendments of 766 MEPs, pertaining to 7 political groups and 23 committees dealing with all policy fields. The input was organized in each translation unit in a different way and according to different approaches depending on the various usage conventions and cooperation methods of each language community and each country. In 2008, the European Parliament decided to create a horizontal unit to coordinate, harmonize, support and assist the terminology research and storage of the findings into IATE and also to cooperate with the units and the other Institutions in the huge effort of cleaning and updating a database containing millions of terms coming from different databases, massively imported without any filtering, some of them being obsolete and outdated and creating duplicates with newly inserted terms. They also needed completion with the new languages that joined the family of the EU official languages in 2003. To achieve this coordination, the new unit needed to raise awareness on the inherent role of terminology in translation, especially of a legislation governing 28 countries and permitting each citizen to go to court on the basis of the translated version. It needed to organize a group of translators dealing with terminology in the units; today this group is the Terminology Network and numbers

more than one hundred translators in the 23 language units with at least two per unit. Special skills and knowledge are needed for the "terminologists", who have to be appointed as such by their superiors among the translators to accomplish the terminology tasks.

These tasks had to be inserted into the workflow and accounting system. Training was needed, tailored for the different target groups, advanced administration of the database for the terminologists, input instructions for the translators, as well as basic training for the newcomers and for the average 60 translation unit trainees who work at the Parliament for a period of 3 months. These trainees dedicate two weeks of their traineeship to field or language specific terminology projects, both for educational and professional experience reasons and to cover needs of lacking human resources because of increasing budgetary constraints combined with an extreme workload in the translation units. Since 2012, TermCoord has been able to offer terminologists the possibility of an on-line ECQA Terminology Management Certification in cooperation with TermNet and covered by the training budget of the EP. TermCoord staff is also invited to provide training to other Directorates in the EP, interpreters and web-editors, as well as to other Institutions like to the translators of the European Investment Bank and the Court of Justice.

Different IT tools were needed such as term extractors, a macro to ease preliminary storage of terms during translation, a search engine to browse the hundreds of links to specialized glossaries imported, a webpage concentrating the links to all reference documents of all EU Institutions. Some of these resources (DocHound and GlossaryLinks) have also been made public on the website of the unit and are used also by the external contractors translating 30% of Parliament's texts.

All these efforts needed a strong communication policy based mainly on an internal website in the intranet, making part of an internal portal of the Directorate General of Translation. Awareness campaigns on different slogans like "Recycle your terms", "In termino qualitas", "tailored training" and "Let's IATE", "your database is what you make of it", as well as a series of terminology seminars under the generic title "Terminology in the changing World of Translation" and on topics such as "multilingual legislation

process", "terminology and CAT tools", "e-lexicography and terminology in the media" that have been very well attended and evaluated by translators of the European Parliament and other Institutions.

2nd Level: Interinstitutional Communication and Information Sharing Cooperating and Administrating a Common Interactive Database and a Terminology Portal

The internal and interactive part of IATE needs a tight and continuous cooperation between all the participating Institutions. This cooperation concerns:

- a) The content, consolidation, merging, constant updating of methods and guidelines, common or coordinated projects in specific fields; also decisions on import of collections, and referencing criteria to be followed by all EU translators
- b) Administrational aspects such as rights and roles attributed to different groups of users, transfer of ownership to another Institution for updating or completion and interinstitutional validation
- c) Technical aspects such as prioritizing improvements to functionalities made by the permanent external developers team established in the Translation Center in Luxembourg, testing and bug management.

All these decisions are taken by the IATE Management Group, accountable to an Interinstitutional Directors' body. With a presence in the Management Group since 2008, TermCoord brought about several changes increasing its efficiency by suggesting the creation of several working groups and task forces dealing with the data entry and interface improvement, with the updating of the handbook and the integration of IATE in the new CAT tools. It also suggested the creation of an interinstitutional platform for the sharing of information and providing common resources to all EU translators, as well as the conversion of IATE in a modern web 2.0 version. Both of these initiatives have been endorsed by the interinstitutional hierarchy and a specific budget was allocated.

The EurTerm Terminology Portal developed by TermCoord in "Confluence" will be fed by an editorial board composed from the Terminology Coordination Departments and will contain access to internal IATE with which it will be connected, a centralized access to all interinstitutional and worldwide terminology resources and databanks and access to communication platforms on a language level (terminology wikis and forums). Additionally, it will provide access to the intra-EU meta-search terminology tool QUEST searching in the most important national terminology databases in addition to IATE, the translation memory Euramis, and EurLex. Further features will include a blog, a calendar of events, a multimedia section for webinars or web streaming of events, as well as the search tool for the links to glossaries selected and updated by our Unit. TermCoord prepared in 2011 the model of this portal that has been agreed and will be finalized and opened to the translators in 2014 and in the future partly to the wider public.

TermCoord established and regularly hosts videoconferences with the Terminology Coordination Departments in Luxembourg and Brussels on strategy and management issues, deciding on communication issues, training and even an exchange of staff members for a period of two months to increase knowledge transfer and cooperation.

Except IATE, the unit also represents the EP in the management of the interinstitutional text related forum ELISE, in which translators from the three legislative Institutions translating texts related to the same act discuss on-line terminology in their respective language.

3rd Level: Cooperation with International Organizations

On an international level the Joint Inter-Agency Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology (JIAMCATT) regroups all international organizations and deals with all subjects related to CAT tools and Terminology. Within the scope of its main goal, which is the cooperation among all partners and the exchange of knowledge and material also in the field of terminology, these organizations try to gather all

terminology resources and grant access to each other and to share their experience with terminology projects.

JIAMCATT's newly set up Terminology Working Group (consisting of representatives of EP TermCoord, UN, European Court of Justice and European Commission) contributed substantially to enrich the terminology section of JIAMCATT's website with the EU and other terminology resources. Many of these resources can be found on EU interinstitutional terminology portal EurTerm, which in the near future will be opened to all JIAMCATT members.

In the (most recent) 27th JIAMCATT meeting (April 2014), EP TermCoord proposed to create an interinstitutional access page to the members' databases and portals. The idea behind this is to offer all members of JIAMCATT a common meta-search tool (restricting access to pages containing sensitive information) that will enable searches in all databases including IATE, UNterm, FAOterm, AGORA (OECD), etc.

Sharing of terminology resources and tools among international organizations was recognized as a very beneficial exercise for the quality of translation and the need for enhanced communication and networking has been stressed in order to face the spectacular rise of the importance of terminology in a globalised context.

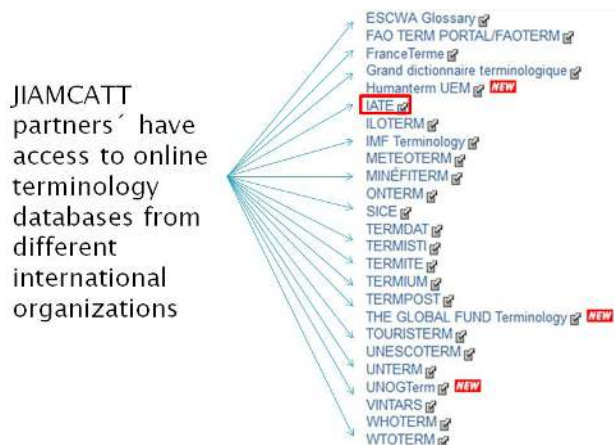


Fig. 1 Exchanging know-how and material in the field of terminology

The common platform will provide a single central access to terminology resources, tools and databases; efficient and user-friendly interinstitutional communication, linguistic knowledge and skills sharing as well as enabling communication on language level and on specific topics.

4th Level: External Communication, Promotion and Coining of Resources

Connecting with the External World of Terminology

Terminology has evolved in the last years, thanks to and because of the inherent need for multilingual communication for every public, private and academic sphere of activity in a globalised world.

Important companies worldwide possess huge terminology departments and databases; private providers or non-profit organizations offer databanks and terminology support. Also, very large professional forums on terminology have been created, each international activity includes a glossary on the relevant website, there are yearly hundreds of conferences on terminology and connected activities, very large organizations regroup hundreds of public, private and academic actors dealing with terminology.

Terminology has also become a separate discipline in the linguistic sector and the humanities. Hundreds of Universities worldwide have created terminology departments or integrated terminology courses and practice into their programs in translation and linguistics faculties. Terminology in several fields is very frequently the subject of academic theses of all levels and the Terminology Coordination Unit of the European Parliament has to select every three months among more than 1500 applications from all over the EU to cover the 6 posts for a specialized traineeship in terminology. While in the recent future, terminology specialists tried to enrich the web with terminology resources, today in the era of web 3.0 and big data, the main task is to regroup in an easily accessible way all the huge and multiple resources in all languages of the world and all fields of activity.

The European Union has the largest and most multilingual human translation production in the world and cannot stay isolated in this wonderful evolution of terminology and its adaption to the current needs of our localized and globalized world. TermCoord has started an intensive campaign and could include IATE in some of the biggest terminology search tools and webpages.

TermCoord has contributed a module on Terminology to the University of Luxembourg Master's program "Multilingual Learning in a Multicultural Environment". This consists of courses on multilingualism, terminology management, and digital terminology coining as well as practical exercises, accompanied by theoretical courses given by Prof. Rute Costa in the next semester. The students of this module are offered internships in TermCoord. Staff members of the Unit are invited to several universities for seminars and to initiate IATE based terminology projects.

As from its creation, TermCoord has developed a wide network of external contacts mainly in the other international institutions and the academic world. Even in the first months of its existence it invited 10 prominent terminology professors and cooperated with them for the development of an original approach of terminology management in a public institution. A very important asset for the unit has been the knowledge and enthusiasm of the by now some 100 trainees from all countries with studies or specific interest in terminology, who offered an important input from the most recent developments and keep cooperating with the unit in several projects through specific accounts and discussions in the social media.

In April 2011, the unit went public with a website that attracted up until December 2013 300.000 visitors and became an important reference in the world of terminology offering EU specific resources and interesting posts on translation and terminology prepared by our staff in cooperation with trainees specializing in communication. In 2012, this external presence was extended with accounts and pages in the most important professional social media networks.

The biggest interest was shown for our pages containing the IATE term of the week, related and linking to an article on an important current event, the interviews with prominent terminologists conducted by our trainees, and the specific EU terminology resources and the different possibilities offered by the European Parliament for traineeships and study visits in our unit.

In 2012, TermCoord launched IATE projects with Universities: Interested translation and terminology departments receive a template to make exercises with their students simulating input into the database and compile lists of entries in their languages in

cooperation with our unit, which after validation are inserted in IATE. These projects are intended to become in the future, projects conducted by the Terminology Coordination Departments of all Institutions cooperating in IATE and to be inserted in the in the European Master of Translation offered by the European Commission to a network of some 25 universities.

As from the first semester of 2013, the University of Luxembourg inserted in the syllabus of its Master of "Learning and Communication in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts" a series of courses and workshops on terminology management, multilingualism, terminology coining and web monitoring, given in three languages by members of TermCoord staff with the agreement of the European Parliament. Several universities invited the lecturers to give a part of these courses combined with a terminology project (Saarbrücken, Vienna, Thessaloniki, Bologna, Paris, Sofia, Salerno, Malaga, Vigo, etc.).

Our unit was the subject of a master thesis at the University of Vienna and provides the possibility to students and researchers to publish on its website their theses and studies on terminology or containing a chapter on terminology. Students working on terminology in their universities are allowed to apply for an unpaid traineeship in TermCoord, where they are familiarized with practical terminology work.

Several university professors were invited to our big seminars as speakers or were invited to run specific workshops for the translators and terminologists. The next seminar will take place on the 5th of June under the title "Terminology in Academy", focusing on this cooperation and ontologies.

TermCoord is working in cooperation with four universities (Luxembourg, Cologne, Rome-Sapienza and Salerno) on a research project to insert ontologies in IATE aiming to convert it from simple termbase to a large-scale terminological relational database.

TermCoord is member of EAFT (European Association for Terminology) and member of the Executive Committee of TermNet and participates in international terminology conferences frequently representing all EU Institutions. Presentations are also given in Universities upon request or organized in the European Parliament in Luxembourg for groups of professors and students.

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- Any additional information can be found on TermCoord's website (<http://termcoord.eu>)
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