

Why is terminology your passion?

The third collection of interviews
with prominent terminologists

Note to the reader

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TERMCOORD BRINGS HIGH-PROFILE TERMINOLOGISTS TOGETHER

In this e-book TermCoord has published interviews with prominent terminologists about their work, their projects and their opinions on interesting terminological issues. These interviews were carried out by trainees from the European Parliament's Terminology Coordination Unit and the interviewees are all terminologists who have made an active contribution to the field.

The aim of this initiative is to shine a light on terminology work and raise awareness about its importance for both monolingual and multilingual communication.

The interviews were designed and carried out entirely by the individual interviewers, who were responsible for personally suggesting and contacting the terminologists they chose to interview.

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Interview with Jana Altmanova



Jana Altmanova has been a researcher and lecturer of **French** language, **linguistics** and **translation** in the Department of Literature, Linguistics and Comparative Studies at the **Orientale University of Naples** since 2011. In 2008, she received a **PhD** in French Studies from the **University of Bari**. Her thesis was entitled 'Néologismes et créativité lexicale du français contemporain dans les dictionnaires bilingues français-italien' (Contemporary French neologisms and lexical creativity in French-Italian bilingual dictionaries). In 2010, she was awarded a **research grant** by the Department of Comparative Studies at the Orientale University of Naples for a project entitled: 'Normalisation et harmonisation terminologique dans le domaine des arts et métiers' (Terminological normalisation and harmonisation in the arts and crafts sector). She is a member of Ass-I-Term (Italian Terminology Association), whose goal is to encourage organisations to share and publish Italian technical and scientific terminology. In November 2016, she took part in the **VIII European Terminology Summit** in Luxembourg, Visions and Revisions, during which she gave a presentation entitled 'Les perspectives de la formation en terminologie dans le contexte italien : des portes ouvertes à de nouveaux horizons' (Perspectives on terminology training in Italy: exploring new options).

1. What did you study and when did you start to gain an interest in terminology?

I received a **bachelor's degree** in Foreign Literature and Languages in 2002 from the Orientale University of Naples, where I was a very passionate student of French linguistics and literature. I then began working as a **freelance translator** of French, Italian, Slovak and Czech, during which time I developed a passion for **teaching French** and obtained a secondary school teaching qualification. I was then given the opportunity to continue my studies with a **PhD in French Studies** at the **University of Bari**. I focused on **lexicography** and **lexicology**, extracting neologisms and their definitions from French dictionaries and comparing them to their Italian equivalents. Through my research on the Dizionario bilingue e i linguaggi settoriali (Bilingual dictionary and sectorial languages) at the Research Unit of the **Parthenope University of Naples**, which I carried out as part of the PRIN 2008 project on Lexicography and Metalexicography (**University of Bari**), I was able to further analyse specialist nomenclature and the processing of the technical lemmas contained in existing bilingual dictionaries, particularly those pertaining to the traditional arts and crafts. I subsequently took an advanced training course in Specialist terminology and translation services (**Sacred Heart Catholic University of Milan**), which proved particularly useful for the development of my research. This path led me to lexicographical and terminological research and I have not looked back since. I had never studied specialist languages before, but by attending national and

international seminars and conventions, I learned that there was a lot of interest in the field and realised that it could form part of my work as a researcher and lecturer in French language and linguistics.

2. You are a researcher of French language, linguistics and translation in the Department of Literature, Linguistics and Comparative Studies at the Orientale University of Naples. Tell us about your work and the activities you are involved in.

As part of my role as an academic, I teach **French Language and Linguistics** on the BA courses and specialised translation on the MA course. As I said before, my research primarily involves analysing **specialist discourses** from **diachronic** and **synchronic** perspectives, with a specific focus on **arts, crafts** and **niche industries**. One of the projects on this topic is **Termorfèvre®**, which was launched in 2012 in cooperation with students from the **Parthenope University of Naples'** PhD programme in EU languages and specialised terminology, and aims to expand on theoretical and methodological approaches to diachronic and synchronic study in the field of traditional goldsmithery and create a multilingual dictionary for the sector. The project is being carried out in close cooperation with local communities and professionals, specifically the **Borgo Orefici di Napoli** (gold district of Naples), allowing the researchers to collect and extract terminology in situ. The impact of the financial sector on the creation and dissemination of terminology is the focus of another project, **Leximarq®**, which is creating a virtual link between the marketing and academic worlds, particularly in terms of linguistic studies. This project is being run by two universities, the **Orientale University of Naples** and **Paris 13 University**, and is focused on the lexicalisation and dissemination of brand names in specialist environments and everyday language. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend the conference 'Lexicalisation de l'onomastique commerciale. Créer, diffuser, intégrer' (Lexicalisation of commercial onomastics. Create, disseminate, integrate), which will take place at the Orientale University of Naples from 25-26 May 2017 and will feature lectures by academics from various countries including Italy, France, Spain, Canada, Morocco, Algeria, Georgia, the Czech Republic and Poland.

3. How much time does your university dedicate to terminology and how could this be improved?

Studying terminology is an important part of what we do at the university, and that has especially been the case in recent years. It is part of the rich philosophical and literary tradition for which the Orientale University is renowned. Over the past ten years, the Department of Literature, Linguistics and Comparative Studies has created new degree programmes (**BA Linguistic and Cultural Mediation** and **MA Specialised Translation**) which give students an opportunity to study this relatively new and fascinating discipline in a communicative and international context that is focused on 'pragmatic' discourses and texts. We are working with our MA Specialised Translation students to optimise the study of and research into terminology by using **CAT tools** and software and concentrating more on text analysis. I am thoroughly convinced that, while terminological training should involve learning about and applying the main terminological theories, there should be a focus on the methods students are most likely to use in their future careers, which will see them working with various text types and discourses and managing a number of terminological resources. When thinking about new ways of teaching terminology, we should also consider how it can vary according to context and/or text type (including the web genre). We also discussed these factors at the conference Terminologia e discorso: Sviluppi e prospettive nel dibattito

contemporaneo (Terminology and discourse: Developments in and perspectives on the contemporary debate) held on 10 and 11 November 2015 at the Orientale University of Naples, the proceedings of which will be published shortly.

4. You are a member of Ass.I.Term (the Italian terminology association): what are the association's goals in relation to terminology?

The Italian terminology association – **Ass.I.Term** – is an excellent example of an organisation which researches, experiments with and promotes terminology. It has always promoted scientific papers written by terminologists, advocated the dissemination and publication of technical and scientific terminology in Italian and other languages, and encouraged young academics and professionals to specialise in terminology. What is more, national and international projects set up and scientific papers written in recent years have produced significant findings. One example is our collaboration with **Realiter** (the Pan-Latin Terminology Network), which brought our vision to other Romance countries and enabled us to produce terminological resources for various specialist fields. It is also worth noting the important debates which take place at annual conferences attended by respected terminology professionals and academics, particularly those held by the **Accademia della Crusca** (Italian language academy), **Rete REI** (Network for the excellence of academic Italian) and **DGLFLF** (National delegation for the French language and the languages of France).

5. In November 2016, you took part in the VIII European Terminology Summit in Luxembourg, where you gave a lecture entitled '*Les perspectives de la formation en terminologie dans le contexte italien : des portes ouvertes à de nouveaux horizons*' (Perspectives on terminology training in Italy: exploring new options). Can you briefly summarise your lecture and explain why you chose this topic?

This was the 20th Visions and Revisions summit and **Maria Teresa Zanola** and I therefore thought it appropriate to discuss the problems with terminology training in Italy and evaluate published studies, the current situation in Italy and future developments. In the light of the **ISTAT** data on terminologists working in Italy and their professional status, it seemed highly appropriate to offer a lecture focused entirely on describing the professional profile of terminology trainers in Italy and the educational and didactic content of degree courses. We discussed the link between terminology and specialist languages, sub-dividing the most commonly adopted approaches into three basic categories: discourse analysis, methodological research and in-house training. This trend appears to be determined by the goals of linguistic and cultural mediation training courses, which are now used in all Italian universities. We then gave an overview of translation-focused MA courses and PhD courses, ending with a discussion of specific areas of research, ranging from long-established to emerging fields, which are also worth considering.

6. What CAT tools do you usually recommend to your specialised translation students?

In my opinion, the real challenge is equipping students with a robust, but flexible **translation methodology** that can be used in any working environment. I believe this is one of the key rules by which **cultural mediators** and **translators** should abide. Being adaptable obviously means familiarising yourself with all the tools that can help you in your translation work, without compromising on quality. That being said, it is clear that since the 60s and 70s, translators have been able to produce good-quality

translations in shorter timeframes by using **CAT tools** and corpus analysis software. The added value of such software is undoubtedly its capacity to search a huge bank of terminology for specific terms, which is extremely difficult to do with printed corpora or small electronic corpora that must be searched through manually. We use a number of CAT tools including SDL Trados, T-Labs Plus, Transit, Wordfast, Antconc, IdiomServer, Alchemy CATALYST and Textométrie. It is common knowledge that these programmes, which allow users to create specific termbases and translation memories in various language combinations, have recently been simplified to make them easier to understand and use. Developers have achieved this by increasingly using semantic and linguistic parameters to generate results rather relying exclusively on statistical parameters.

7. Are you familiar with IATE? What do you think of it?

Yes, I am familiar with **IATE** and often consult it when conducting didactic analyses and research and when translating. It is a very handy tool that is, most importantly, easy to use. I think that **ease of use** is one of IATE's strong points; I have observed that companies (especially legal and administrative ones) and students use it very frequently to find translations of terms in the various European languages. I encourage students and translators to use it, particularly when dealing with EU texts. What is more, we have already started discussing the possibility of working more closely with the European Parliament, particularly with **TERMCORD**, on the translation and terminology projects carried out by our students. I believe that collaborations of this type can be highly educational and rewarding for cultural mediators and translators.

8. In your opinion, how important is terminology management for translators?

Terminology management is essential. Whether it comes in the form of a terminology product (glossary or terminology data bank), research project, or the extraction, collection and management of terminology data, terminology is a key aspect of **specialised translation** and is even more crucial for translators working in multilingual environments. Translators can manage the translation process more efficiently by using textual and terminological resources, translation memories and bilingual corpora.



Written by **Laura Colaci**. Laura was born in Lecce, Italy in 1992. She is in her second year of the MA Specialised Translation at the Orientale University of Naples and spent six months at the University of Luxembourg as an Erasmus+ student. She also did a short internship in the Terminology Coordination Unit of the Directorate-General for Translation of the European Parliament in Luxembourg.

Interview with Silvia Bernardini



Silvia Bernardini graduated in translation in Forlì in 1997 and, after a short spell in the UK (where she got her MPhil from the University of Cambridge), came back to Forlì, where she has worked as an assistant professor, an associate professor and now as a full professor. By the time she returned to Italy, she had also completed her PhD in translation studies (Middlesex, UK). She has taught a variety of courses (technical and scientific translation, translation methods and technology, and English (corpus) linguistics) and has coordinated the Master's course in specialised translation. Her research interests are in the fields of translation technology, translator education, English as a lingua franca, documentation and corpus linguistics. She has given invited talks on these topics in Belgium, Brazil, China, Germany, Norway, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, the UK and many Italian universities.

1. You are a professor in English Language and Translation with several years' experience in teaching and research. Your PhD focuses on a corpus-based study of collocations in translated and original texts. What inspired you to examine this particular subject in depth?

My PhD research brought together two topics that are very central for me, namely phraseological tendencies in language use and typical features of translated language. As a student in the 1990s, prior to starting my PhD, I had the good fortune to meet John Sinclair (creator of the revolutionary [COBUILD dictionaries](#) and one of the fathers of corpus linguistics) and to witness the development of the [British National Corpus](#). The 1990s were a period of great enthusiasm for the 'corpus revolution', and translation studies scholars like Mona Baker and Sara Laviosa also saw the potential in this area. I found the corpus-based quest for typical features of translation fascinating, and in my PhD I set out to discover whether any such features could be identified at the collocational level. In case you also want to know whether my quest was successful, let us simply say that research is always more complex than you think at first – this was in itself a valuable lesson for me! However, I did observe some interesting regularities, including (and here I am generalising somewhat!) a tendency for translators to favour plain and common collocations in their target texts, sometimes choosing not to reflect unusual or creative ones found in their source texts.

2. In October 2014 you participated in the conference *Terms and Terminology in the European Context* with Erika Dalan, Adriano Ferraresi, Eros Zanchetta and Marcello Soffritti and presented a very interesting paper entitled '*Terminology in international academic settings: The case of English native and lingua franca course unit descriptions*'. What advice would you give to ELF (English as a lingua franca) universities when creating or improving their catalogues in English? Do you think that universities in the EU could benefit from retrieving information from shared corpora?

As early as 2001, in [an article for The Guardian](#), translation studies scholar Juliane House suggested that English was the de facto lingua franca of Europe. Universities across the continent use English to connect with their stakeholders (particularly students), and yet terminological inconsistencies are frequent and may make communication problematic. Our study focused in particular on course catalogues in English, given their role in ensuring student mobility and the internationalisation of higher education institutions, but several conference participants confirmed our fears: terminological inconsistencies plague institutional communication regardless of the languages and genres involved! I think it is crucial for universities to understand that sound terminological work is a prerequisite for mutual understanding. There is no doubt in my mind that grassroots collaboration in collecting corpora, developing terminological databases and sharing such resources as widely as possible would bring an extraordinary return on investment to the EU higher education area as a whole.

“It is crucial for universities to understand that sound terminological work is a prerequisite for mutual understanding”

3. Consulting corpora is proving to be crucial when it comes to translation. How do you think translators should approach corpus analysis and how does it affect the quality of translated texts?

I tried to answer this question [during a talk I gave in October 2016](#) in Pisa to an audience of over 100 professional translators, both budding and seasoned. For a number of reasons, corpora have so far been used less than other technological aids, such as translation memories. For all their merits, TMs have certain disadvantages: they make translation faster, but not necessarily better, and are not fully adequate for every type of text and task. With machine translation improving by the day, I believe there will be less need for fast translation, and more scope for high-quality translation (and authoring, transcreation, post-editing, you name it). Corpora can help us to evaluate creativity in source texts, enlarge our pool of target language equivalents, make informed decisions and defend them when necessary. That's why I think they are worth going the extra mile for!

4. At what stage in your career did you first become interested in terminology? And what is the most recent project you have been involved with in the field of terminology?

The first time I came into contact with terminology was in 1994, more than 20 years ago. [Franco Bertaccini](#), who taught me translation from French into Italian then, introduced us to the basics of the discipline. He was keen to stress that terminological/terminographic work is an inherent part of specialised translation work, whether as a separate professional task or as an activity that is carried out while translating. It was during this course that I started to become acquainted with translation as a profession – over and beyond translation as an academic subject – and I think it helped me lay the bases for my own approach to translation research and teaching.

Coming back to the present, in the last couple of years I have started to work on institutional academic terminology. Academics and admin staff at the University of Bologna are acutely aware of the need to make sure that communication with our national and international students and potential partners is effective. We have consequently started to develop a database of institutional academic terminology in English and Italian for internal use, drawing on available materials produced at EU level. We hope to be able to share it soon with colleagues and continue to develop it as a joint effort. Contacts have already been established with several research groups across Italy and Europe.

5. Would you recommend some best practices for extracting and managing terms from a domain-specific corpus?

Corpus query tools provide several functionalities for term extraction and management, offering an empirical basis for selecting terms and recording their co-textual patterning (e.g. wordlists and keyword lists, cluster and n-gram lists). I would recommend that terminologists who wish to explore these possibilities download and play with [AntConc](#), Laurence Anthony's simple yet fully functional corpus query tool. Open-source or free tools also exist for extracting parallel terminology from aligned corpora automatically. For instance, we obtained promising results with [anymalign](#). It should never be forgotten, though, that these tools simply provide starting points for analysts: the bulk of terminological work remains manual, requiring the insightful analysis of highly trained professionals.

6. Together with other professors and researchers, you founded the Terminology Lab (LabTerm, Laboratorio di Terminologia e Traduzione Assistita) affiliated with the University of Bologna's Department of Interpreting and Translation (DIT). Can you describe some of its activities? Did it help to establish cooperation between students, teaching staff and the professional world?

[The Terminology Lab](#), or LabTerm, is an important hub for all departmental activities connected with technical and specialised translation, terminology and terminography, the translation technology industry and the world of work. Together with its research division, [CoLiTec \(Corpora, Linguistics, Technology\)](#), the LabTerm runs a wide range of activities, including continuing education seminars for professional translators, and coordinates extended internships with local companies for MA students (e.g. through the language toolkit programme, run jointly with the Forlì-Cesena Chamber of Commerce). But the one event we are especially proud of is the TeTra Conference, which brings together in the same room software developers, researchers, students and professionals, and lets them talk (literally!) to each

other. [The last one, on 30 September 2016](#), was a big success: more than 120 people turned up despite a train strike!

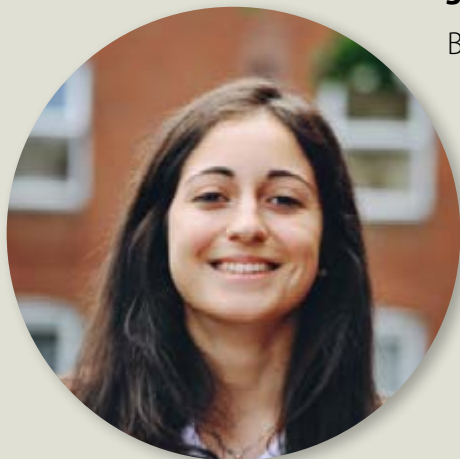
7. TermCoord devotes much effort to constantly improving the EU's interinstitutional terminology database (IATE = Inter-Active Terminology for Europe). What is your opinion on this concept-based multilingual database?

IATE has always been a model for anyone working in the field of terminology. We encourage our students to become acquainted with it, use it as an example of terminological best practice and turn to it whenever they require a reliable documentation resource in their daily work. 'Reliability' is the keyword here: there is a lot of information out there on the web, but it is very hard and time-consuming to decide if one can trust it, particularly (but by no means only!) for novices. Databases like IATE are therefore more essential than ever, as are the constant efforts to enlarge them and keep them up to date.

8. In conclusion, what advice would you give to future terminologists, based on the trends and perspectives you have observed within this field?

I believe it will be important for future terminologists to combine a firm grasp of the theories and principles of the discipline with computational resources and methods borrowed from neighbouring research fields (such as computational linguistics, machine learning and distributional semantics). In this way it will be possible to maintain the high standards associated with a manual activity and combine them with the faster turnarounds characteristic of semi-automatic, streamlined processes.

Giorgia Lopez



Born in Vicenza, Italy, in 1992. She completed her BA at the Advanced School of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Bologna and holds an MA degree in Professional Translation from Swansea University (UK). Her working languages are Italian, Spanish and English and she takes every opportunity to improve her French and Portuguese. She is interested in translation technology, audiovisual adaptation tools and project management, hence her role as Translation Project Manager with a British language service provider (LSP) for one year. As a trainee in TermCoord from October 2016, she is hoping to expand her expertise in terminology while making a positive contribution to the team.

Interview with Jan Blommaert



Jan Blommaert (Dendermonde, Belgium, 1961) is known as one of the world's most important sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists. He is a professor of Language, Culture and Globalisation, as well as the director of the Babylon Center at Tilburg University, the Netherlands. He has significantly contributed to the sociolinguistic globalisation theory, focusing his work on historical and contemporary patterns of the spread of languages and forms of literacy, and on lasting and new forms of inequality emerging from globalisation processes.

1. Let us start with a general question: having studied African history and philology, how did you end up in the more general branch of sociolinguistics?

Africa is an absolute paradise for sociolinguists. In Europe we have all grown up in a monolingual context: 'normal' people have just one 'mother tongue', which they may possibly supplement with 'second', 'third' and further languages after they have acquired that first language. Simultaneous multilingualism is regarded as a deviation from the norm, an abnormality, and Belgium is a classic example of this – a multilingual country where simultaneous multilingualism is seen as politically, socially and culturally exceptional and is actively discouraged as being undesirable. Well, if you go to Africa with that kind of ideology of language, you will not understand a thing that is going on around you, because simultaneous multilingualism is the norm there. People have several 'mother tongues', so they do not distinguish between languages A and B, although they do distinguish between social contexts A and B. So in fact I had to become a sociolinguist in order to understand language and society there, and my first fieldwork in Tanzania was simply a crash course in advanced sociolinguistics.

2. You clearly seem to be in the Eurosceptic camp. To give an example, let me cite one of your articles: "(...) the levels of language skills laid down by the EU (A1, A2 etc.) are abstractions which have nothing to do with the reality of communication[1]". Why do you regard them as abstractions which have nothing to do with reality?

I am Eurocritical, but not a Eurosceptic, and I adopt that position on the basis of a strong belief in the potential of Europe. I want it to work and keep its promises, and, as a concerned European citizen, I am critical when it fails to do so. The example of the levels of language skills is typical: a bureaucratic and standardised solution is chosen for something which essentially is amenable only to 'made to measure' approaches and flexibility. There are various reasons why I say this. Firstly, there can be no conceivable language test that will unequivocally measure the practical language skills of the language user in real

situations. A person who scores 100% in English at school will not necessarily – and not on that account – understand English as it is spoken in Leeds or Belfast, or the texts of rappers such as Snoop Dogg. That is a general fact: what language tests may perhaps indicate is competence at language learning; but they do not test the reality of communication. Secondly, and this is something which is already implicit in the first point: as a rule, people are tested for competence in using a standard variant of a language, and as we know, a standard variant is one that no one genuinely uses. There is no language without an ‘accent’, because what we call ‘accent-free’ is generally in fact the most prestigious accent. In that respect, the learned standard variant, paradoxically, is often extremely marginal in society, and it is necessary to learn the local accents and variants in order to be ‘integrated’.

Take Leeds or Belfast again, in the case of English. When you learn to communicate, after all, you do so in a real social environment, and during the learning process it is vital to absorb the ‘local colour’ as well, the language variants which really make us part of a particular social complex. Why? That is the third point: because language is the major, unmistakable social filter which serves as a basis for all manner of categorisations – both positive and negative. A ‘Moroccan’ accent which a person speaking Dutch has failed to overcome at level A1 will not be eliminated by passing the C1 test, and in that respect too, the European levels of language skills are an abstraction which has nothing to do with the reality of communication. If one has the impression that a newcomer speaks Dutch inadequately when he has passed level A2, the impression will not change when they pass level B2. In reality, language use has an emblematic impact: certain features, no matter how minimal, result in acceptance or exclusion – think of the spelling mistakes that people make in Dutch when writing the identical-sounding endings -d and -t, which, if they are applying for a job, are quite likely to result in their being rejected out of hand. To the extent that levels of language skills are associated in people’s minds with expectations of actual social and cultural ‘integration’, they are a fiction.

3. How then could one – ideally – assess a person’s language prowess in a meaningful way?

It is not really clear to me why one should even want to assess levels of language skills. What level should be taken as the yardstick, anyway? What one needs at the hairdresser’s or the baker’s? At work (and in that case, which work)? At a parents’ evening at school in order to speak to the maths teacher? There is no such thing as ‘a’ (single and unequivocal) level of language skill. Each of us combines in himself a whole range of different levels of language skills at any given moment in our lives. I am highly articulate when discussing language matters with a fellow researcher, yet struggle to converse with an insurance agent, a car dealer, a software developer or a neurologist. So how would you define my level, and how can we assess it?

4. One of the things that our terminology department, which assists translators at the European Parliament, administers is the multilingual interinstitutional terminology database ‘IATE’ (InterActive Terminology for Europe). Have you heard of IATE before? If so, have you ever consulted IATE?

No, I cannot say that I know it, except by hearsay.

5. In the past, the EU Institutions imposed jargon and terminology on the Member States, the 'prescriptive' approach. Nowadays, the situation has been reversed, and specific terms are supplied to the terminology databases of the EU Institutions from the Member States – the 'descriptive' approach. Do you favour the prescriptive or the descriptive approach?

When it comes down to it, this is a practical question: what works best? The EU has always adopted a very inflexible (and therefore unrealistic) attitude towards language and languages, due to the sensitivities of a number of Member States. For a time therefore, imitating scientists, and in order to be 'objective', it was thought that a completely standardised jargon would ensure the greatest clarity, but then it came to be realised that the resultant texts alienated local target groups emotionally, and that it was therefore necessary to permit greater diversity. Languages are not interchangeable on a one-to-one basis, social and cultural systems even less so, and with the increase in the number of Member States, the volume of potential differences in meaning and misunderstandings increases objectively. Only a relaxed and realistic attitude towards language issues can provide a solution here: we need to accept that the language situation is a complex of elements which is always in flux and that the response constantly needs to be changed and adapted to new circumstances, and with one practical question in mind: what works best?

6. English is a lingua franca at the EU Institutions, for example. What do you think that this victory of English means for all the other languages in the EU?

That is only partially true: the 'lingua franca' is not a single language but a stratified and functionally structured multilingualism. In the jargon we call this 'linguaging': doing language, language as a verb. People use one language or another, or mixtures of them, as dictated by the situation, the interlocutors or the subject, and they immediately switch to a different code if these factors change. The use of certain forms of English has not eliminated the other languages, nor will it in future: English has taken up a position alongside the other languages as a practical instrument for certain forms of interaction in certain settings, with certain interlocutors and on certain subjects. But a conversation in English with a counterpart from another Member State is interrupted by excursions into one's own language with colleagues or other people from one's own country, in between times we greet other colleagues in yet other languages, and the memoranda and minutes on discussions which were conducted in English circulate in various languages and are discussed in just as many. It would be mistaken to think that the 'official' language is also a language which eliminates every other. In reality, it is merely the language of the official part of the communication, the part which assumes an *urbi et orbi* role. But that is in reality only a small fragment of the world of communication in which we live and move and have our being. Here too, as far as I am concerned there is only one guiding principle: what works best? And a relaxed attitude is the best compass for navigating in an extremely complex multilingual environment.

7. And what does the status of English as a world lingua franca mean for the development of the English language itself?

The answer is the same as that to the previous question: English – in a wide range of forms – is becoming part of the multilingual repertoires and the 'linguaging' practices of more and more people, and in such contexts it is used for certain forms of communication, while other languages continue to be used for others. For example, English has become the worldwide language of academic publishing. But there

are two observations to be made about this. Firstly, the English in question is of a highly specific kind – academic English – and that is not the kind of English you can use if you need to explain a problem with the outflow pipe from your bath to a plumber in Chicago. Secondly, it is the language of academic writing, but not of academic speech. We still mainly teach in local or national languages, while nowadays writing in English. Our academic work has therefore, strictly speaking, not been ‘anglicised’, but it has become multilingual. That is the stratified and functionally structured multilingualism that I mentioned earlier, and in that sense we have all become English-‘linguagers’.

What consequences does this then have for English itself? There is a sociolinguistic rule which states that a language which grows very large disintegrates into innumerable new variants, and that is precisely what we are witnessing in the case of English around the world. ‘English’ now stands for an extremely motley and rapidly changing continuum of variants, ranging from varieties which merely resemble English to others which actually are English, and in the latter category we observe an enormous innovatory dynamic which to a large extent is operating within a new globalised popular culture and through social media. This is incidentally the first time that a great deal of change in language usage has started to originate not in the spoken variants but in the written forms. Consider, for example, the new ways of writing that we use in text messages and chats, such as “CU” “w8” or “thx”.

8. Many cities in Europe are increasingly becoming places of superdiversity, such as Brussels, London, Luxembourg, etc. Is language a divisive element or is it on the contrary what binds people together in cities with superdiversity?

Not surprisingly, that is a complex issue, because there are various levels to be examined here, and we must be sure to bear in mind the previous observations. Firstly, there is a political and ideological level, and at that level, superdiversity is regarded as a problem and an obstacle. An emphasis on uniformity and homogeneity is the classic response of modernity to growing diversity. Secondly, there is an objective potential for growing communication problems which are simply due to demolinguistic change in our society, where a hundred or more languages are sometimes represented within a very small area. That is not only a source of potential, it is also an operational problem which expresses itself in so-called ‘frontline sectors’: education, the police and judicial system, health care and officialdom. There we encounter an escalating translation problem which is virtually insoluble. Let us take a simple example: refugees from Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen are nearly all classified as ‘Arabic’-speakers. However, official court interpreters – many of whom come from Moroccan backgrounds – often have great difficulty in understanding their varieties of Arabic, which creates both practical and political/legal problems.

But there is, thirdly, the factor which we discussed previously: ‘linguaging’. In superdiverse environments, it is rare to find a confusion of tongues such as we associate with the Tower of Babel: rather, what one finds is an extremely flexible and tolerant attitude towards multilingualism, in which seriously deficient forms of Dutch often form the backbone. So people find their own way in the situation of extreme multilingualism which we can observe emerging in practically every city, and in that sense we see, contrary to the first two points, that it is in fact perfectly possible to have social cohesion, social interaction and a sense of community in superdiverse environments. The language problems that occur need not be underestimated, but we should not overestimate them either. We certainly need a more effective multilingual infrastructure in our cities, that much is clear – even if politicians do not agree. But we should also be aware that our society will not collapse if it becomes superdiverse. Indeed: in the past 15 to 20 years, our society has in fact become

superdiverse in a way which has hardly been noticed. In lectures on the subject, we present statistics on the increase in the foreign nationalities represented in Ostend in the past 20 years. That increase is quite remarkable, and people tend to be very surprised when their attention is drawn to it, because it has never actually struck them before. That seems to me to be good news.

[1] <https://jmeblommaert.wordpress.com/2013/01/17/voor-de-onderzoeker-hoe-vlaanderen-in-2013-argumenteert/>

About the interviewer

Corine Klip, study visitor at TermCoord. Born in the Netherlands in 1973 (Amsterdam), she moved to Luxembourg in 1984 and attended the European School as a child of a EU-official. After graduating from the European School, she obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Communication Sciences in Ghent and worked for nearly 18 years in the financial industry in Luxembourg. Being always fascinated by language and multilingualism in all its forms, she decided to take a double sabbatical break from the financial industry in order to continue studying multilingualism and multiculturalism. She is currently doing a Master Degree in Learning and Communication in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts at the University of Luxembourg.





Interview with Katie Botkin

Katie Botkin is a freelance writer and the managing editor of the [MultiLingual magazine](http://multilingualmagazine.com/), which covers language, translation, localization, and global culture. She decided at the age of six that she wanted to be an author, and to that end, she has learned to embrace her perpetual curiosity about almost everything. She is currently working on various articles and projects, including a novel about homeschooling culture. Her personal website is <http://kbotkin.com/>

1. At which point of your life did you feel sure that your love for the English language was going to narrow your career path?

I was six when I decided that I wanted to be a writer. I studied journalism in college because it seemed more profitable than sticking to fiction, and then quickly became disillusioned with the world of newspaper management. I tried teaching English on three continents, dived into linguistics in grad school, and wound up editing and writing for a linguistically-driven magazine. It's been a fairly narrow career path for me, it's true, but I always told my students that a love of English can take you far in any field. The world runs on precise, honest, compassionate communication.

2. To what extent do you think editing can actually improve a written piece while still paying attention to the original intents of its author?

To a large extent! I thrive on good editing in my own writing. It's very helpful to have a second set of eyes, both for typos and content-wise. Writers can easily leave pertinent details out of a narrative, or repeat themselves too much, most often because it's all so well thought out in their own heads. Good editors know when to ask questions about ambiguities and inconsistencies.

3. How much is terminology important in an editor's everyday life, in your opinion?

It's important for proper nouns most of all, and creative writers should strive to be consistent so readers don't get confused. Of course, this can cause problems of its own—for example, I would personally find it less difficult to read Russian literature if it stuck to one consistent name for each character, instead of varying between full legal names, short forms, endless diminutives and so on. It would be less effort for me, but it would obviously not be an accurate depiction of Russian culture. Of course, the more technical and brand-specific the text is, the more important consistent terminology becomes.

4. Could terminology databases/glossaries and journalistic editorial guidelines be related? For example, do you think it would be useful for media companies to have their own glossary, besides guidelines?

Yes, and they often do! MultiLingual magazine, where I work, has a fairly extensive glossary that we update every year. It's online so our writers (and readers) can access it, although we often edit quite a bit ourselves—it's rare that writers go to the trouble of working from it.

5. Sometimes it is vital to have the right term at the right moment. Could you describe a situation in which a term complicated your life?

Well, we're constantly checking on the proper spelling of businesses, for example. More often than you'd think, the businesses themselves are inconsistent in their spelling and capitalization, so it's hard to know which is preferred.

6. Could you tell us something more about Translators without Borders, the non-profit association for which you (used to) edit the website's newsletter?

They do humanitarian translation work for a variety of nonprofits. Currently, they're working on the ground in Greece to help translate materials for refugees arriving from Syria. The work they do is hugely important for underserved linguistic groups.

7. We know that this organisation assists in translating more than two million words per year for several NGOs (such as Médecins sans Frontières, Médecins du Monde, Action Against Hunger, Oxfam US and Handicap International). But what does 'humanitarian translation' mean to you?

Translation for good, regardless of cost. Accurate translation is nearly always beneficial for cross-cultural communication, as long as you bring cultural understanding into the equation as well. Often, translation is most expensive where it is most needed—smaller languages with fewer translators tends to make things difficult, particularly in areas where these smaller languages and language groups abound. Translating for these areas is not financially lucrative, and in a world where linguistic training tends to go hand in hand with how much money you can make from it, this means these areas are often linguistically underserved. Humanitarian translation is probably the only translation option there is for most minority languages.

8. Since you are a book lover, would you share with us which are your favourite English translation examples of foreign novels, and why?

I loved Lee Fahnestock and Norman MacAfee's version of *Les Misérables* as a 17-year-old, and Rosemary Sutcliff's *Iliad* before that. The latter is a retelling rather than a straight translation, but that made it very accessible while still staying true to the original Greek formality and intent. I probably never would have ventured to read the *Iliad* as a child otherwise. Most recently I really appreciated Harry T. Willetts' translation of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *In the First Circle*. It's the book as Solzhenitsyn intended it, rendered into English for the first time. Literarily, politically, and philosophically, I loved it. Pragmatically, the book begins with a cast of characters listing everyone who appears in the book, along with any derivative names they may go by. It's a literary terminologist's dream come true.

9. On your own website, you wrote: “So my day job consists of managing a magazine about translation and cultural differences, including editing a host of articles written by people whose first language is not English. In these instances, it is very helpful to know how language works — the way French deals with certain idiomatic expressions that would not make sense translated literally, for example.” What is your best advice to non-native English writers, then?

It’s the same advice I would give to writers of any kind: read the best writing that you enjoy, write what you enjoy, and get an editor or teacher you enjoy to help you along the way.

10. In general, how much power do you think written language has, compared to spoken language?

I would say “the written word endures,” but that’s changing with the digital age. I find it much easier to organize my ideas in written form — I just recently gave an interview for a documentary, and we recorded the same anecdote several times because I kept leaving things out or wandering off point. I’m used to being able to go back and just add or delete things, so it was challenging to do it all in the moment. In the era of soundbites, I think it can be particularly hard to speak effectively.



The interviewer: Eva Barros Campelli

Born in 1989 in Rome (Italy). Wrote 300+ film reviews, covered the Rome’s and the Venice’s film festivals, and still managed to obtain a master’s degree in Clinical Psychology. She attended a post-graduate course at the London School of Journalism, had a Web Editor assistant work experience at Good Things magazine, and enjoyed the British lifestyle for a while. Member of the Italian Journalists’ Association as well, she later contributed to the Huffington Post USA and HelloGiggles. Currently passionate about human rights and international politics – though in her spare time she always complains that too many books, songs and movies break her heart and ruin her life.

Interview with María Rosa Castro Prieto



I have been a lecturer in terminology for over 20 years now. I began my teaching career at the University of Granada and am now a member of the **Spanish Philology Department** at the Autonomous University of Madrid (the UAM). I have also been teaching applied linguistics for a short while now at Complutense University of Madrid. I have combined my teaching work with professional practice: I helped clean up the [Eurodicautom](#) databank; I was the Spanish terminology manager at the translation agency C&L; I also managed the Documentation and Terminology Department at a language services agency. As regards research, I belong to the research groups [Ecolexicon](#) and [Aula.int](#), both of which belong to Granada University.

1. **You studied Spanish philology and have a doctorate in translation and interpretation. Could you tell us how you came to specialise in terminology? How did you discover your passion for terminology?**

I graduated in Spanish philology at UAM in 1990. No sooner had I finished my degree than I started the usual teacher training courses as I had already decided that this was my vocation. However, through a series of coincidences, I came across terminology a few years later: I went to a summer school at the Sorbonne and returned to Spain with a recommendation to start work in the terminology department of a translation agency. At that time I did not have the slightest idea what the work entailed, nor did I know of course what a term was, but I do remember that I became excited about it when I realised I would have to work with 'words', which was in fact what I had liked most in my philology studies. That was towards the end of 1992 and I have not stopped since.

2. **IATE is the European Union's interinstitutional terminology database, with entries in 24 official languages. What is your opinion of IATE and what improvements would you recommend?**

First of all in my opinion it is an essential tool for the mediators in communication community. But I would emphasise especially that, thanks to the EU's institutional and financial backing, this is a tool for everyone: anyone can propose a new entry for the database or search in it. Thanks to this constant input IATE is a living tool as it is constantly being expanded and brought up to date. I consider it right that, using the Eurovoc structure, it represents specialist knowledge in a systematised way that is key to communication mediators being able to carry out reliable searches. However, in these days of the semantic web, I could wish for a more versatile interface that would enable users to rearrange all this information so future searches match

their needs. I recognise that the simplicity of the current system makes it easier for the average person to consult it, let us not forget that this is a tool for everyone to use, but I would like to see users with a more linguistic profile offered interconnected data along the lines of knowledge databases.



3. Translators and interpreters are the main terminology consumer group. Would you say, however, that the terminology resources on offer to them are underused or, even, that many do not know about them?

First you have to ask, what is considered to be a terminology resource? What is it like? When is it needed? How is it used? If we answer these questions with reliable data then we will be able to know whether the resources available at present meet the expectations of the professional community. I believe therefore that an assessment is needed of what translators use as terminology resources and how they use these terminology resources in order to redefine utilities and products.

Tools have evolved in recent years with the result that search habits have too. However, terminology products have retained the same traditional search format, which is, in my opinion, a big problem. Today more than ever, professionals need efficiency, versatility and immediacy and this can only be achieved by gathering together all the information available on one single support enabling a simplified search procedure that produces satisfactory hits.

4. As a lecturer and coordinator of Applied Terminology in Translation at the Autonomous University of Madrid, do you sense that your students suffer from ‘terminologiphobia’ (term minted by Mark D. Childress¹)? How do you motivate them?

I would say that I have encountered this feeling of ‘terminologiphobia’ around 50 % of the time in my teaching career; students approach the subject with negative or positive expectations and during the course they either hold to their initial view of the subject or change it. Personally I try to make them see that, thanks to terminology work, they can resolve their lexical needs from any one of its perspectives: cognitive, socio-functional, grammatical. Of course this is somewhat theoretical as they are not working in the professional field and nor, more importantly, do their own translation and interpreting lecturers require them to do so as they tend to simplify solutions to terminology problems just by using dictionaries. I mean that the tendency is usually to seek an ad hoc solution, rather than systematically resolving the problem, which is, in the long run, more satisfactory. In my classes I insist on making a distinction between those occasions requiring systematic work and those just requiring ad hoc work for whatever reason.

 I try to make [my students] see that, thanks to terminology work, they can resolve their lexical needs from any one of its perspectives 

5. You are a lecturer, but also a researcher working on various projects related to the lexicon and terminology. What are the main challenges you encounter in your research work?

I think that one of the challenges of terminology research, from my personal perspective at least, is widening the spectrum of terminology consumers. Generally speaking, research is oriented primarily

towards professional translators and interpreters and I believe that this outlook restricts the scope for results in this discipline. It is true that considerable progress has been made in the last 10 years in basic linguistic description, but the results are not being applied to other groups: documentalists, journalists and scientific disseminators, teachers of foreign languages for specific purposes, etc.

6. In a world led by technology and social networks, how do terminologists address the growing number of neologisms?

As nothing more than a linguistic phenomenon. By this I mean that for a terminologist neology is a subject for study, for analysis, which must be considered in regard to its necessity, origin, adaptation, dependency, or coexistence with existing forms. Contact occurring between languages creates favourable condition for the appearance of new forms representing concepts that may or may not already exist in the receptor language. In the case of terminology in knowledge fields, neology is a language resource for updating scientific thinking. Faced with these possibilities, the work of a terminologist, that is someone who works on the most practical aspect of terminology, consists in compiling these new terms and their special characteristics in order to record them in such a way that the user-consultant has the information needed to decide how to act.

7. The number of international companies is constantly rising, as is transnational work and collaboration. Do you think that companies would find it useful to have their own terminology database? And if so, how would you convince them that they need a terminologist?

Some multinational companies do create and maintain their own terminology databases as, for commercial reasons, they find having a terminological record of their products practical and necessary. However the majority of companies are not aware of the potential advantages of having linguistic control over their products nor of how this can help them in the way they present their products, from a multilingual perspective, to their customers. I remember the case of a Spanish multinational which was forced to withdraw from the international market some sandals it had named 'slave sandals' in Spanish, because in other languages this name produced such a negative reaction that they did not sell. This, and other cases, can be used to demonstrate to these corporations that if they did terminology work beforehand they would avoid situations of this kind; that this has economic consequences for them as they would achieve greater lexical cohesion and identity which would, in the long term, prove advantageous.

8. How do you think terminology has developed in Spain? What is the outlook for it in the future?

Terminology studies have gained ground in Spain since they were introduced in translation and interpreting faculties in the last 10 years of the last century. A great deal of progress has been made in the past 20 years, thanks to teaching, research and the work of some institutions. All the same there is still a fair amount to be done in achieving greater visibility for the subject as I do not think researchers in all the other languages fields apart from translation and interpreting know much about it. All of us working in terminology have the challenge of disseminating research findings and ensuring this becomes part of other university curricula.

Terminology also needs to become more visible in the institutions. Many of us working in this field have therefore set up a group formed of more or less like-minded people and linked to an association, AETER,

which meets periodically and whose objectives are focused on terminology as a discipline. One of AETER's most ambitious projects has been to propose an initiative, which has been given the name of TERMINESP, with the aim of turning this into a body dedicated to organising terminology from the whole Spanish-speaking world while, at the same time, coordinating with other bodies from the autonomous regions, such as Euskalterm, Termcat or Termigal. It seems that the project is currently going being revitalised so I therefore have great hopes of seeing it become a reality.

9. What do you think of the role played by the European Union as regards languages? Do you believe it encourages the development of terminology?

The European Union institutions have always supported initiatives in the field of languages. Because, I think, of the necessity imposed by its multilingual situation. This respect for the diversity of European cultures results in support for the different languages. Terminology has therefore benefited too, although in the past more obviously so, nevertheless I do not think it is a priority at present. If it were, to give an example, I am sure that how IATE is consulted would improve significantly.

On the other hand, I believe that the institutions in each country are needed for terminology in each language to develop and spread, as is cooperation between them and the European Union. Only thus can a more autonomous terminology be created that is less dependent on other languages.

10. Finally, given that you are surrounded in your daily life by students, do you believe that young people of today can have a career in terminology? And if so, what advice would you give them?

I think that, although terminologist as a profession could be a reality, there is no real demand on the labour market as such. However, I do think that having an excellent skill in terminology management does add value to language professionals' CVs whether working in languages from a monolingual or a multilingual perspective.

[1] Childress, Mark D. Terminologiphobia. Multilingual Magazine, June 2006 (page 86)

[Check out all her academic publications here.](#)



Carmela Blanco

Carmela was born in Madrid (Spain) the year in which the Treaty of Maastricht on European Union was signed. She holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and a MA in Conference Interpreting from the National University of Ireland, Galway. She gained experience as a translator at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, working with English and French. Prior to coming to Luxembourg, she worked as a freelance translator and a conference interpreter at the UN in Geneva and in a range of conferences, most of which were in the medical field. She is also gifted at playing the piano and enjoys a wide range of sports.

Interview with Loïc Depecker



Loïc Depecker, a former student of the École normale supérieure in Paris and a qualified teacher of grammar, currently teaches linguistics at the Sorbonne. At the cabinet meeting of 20 May 2015 he was given responsibility for all matter relating to the French language and the languages of France. Between 1980 and 1996 he held a number of senior posts in the Office of the French Prime Minister and in the Ministry for Culture and Communication. In particular, he gave technical advice on neologisms and scientific and technical terminology. He is an expert at AFNOR and President and founder of the French Terminology Society (scholarly society). He has been an 'Officier des arts et des lettres' since 2011.

1. In 2015 you were given responsibility for all matters relating to the French language and the languages of France so that you could set up the French Language Agency. What is your task as a terminologist?

The task the Prime Minister gave me covers a very wide area. In short, my job is to turn French into a language of the modern age, which can evolve and be used to describe modern-day realities. It is also a very old language, dating back over a thousand years – it is an historic language. It is also a modern language which needs to be developed in all areas of knowledge. I have launched major projects in a number of areas: terminology, safeguarding scientific and technological language, French on the web, the relationship between French and the languages of France, the languages of the French-speaking world, the languages of Europe and the languages of the world, in particular the Romance languages. On top of that difficult task, however, the really important thing is that everyone in France – whether in mainland France or in the overseas territories – should have the opportunity to learn French. While the French enjoy very good schooling thanks to the work of the Ministry for Education, many of our compatriots do not speak French well, either because they moved to France only recently, because they have never had the opportunity to learn French, or because they have forgotten it. I started young, in 1970, teaching Algerian workers how to read and write in French. The joy and sense of commitment I felt then have kept me going ever since – the joy of witnessing a person's happiness at discovering how a series of letters forms their name. Since then, with so many changes in society, the issue of French has definitely become a social one.

2. Do you think an institution like the French Language Agency is a useful tool for linguists and experts or rather a way of raising awareness of the correct use of the language?

The idea behind the French Language Agency that the Prime Minister has asked me to set up is that it should coordinate more effectively the work of the bodies that teach French outside the national education system. There's a lot to do. We have to help our compatriots in the overseas territories to reach a very high standard in French very quickly, at the same time as they learn their mother tongue(s). After all, in some parts of France French is not everyone's mother tongue. I think about the issue of the overseas territories a lot. We have to train people's minds in the right way and try to understand the mechanisms in play when we switch from one language to another. It's a game everyone enjoys, but you have to learn to play it properly.

3. You define terminology as an 'outward-looking' discipline. How does terminology shape the way we perceive and understand the world?

I do indeed see terminology as an 'outward-looking' discipline. Naming objects and concepts is something we do all the time – often unconsciously. Using or creating terms always involves a choice. What are we choosing? In my view we are choosing a 'conception': each term carries with it a conception – a way of seeing things and the world. In the context of current migration crisis, in the group of terminology experts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs we have been talking recently about how to translate the English term 'hot spot'. We have (for the time being) settled on centre d'accueil ('reception centre'), which is the term Manuel Valls used in one of his speeches on the subject; if you want to be more precise you could use the terms centre d'accueil et d'enregistrement ('reception and registration centre') or centre d'accueil et d'orientation ('reception and guidance centre'). It is clear that each of these terms means something slightly different. In any case, we have fought against the use of centre de tri ('sorting centre') or centre de sélection ('selection centre') as used in some newspaper articles. We have to consider the human element, a fundamental part of the value system in a country such as ours, when making our choices.

4. You were an adviser at the European Commission for 10 years. What was your role?

I was an adviser at the Commission for several years, but I did not have to deal with many projects. As an expert, I had to analyse linguistic projects submitted to the Commission.

5. Have you been following the development of the IATE database? What do you think of it?

Yes, I have been following the development of IATE, in particular in the context of my linguistic and terminology classes at the Sorbonne. Translation students have a lot of preconceived ideas about the terminology resources they find online. I recommend IATE, of course, which has improved a lot. It has been through several technological revolutions, which is always difficult for administrative organisations and IT systems. I think there's a lot more that needs to be done before it can be made available for public use. That should be a priority for the EU – to make sure that all the available resources for European languages, including regional languages, are online, in particular their technical, scientific and administrative terminology. That would be a way of safeguarding languages and meeting UNESCO's objectives for preserving cultural and

linguistic identity. We will probably need to develop IT applications which make group working possible and then incorporate the results into IATE. With today's technology, this would be feasible.

6. In your view, what role does terminology play in multilingual contexts such as that in which the EU institutions operate? What are its limits?

As I have already said, terminology is essential for sharing our way of seeing the world. It is also essential for translation. We have to make sure that terms are at least very similar and harmonised for everyone; context makes complete uniformity impossible. In other words, I think there can be several different terms for a given concept, but that we should make the author and translator of a text aware of this and guide them in their choice of terminology.

7. Should terminology be regarded as a discipline in its own right or as a combination of several different disciplines?

I have learned from the work I have been doing at ISO for nearly 30 years that terminology really is a science: it has methodological theories and principles, its experiments are repeatable, and the approach taken can be validated, in particular by analysing the objects to which certain terms refer and the way in which terminology and objects interact. At the same time – and this is what makes it interesting – terminology does exist at the point where several other disciplines meet: philosophy, epistemology, sociology, the history of science and technology, the history of languages, psychology, psychoanalysis, etc.

8. The introduction of 'standardisation' strategies and language planning is a thorny subject and involves all kinds of negotiation strategies. How does terminology come into this?

Terminology has its own principles, methods and ways of clarifying things. It is a guarantee of truth: if you decide to use terms such as *maîtrise d'œuvre* (project manager) or *maîtrise d'ouvrage* (client) in the same way throughout a contract, everyone is happy. If you don't, all hell breaks loose!

9. In your view, what is the future of terminology and how can it be developed in public and private institutions? Do you think terminology will become more and more dependent on IT?

Terminology has a bright future, in particular multilingual terminology. It won't be IT dependent if the expert system designers know what they want and don't let themselves be influenced by the machines. IT specialists must play an active role in linguistic engineering by contributing their ideas and transcending the power of machines.

10. The objectives of terminology and translation are to facilitate international exchange and do away with linguistic ambiguity. How can we guarantee that this proliferation of information reflects scientific, cultural and local/regional thinking?

Terminology work has to be carried out intelligently and pragmatically. In choosing and creating a term, we have to get into another person's head, feel the spirit of the age and the changes taking place and the trends that cause our languages to evolve day after day. That is what we are trying to do in the 20 or so

terminology expert groups that we have just formed in the French ministries. Then there is the language barrier: sometimes untranslatable concepts arise in terminology as well, but terminology is a science of engineers. There is always a solution. You have to build bridges and figure out how resistant the linguistic material is, as you would do with a metal or a joint...



Francesca Bisiani

Born in 1986 in Trieste (Italy). Studied in the School for translators and interpreters in the University of Trieste. Post-graduate studies in legal translation in Paris-3 Sorbonne Nouvelle. Teaching fellow in Paris in literary translation in Paris-4 Sorbonne, legal Spanish terminology in the Institut Catholique de Lille and gastronomy and Italian civilization in the Italian Cultural Center of Paris. She taught in SciencesPO and worked in the Italian Cultural Center as a translator, editor and seconding the Director in cultural activities. Internship in the UNESCO in the Creative Cities Network. She speaks Italian, English, French, Spanish and learning Greek.

Interview with Lina Malouli Idrissi



Born in Fez, Morocco, in 1988, **Lina Malouli Idrissi** gained a BA in English Studies at the local Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences. She then moved to Tangier, where she obtained a Master's degree in translation at the King Fahd School of Translation. Top of her class for two years running, she was granted an ERASMUS scholarship to finish her Master's programme at Lessius Hogeschool, Antwerp, Belgium, where she attended classes in specialised translation, terminology management and CAT tools. She is now preparing for the ECQA certification exam after her participation in the Terminology Summer School 2015 that took place in Cologne, Germany. In 2013 she started working at the Arabization Coordination Bureau (BCA) – ALECSO as an expert in the terminological and lexicographical research unit, and since then has been in charge of communication and management for ARABTERM projects, as well as content creation and management of its website www.arabterm.org. Since joining the BCA, she has taken part in the management, revision and updating of numerous multilingual terminological and lexicographical projects in fields such as law, education, medicine, literature and the environment. She has also been supervising trainees majoring in translation, in addition to managing and running workshops on terminology and arabisation for high-school students.

1. **Ms Idrissi, why did you decide to focus on terminology and lexicography in your professional life?**

I first discovered my passion for terminology in specialised translation classes back at the King Fahd School of Translation (KFST). I enjoyed extracting terms, understanding their context and looking for their equivalents in the target language, and the rest just fell into place. My story with terminology continued after graduation, when I was working as a conference interpreter. The complexity of the topics and their highly technical nature never scared me, because I believed that all I had to do was read up on the subject matter and prepare a bilingual list of terms before the conference. Then I started working at the Arabization Coordination Bureau, and my professional life moved to a completely new level. Today, I have the good fortune and privilege to be part of the arabisation movement, which aims to promote my language – Arabic – by creating, updating and unifying Arabic terminology.

2. You have been working for the Arabization Coordination Bureau (BCA) within the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) since 2013. Could you please tell us about your role as a linguist there?

The Arabization Coordination Bureau is the only official Arab entity with the remit of coordinating the efforts of all Arab countries in arabising and unifying terminology. For the last three years, I have been working as an expert in the terminological and lexicographical research unit. My main tasks consist in the management of dictionary projects at every stage, coordination among project teams, and scientific and linguistic revision of dictionaries' content before their publication as unified dictionaries.

3. In December 2015 you participated in the Fifth International Platform on Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in a Global Environment (e-AGE), organised by the Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN), a platform that promotes collaboration among experts and scientists in the Arab region and the rest of the world. Why do you think it is so important for linguists to connect with experts in other fields?

It is of the utmost importance for us at the BCA to be constantly in touch with the scientific community around the world. Events such as e-Age allow us to interact with scientists, researchers, students, teachers, etc. in order to determine which areas need to be covered in Arabic, gather their opinions on what we do, and ask for recommendations so as to better meet their expectations. We also take advantage of opportunities like this to promote our projects and to seek the expertise of participants who can help us create new terminology projects or scientifically revise and review existing ones.

4. Communication and cooperation are key factors in every terminological process. Could you tell us how industry, academia and governments in 22 member states interact in order to unify terminology? What is the role of terminology producers outside the Arab World (e.g. the United Nations) in this process? How are users involved in it?

Communication and cooperation are indeed key factors in every terminological process. The BCA is no exception to this, since all the parties you mention in your question play an essential role in our terminological work. Every dictionary project has to follow a set of 15 different steps before publication, the most important of which can be listed as follows: first we choose the project team, made up mainly of experts in the field to be covered by the translators and linguists. We then begin the unification process by sending the dictionary project to Arabic language academies and national committees in ALECSO's 22 member states. These academies and committees go through the project's entries, either approving the proposed equivalents or suggesting different ones based on what is most commonly used in their respective countries. Dictionary projects, together with the countries' stipulations, are then presented at the Congress of Arabization that is held every three years by the BCA in one of the member states. During this congress, government representatives, university professors, scientists and linguists involved in the fields being presented are invited to attend work sessions dedicated to each of the dictionary projects in order to unify and validate their content. Terminology producers from outside the Arab world, such as the UN and the European Commission, are important terminology resources for us. We rely on their databases to find the proper designations of concepts in English and French. As for our end users, they are also

invited to contribute actively to the process of term selection, revision of published terms and the choice of new fields to cover in Arabic via our interactive forum, surveys, social media pages, regular seminars and other initiatives.

5. What are the most difficult domains to cover in the Arabic language, and why?

In my opinion, scientific and technical fields are more difficult to cover in Arabic. Because of language variations, diglossia, and the lack of precision and consistency in the Arabic equivalents of technical and scientific terminology, Arab researchers find themselves obliged to conduct their studies and research using a foreign, up-to-date, precise language. The absence of scientific and technical corpora in Arabic, which are the main sources of terminology, is a real hindrance to the process of creating unified dictionaries.

6. Taking into account the widespread use of English in the fields of science and technology, how has Arabic terminology evolved? Could you tell us how new terms are born (e.g. arabisation, transcription/transliteration, literal translation) and how they are finally included in ARABTERM?

The pace at which Arabic terminology is evolving unfortunately cannot keep up with the rapidly emerging knowledge fields and new terms that are continuously being coined. That is why the BCA has decided to change its perspective in terms of terminological work and policies. One of the projects we are currently working on to solve this problem is the Arabic linguistic observatory, a revolutionary project that will allow instantaneous tracking of new terms. These terms will be then arabised, validated and published in our online terminological bank.

There are numerous techniques for coining new terms in Arabic. However, we opt for only a few, excluding, for example, transliteration. Arabic has a very rich linguistic heritage in all fields (medicine, philosophy, architecture, mathematics, chemistry, economics, astronomy, etc.), so for a new term to be born, we tend to handle it in accordance with the field covered by the dictionary project, and use linguistic tools such as derivation. Another option is arabisation. This technique is used when dealing with terms that are global in nature, terms and phrases that have Greek or Latin origins, or/and the names of commonly quoted scientists, in addition to chemical elements and compounds. In these cases, arabised terms are considered Arabic terms, i.e. they abide by the same linguistic rules as Arabic. Of course, translation is also an option, especially when dealing with compound terms, names of institutions, regional and international treaties, etc.

7. ARABTERM is a series of standardised dictionaries. What kind of terminology policies does ALECSO have for lexical generation? Do you perceive a lack of policies or standardisation of terms in any specific fields?

ARABTERM, as the fruit of a collaboration between the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and ALECSO, adopts the same terminological policies and standards for creating and arabising terms as the BCA. These are a set of 18 concept-oriented standards that govern the classification of fields and sub-fields, the criteria for term selection (linguistic economy, ease of use, derivability, etc.), the techniques used to avoid synonymy and ambiguity, etc. However, the application of such standards remains a not-so-easy task, especially given the fact that Arab countries have different historical and cultural backgrounds and speak different dialects, which influences their choice and creation of new terminology.

That is why on ARABTERM we opt for a policy that allows us to cite – when necessary – the different equivalents of a certain concept in the different countries and their dialects, while of course putting the standardised/unified term as the main equivalent.

8. Because of the particularities of the Arabic language (e.g. letters written right to left, but numbers written left to right), linguists may not be able to enjoy all the advantages technology has to offer. Do you have this problem? How do you deal with it? What kind of CAT tools does ALECSO use to create corpora?

No, we do not have this problem at the Bureau. We used to use Microsoft Excel and Access to manage terminology databases, and both these software programmes support Arabic writing and even have an Arabic interface available. I personally never noticed the difference when switching from English or French into Arabic. Today, we have developed our own platform for terminology management, corresponding to our specific methodological needs and offering equal technical advantages for all the languages used.

9. On the ARABTERM website there is a link to useful linguistic tools, including [IATE](#). Could you please tell us what the general opinion is of this database and the linguistic work of the European Parliament in the Arabic language context?

IATE is undeniably one of the richest, most reliable terminological databases available online. At the Bureau, we rely largely on this tool for the revision of English and French equivalents. As I mentioned earlier, the BCA has developed its own platform for terminology management, offering its users a tremendous number of terminological resources. Thanks to IATE, we have now enriched it with more than 600 000 terms, made accessible for free and downloadable via the website.

With the growing interest in the Arabic language, especially in European countries, the addition of Arabic equivalents to the database can be very useful for IATE users. Recently, the BCA has contributed to the revision and review of a list of Arab organisations, a list that is meant to be at the disposal of IATE translators with some knowledge of or interest in Arabic. The BCA and ALECSO are open to any new forms of collaboration that could link our institutions, and are ready to share their expertise in the field of terminology and lexicography.

10. Arabic is the official or co-official language in 22 countries and one of the official languages of organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU); it is also one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. What advice could you give to aspiring terminology managers who want to deal with the Arabic language?

My only advice would simply be to “GO FOR IT”. Nowadays, there is a growing demand for Arabic terminologists and translators. Because of the strategic and economic importance of the Arab market, more and more companies are investing in Arabic (translating manuals, games, localising software and apps, etc.). To conclude, I would say that Arabic has an outstanding capacity to adapt to developments in any field because of its derivability. Moreover, what makes Arabic intriguing is that the language used today is nearly the same as that which has been used for more than 15 centuries. So, when you work on Arabic, you are opening endless doors towards learning and discovery thanks to an incomparably rich heritage of books and resources that are easy to read and understand.

Interviewer, Ana Bennasar

Born in La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain), she holds a degree in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria with Spanish, French, English, and Arabic as her main working languages. Since 2010, she has been collaborating as a translator for several international organizations and NGOs to improve her professional skills in the field of translation of texts about human rights, immigration, and international cooperation. Ana is interested in law and finance, especially in regions such as Africa, the Middle East and Europe, and she recently finished a MA in Institutional Translation and obtained the ECQA certificate in terminology management.





Interview with Themis Kaniklidou

Themis Kaniklidou is Assistant Professor in Translation Studies and Associate Director of the Ph.D. programme at the **Hellenic American University**. She holds a B.A. in Translation, M.A. in Specialised Translation and completed her Ph.D. in Translation Studies at the **University of Athens** where she wrote her thesis on Narrative Theory and News Translation. Her **research interests** include: narrative analysis in Translation Studies, ideology and discourse in translation, narrative and language, discourse analysis, intercultural communication, framing, media discourse. She has worked in the Greek translation industry as an in-house and freelance translator and has translated numerous documents (EU, technical, business, legal). Themis has participated in various projects that link academia with the translation industry and EU institutions, such as **OPTIMALE**, an EU-funded program on Optimizing Professional Translator Training in a Multilingual Europe. She is the director of the terminological project between the Hellenic American University and **TermCoord**.

1. Having seen your educational background, one could say that translation was your destiny. Why did you decide to study translation and what do you find fascinating about this discipline?

As most translators, I studied **translation** out of love of languages. However, it soon became clear to me that translation extends over and above linguistic knowledge. It is more than a linguistic “ping-pong” between the source and the target language. I realized that that it was about **change, transformation**, and about some loss of “**textual energy**” during the transfer. I soon realized that the skills needed for translators extend far beyond the linguistic ones and include cultural knowledge, thematic knowledge and technological savviness. It was also about balance, balance between **accuracy** and **fluency** and that balance was often not easy to achieve or an almost always elusive.

2. How important has terminology been in your career as a translator?

In the beginning of my career terminology was a silent partner. It was always there, often working “under the radar” and other times very visible in the text depending on the type of text at hand. I could recognize it but I was not always very successful with retrieving equivalents. The big **turning point** came after my MA studies at the **University of Surrey**. I was lucky to have **Professor Margaret Rogers** in my terminology classes and she offered great insights as to how terminology organizes reality. I saw terminology then as a clear and inescapable way of **ordering reality**, of putting name to concepts and seeing the interplay between world knowledge and language knowledge.

3. Attention to terminology and terminography as an integral part of the translation competence are mentioned as one of the strengths of the Master's in Translation at the Hellenic American College. Could you tell us how is terminology included in the studies?

Terminology and terminography have always been a part of the curriculum in the Master of Arts in Translation at Hellenic American University as we had understood that it is a key competence for translator success. Both the **Provost of the University, Dr. Triant Flouris**, myself and other faculty in the program have been following closely the guidelines of the **Directorate-General for Translation** on translator training and it was clear that terminology had been a competence singled out by the DGT. We decided to integrate terminology by offering a full course on **terminology** and **terminography** in the first semester and then terminology remains a featured competence throughout all other courses. The design of the Program has been such that it gives students the chance to train on different types of texts and in particular texts that terminology is a challenge (such as highly technical texts on engineering or telecommunications).

4. You are the coordinator of the cooperation between TermCoord and the Hellenic American College. What projects have your students participated in and how did they enjoy it? Why do you think is it important for them to take part in such projects?

The cooperation with TermCoord has been a fascinating experience both for myself and the students. It has been a project that helps students gain experience with an EU project while receiving guidance both HAU and the TermCoord. We have been cooperating very closely with **Mr. Emmanuel Peclaris**, who has been validating the terms that we have been submitting and his role in the project has been more than key. So far, we have worked on the domains of **information technology**, **intragroup transactions**, and now we are working on **waste management**. This year we introduced an innovation to the project; we enlarged the team and apart from translation students, we included a student from our Engineering Programs, **Mr. Alexandros Manolis**, who, together with the Director of the Program, **Dr. Bravos**, have been assisting translators in building up their knowledge and resource base.

5. What is your opinion on the EU terminology resources that termcoord.eu provides?

Termcoord has been doing a very good job with introducing resources for terminology. I particularly like the way that the resources are presented and how easy it is to navigate. Being a part of the project with **IATE** has made me see IATE both from the inside and its public version and I have been really impressed by the majority of supplementary information translators get. One thing that **Termcoord** has succeeded in is to help students overcome any **fear of terminology**, particularly in the beginning of their studies.

6. You participated in the European project OPTIMALE that ended in 2013. One of the goals of this project was to implement professional translator training in University education of translators. How successful was the project in your opinion and how has the educating of translators changed since?

The **OPTIMALE project** was all about **optimizing translator training** across different institutions offering translation programs in the EU. It offered us great opportunity to see what other institutions are

doing with areas of translator training such as internships or project simulation. The project was successful but I regret that not many spin-offs came after it.

7. What do you think about the idea that Terminology and Translation should be studied as separate disciplines?

I believe that theory-based or theory-oriented terminology can be studied as a separate discipline but I am a very passionate supporter of the **interdisciplinary** or **transdisciplinary** nature of terminology exactly because it connects to knowledge about the world; I certainly cannot think of contemporary translation studies without terminology in the curriculum.

8. Last year, you helped organise the conference “Europe in Discourse: Identity, Diversity, Borders”. In addition, your PhD. dissertation concentrated on the analysis of the translating of newspaper headlines. In your opinion, how does translating of the news influence the current situation in Europe?

The **Conference Europe in Discourse: Identity, Diversity, Borders** has been one of those high-impact initiatives, both for the University and our community. It was a Conference that was originally conceived by and organized upon the initiative of the President of Hellenic American University, **Mr. Leonidas-Phoebus Koskos**, led academically by the Director of the PhD program **Professor Juliane House** and embraced by our Provost, **Dr. Flouris** and the entire university community. We wanted to open the discussion about the role of language is shaping **identities** and creating **narratives** in and about Europe and interrogate about what being European means. News translation can shape different identities about “**Europeaness**”. It can do so by using a different language to tell a news story originally conceived and told in another environment that of the source text and for a different audience.

9. How important is according to you multilingualism for the European Union?

I am a big supporter of **multilingualism** in the EU and EU policy on that has been overly generous by awarding **official language status** to member states. What is particularly important is that multilingualism and its role in the EU shows that the EU cannot solely be a technocratic project. Promoting multilingualism means understanding **diversity** and **difference** not as a **barrier** but as a **key element** of a shared **European identity**.



Written by **Simona Pecháňová**. Simona came to TermCoord for a Study Visit in January 2017. She is currently a student of the Master's in Learning and Communication in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts at the University of Luxembourg. She finished her Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature and French Language and Literature at Charles University in Prague in 2015. During her Bachelor's she spent a year abroad at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota studying English and Education. After graduating she spent one year working in an EAL department at a secondary school in England and translating for school representatives and parents played a major part of her role. Therefore, she greatly appreciated the classes in Terminology and Translation at the University of Luxembourg and she is looking forward to learning more about the field in the future.

Interview with Prof. Dr. Hendrik J. Kockaert



Prof. Dr Hendrik J. Kockaert lectures French Linguistics, Terminology, Legal Translation, and Translation Technology at KU Leuven, Faculty of Arts, in Antwerp. Since August 2015, he is Dean of the Faculty of Arts on Campus Sint-Andries in Antwerp and he is a Research Associate at the University of The Free State, Republic of South-Africa.

He is also a certified LICS Auditor for granting ISO 17100 certification to translation services, and he is the Editor-in-Chief of The Journal of Internationalisation and Localisation [JIAL]. He is also the Chairperson of ISO TC 37 SC 1 and a member of NBN, the Belgian Standardization Institute; an expert in the development of ISO terminology standards; and a certified ECQA (European Certification and Qualification Association) Terminology Manager Trainer and Job Role Committee Provider.

Moreover, Prof. Dr Hendrik J. Kockaert is the coordinator of the following projects financed by the European Commission: QUALETRA (JUST/2011/JPEN/AG/2975), and LIT Search (JUST/2013/JPEN/AG/4556). And he publishes in the areas of terminology, translation quality assurance, and translation technology.

1. When and how did it all start: Was terminology a deliberate choice or did you get involved with it “on the road”? Do you still play an active role in the world of terminology?

I started practicing terminology during my internship at the European Commission in Luxembourg in the Jean Monnet building in 1985, under the supervision of Hubert Wellenstein and Irmgard Fiamozzi. We published the Multilingual Dictionary of Fishing Gear (1992) and the Multilingual Dictionary of Fishing Vessels and Safety on Board (1992). It was in that glorious period without Internet that I rolled into terminological practices and that I learnt the essentials in terminology. Not always “on the road” but also “on the sea”, because we enjoyed visiting trawlers in Italy, France and The Netherlands, in order to understand which term refers to which bizarre part of fishing gear or trawlers. I learnt how important the dialogues between engineers, fishermen and translators-terminologists were. Today, I am the Head of ISO/TC 37/SC 1 – Principles and methods, the ISO subcommittee which develops and updates the essential principles and guidelines in terminology (management).

2. Could you tell us something about your membership and participation in Standardisation (ISO/TC 37 SC 1)?

Being the Head of ISO/TC 37/SC 1 since 2013, I coordinate the activities undertaken in its different Working Groups (WGs): Practical guidelines for socioterminology, Typology of language registers, Graphic notations for concept modelling in terminology work and its relationship with UML, Terminology policies — Development and implementation, Terminology work — Principles and methods are some of the projects in which SC 1 is involved now. I enjoy the annual work meetings because it is always a pleasure to meet the experts in terminology in a different city, ranging from Beijing, Matsue, Copenhagen and Pretoria.

3. What do you think is the most challenging part of terminology management and what are, in your opinion, the most important (dis)advantages of terminology management and why?

Translators and multilingual communicators sometimes face terminology as a luxurious asset, which is not a priority in their daily professions. It is sometimes hard to convince professionals that terminology is indeed the backbone of efficient multilingual communication and consistent translation in corporate businesses and large institutions. But, if a terminologist highlights that consistent terminology boosts the rankings in search engines, generating Search Engine Optimization, terminology creates the necessary impact.

Terminology management has the advantage to create sustainable efficiency in multilingual (and monolingual) communication. The disadvantage seems to be that the positive effects of terminology management is tangible only on a long term, instead of a quick win.

4. You were coordinator of several European projects related to legal translation, terminology and training of legal interpreters and translators. Would there be any possibility to link (one of) these projects to IATE, the multilingual term base of the European Union?

I was the coordinator of Quaetra, a DG Justice project which advocates efficient access to the translations of the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) and its connected essential documents. A multilingual term base of the EAW is available on line (www.eulita.eu) and would be beneficial when incorporated in IATE.

5. For many years, you have been professor of French linguistics, Terminology, Legal Translation and Translation Technology at the KU Leuven in the Faculty of Arts (Campus Sint-Andries, Antwerp, Belgium); how did you integrate the use of IATE and the websites of the European institutions in your classes and is there any cooperation between the University and the European Parliament (DG Translation, the Language Units and the Terminology Coordination Unit), for instance, projects, traineeships, Master's theses etc.?

My translation workshops with students are organised in such a way that opening and consulting IATE has become a natural reflex. I always refer to IATE so that they are able to consolidate their translation choice. Students are always invited to apply for an internship at the European Parliament in Luxembourg, and recently in Brussels too, where they do a tremendous job: enriching IATE. Our faculty being a member

of the EMT Network, which is supported by DG Translation, works closely together with all 64 member universities in the area of terminology development and management.

6. Do you have any suggestions or good advice for (young) people who are interested in terminology?

It is always beneficial to practice terminology on the field. Referring to my first experience in Luxembourg, I realise how important practical hands-on experience is. Such a practical experience should of course be based on a sound basis, such as terminology courses offered by universities, the ECQA-CTM (Certified Terminology Members) courses, and good handbooks, such as the new Handbook of Terminology (2015), and edited by myself and Frieda Steurs.

7. Are there any anecdotes or remarkable misunderstandings related to the use of (the wrong) terminology you would like to share with us?

A cat painted like a Koi fish, is not a catfish but a cat. If you understand this, you also know why it is important to apply the ISO terminological principles.

Leen Boel

Born in Antwerp (Belgium) in 1985, she graduated in 2009 as Master in Translation (NL/FR/AR) with a terminological research of the Moroccan Commercial Law as the topic of her thesis. After her studies, she enrolled in some supplementary communication modules at the KU Leuven (Belgium) and spent a semester at the Dutch-Flemish Institute in Cairo (Egypt) to improve her Arabic and Egyptian. Since 2010, she has worked for several companies in various sectors, as well as Project Assistant for European projects on legal translation and terminology (KU Leuven, Belgium) and combined her full time job first with evening classes in Marketing and later on with a Postgraduate Programme in Specialised Translation, during which she did a work placement in ontology management at the DANTERMcentret in Copenhagen (Denmark). In order to practice her translation skills, she works as a voluntary translator for different kinds of organisations. Leen is ambitious and tries to bring her eagerness to learn and her endless wanderlust together as much as possible, not only by attending conferences, seminars, workshops and summer schools related to Terminology Management, but also language summer courses in Tunisia and Morocco. Soon, she will obtain both the ECQA certificate for Terminology Manager and European Project Manager.





Interview with Michèle Lenoble-Pinson

Michèle Lenoble-Pinson was born in Libramont, in Belgium, in 1943. She was awarded a doctorate of philosophy and arts at the Université catholique de Louvain. She is a professor emeritus of Saint-Louis University, Brussels, an honorary professor of the Council of the European Union, and a teaching linguist, having worked at the High Council of Justice, and later the Institute of Legal Training (IGO-IFJ), in Brussels. The breadth of her work is such that she was made a member of the Arlon-based Luxembourg Academy, the Conseil international de la langue française (International Council for the French Language), the French Community High Council for the French Language, the Paris-based General Terminology and Neologism Commission (1997-2009), and the specialised Terminology Commission at the French Foreign Ministry in Paris (2005-2009). In addition, she has presided over the Association for the Application of Spelling Recommendations (1996-2014), the Terminology Commission within the Council for the French Language and Language Policy established by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (2008-2012), the Belgian semi-final of the 'Dictée des Amériques' dictation and language competition (1995-2009), and the Paris-based Language Modernisation Group (2002-2009). She has also been in charge of the Belgian Spelling Championships since 1992. She has been Vice-President of the Belgian Section of the International Francophone Press Union since 2009. She has been made a Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold II (Belgium) and a Knight of the Legion of Honour (France).

1. You have published several terminology books. Can you tell us when and why you decided to concentrate on terminology?

Because I was attracted by etymology, the history and usage of words and terms, I decided, when I wrote my dissertation for my degree in Romance philology and, later, my doctoral thesis, to choose the subject of hunting vocabulary, from the Middle Ages to the present day. The thesis has been published as *Le langage de la chasse* and continues to be an authoritative work (Publications des Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis, 1977). In the same fascinating vein, my *Dictionnaire de termes de chasse passés dans la langue courante* (Honoré Champion, 2013) illustrates what a rich vocabulary has grown up around hunting, falconry, and shooting. At the Maison de la francité, in Brussels, from 1983 to 2000, I ran the C.Q.F.D., that is to say, the Dynamic French Quality Circle. We proposed that 256 Anglicisms be replaced by French substitutes.

2. Between 1997 and 2009 you served on the Commission générale de terminologie et de néologie (General Terminology and Neologism Commission) in Paris. Can you briefly describe your role in that Commission?

Having been called in as an 'eminent figure' by Alain Juppé, at that time the French Prime Minister, I played an active part for 12 years in the Commission's monthly meetings and its vocabulary-building work. My

proposals, which would sometimes be different from those of the French members, took into account the usage of Belgian French-speakers living in contact with several Germanic languages. The proposals which were accepted are in the 'Synonyms' field of the lexical sheet published in the [France Terme data bank](#). Within the Commission, the French Academy's terminological work often goes unrecognised. The terms approved by the Academy are published in the French official gazette and then have to be used by French government departments.

3. Your book *Dire et écrire le droit en français correct. Au plaisir des gens de robe* (Bruylant, 2014) is about legal terminology. What is the role of terminology as far as law is concerned?

In law, clear writing depends on the use of such technical terms as might be useful and necessary, and on correct use of syntax. Legal experts also use ordinary everyday language. That is why the entries in the 800-page guide, arranged in alphabetical order, include legal terms, standard words that can be difficult to use, grammatical agreements, and Latin phrases (translated and with a commentary). The guide also covers archaic expressions in use, new words, pleonasms, homonyms, paronyms, abbreviations, regionalisms, set phrases, and American English loan words and their recommended French equivalents. For lawyers and translators, this dictionary is a linguistic safety net.

4. Can you tell us what kind of difficulties might arise for a terminologist working on legal terminology?

In addition to avoiding slavish borrowing from English, a terminologist must seek to marry the rigour of legal concepts with terminological precision.

5. What are the most difficult fields to study from the point of view of the French language?

Every specialist field has its difficulties. Nuclear engineering is a delicate field to deal with, especially when it comes to terms related to nuclear waste. Within the copious nomenclature used for medical imaging devices, there are functions which are closely similar and yet different, and these are hard to define and name.

6. Which fields do you like most and why?

Fields that you go into more deeply tend to become fascinating. I have done a lot of work on, and particularly like, the language of hunting (the chase and falconry) and legal language. These are very rich fields that both date back to Old French and Latin.

In Paris, in the General Terminology and Neologism Commission, a specialist in the field on the agenda, generally the Chair of the specialised commission, used to attend our proceedings. It was very interesting to look at terms in the light of his or her comments.

7. As a member of the General Terminology and Neologism Commission you worked on *l'Enrichissement de la langue française*, comprising nine specialist vocabulary books. Can you say what processes are being employed to make the French language richer today?

In ordinary lay people's language, users spontaneously create the words that they need. Young people, journalists, writers, and advertising agents introduce new words and usages. Some become established; many last for a time and then disappear.

In the languages of specialist fields, professions, sciences, or technologies, the coining of terms is done in an organised way.

- Either a new element (a concept or object) is designated by a neologism, that is to say, a semantic neologism or a morphological and semantic neologism. This can be produced by processes including derivation (suffixes etc.), composition, and metonymy.
- Or a new element (i.e. concept or object) already named in a foreign language is imported as it stands into French. This foreign term, or loan word, has to be examined and processed. Every language becomes richer by borrowing from other languages. In the 16th century French borrowed a great deal from Italian. Since 1945 it has been borrowing from American English. The members of the General Commission – which on 25 March 2015 became the Commission d'enrichissement de la langue française (Commission for the Enrichment of the French Language)
- endeavour in each instance to find the most appropriate way to deal with loan words:
- either by adopting them, that is to say 'dressing' them in the French style by adapting them to French phonetics and written forms;
- or by translating them into French;
- or by replacing them with existing French terms, thus creating semantic neologisms and a source of polysemy;
- or by creating French (morphological and semantic) neologisms. On that point see above.

8. You chaired the *Groupe de modernisation de la langue* (Language Modernisation Group). What was the purpose of that group?

Bernard Cerquiglini set up the group in 2002 and immediately offered me the chair. Every group meeting that I chaired, in other words until May 2009, was attended by a member of the committee responsible for the French Academy dictionary, the Dictionnaire de l'Académie française. The group acted as an observatory for present-day French. It addressed itself specifically to:

- the trend towards feminisation of job titles and names of occupations; I was editor-in-chief of the first two editions of *Mettre au féminin* (Brussels, 1994 and 2005);
- application of the 1990 spelling adjustments in French-speaking Belgium and Switzerland and in France; two sites can be recommended: www.orthographe-recommandee.info and www.renouvo.org ;
- the project to rationalise the agreement rules for past participles.

9. What is involved in the modernisation of the French language?

French is a living language. Its usage is evolving all the time. Vocabulary in particular is forever changing and expanding, whether it belongs to specialist or non-specialist language. Words and terms come into being, die out, and reappear. Grammar and syntax evolve more slowly. However, the feminisation of job titles and names of occupations, which is under way, can be seen in writing and can to some extent be heard. The 1990 spelling adjustments recommended by the French Academy are becoming established usage, even among those who have not learned them. Why should that be the case? Because the adjustments largely correspond to the way in which usage should develop. I have produced two compilations entitled *Écrire sans faute* containing dictation texts from the spelling championships. These are taken verbatim from French literature written in Belgium. In the compilations I comment on the lexical and grammatical difficulties of the texts and highlight new written forms (De Boeck, first edition, 2005, second edition, 2012, with downloadable audio texts).

10. You have also published many books on spelling. How does modernisation of the language affect spelling?

A distinction should be made between spelling according to accepted usage, or lexical orthography, which applies to the words and terms listed in dictionaries, and the spelling of grammatical agreements, which relates to the morphological and grammatical changes that words undergo according to their function in a sentence. The Academy dictionary sets the standard for spelling according to accepted usage. The ninth edition, which has been in the process of publication since 1992, will soon be completed. The spelling of grammatical agreements is dealt with in grammar books, in particular *Le bon usage* by Maurice Grevisse, revised by André Goosse (16th edition, 2016).

I was a grammarian for the whole of my university career and am now, at the request of the Grevisse family, updating Maurice Grevisse's *Le français correct* (De Boeck, sixth edition, 2009). This 500-page guide is in two halves, the first given over to lexical difficulties, arranged in alphabetical order, and the second, to grammatical and syntactic difficulties, which can easily be picked out with the aid of an index. I rely on the latest edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* to resolve lexical queries and on the latest edition of *Le bon usage* when exploring grammatical and syntactic points. I invariably draw attention to traditional written forms and to the new forms recommended by the Academy.

Michal Kováč is preparing for his doctorate in French philology at the Masaryk University Romance Language Institute in Brno (Czech Republic) while also working in the motor industry. He has completed a traineeship in the European Parliament's Slovak Translation Unit and made two study visits to Parliament's TermCoord Unit in Luxembourg. He loves France, the French language, and history and is interested in French-based creoles as well as in terminology.





Interview with Gonzalo Ortega Ojeda

Gonzalo Ortega Ojeda was born in Teror, Gran Canaria in 1954. He attended Salesiano primary school and then Pérez Galdós secondary school in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria. His university career then began at La Laguna University in Tenerife, where he studied Romance Languages and Literature in the department of Arts and Philosophy. In 1977 he started work as a teacher and researcher at the university, where he remains to this day. He has been a Spanish Language Professor since 2000.

Ortega researches Canarian Dialectology and has published and co-authored several dictionaries on regional Canarian terms, in addition to other theoretical work: *Diccionario de canarismos* (Dictionary of Canarian terms), *Léxico y fraseología de Gran Canaria* (Lexicon and phraseology from Gran Canaria), *Diccionario de expresiones y refranes del español de Canarias* (Dictionary of Spanish words and proverbs from the Canary Islands), *Catálogo de los gentilicios canarios* (Catalogue of Canarian peoples), *La competencia léxica de los hablantes canarios* (Linguistic competence of Canarian speakers), *La toponimia de Artenara (Gran Canaria)* (Place names of Artenara (Gran Canaria)). He has also published material on teaching Canarian Spanish to both native speakers and foreigners, such as *La enseñanza de la lengua española en Canarias* (Teaching Spanish in the Canary Islands), *El español idiomático* (Idiomatic Spanish), *Dificultades del español* (Challenges in Spanish), *Los errores sintácticos más comunes del español* (Most common Spanish syntax errors), *El español en Canarias* (Spanish in the Canary Islands) and *Lexicología del Español* (Lexicology of Spanish) (which has inspired several books and articles).

He is currently undertaking a detailed study on place names in the municipality of Teror with the historians Francisco J. Sánchez Ojeda and Vicente de J. Suárez Grimón. He has been a member of the Academy of the Canarian Language since 2001 and co-authored its *Diccionario básico de canarismos* (Basic Dictionary of Canarian Terms). He chaired the Academy between 2012 and 2015.

Ortega has published four literary works: *Una muchacha de Holguín y otros relatos* (A girl from Holguín and other stories) (1999), *Cuentos de Vecindad y otras historias* (Neighbourhood tales and other stories) (2005), *Las tribulaciones caribeñas de Michael Thompson y otros cuentos* (The Caribbean tribulations of Michael Thompson and other stories) (2010) and *El edificio de los espejos* (The glass building) (2014). The four stories were published by the municipal council of Teror.

1. Your field of work focuses on lexicography, what inspired you to work in that field?

Lexicography is a branch of applied linguistics. Dictionaries are reference works for readers across all languages. Our work focuses both on lexicographic theory (meta-lexicography and lexicographic theory) and compiling indexes of dialects for Canarian Spanish. Compiling dictionaries is a herculean task, and the average dictionary user is often unaware of the work involved. Lexicographers take their work very seriously and are meticulous in their approach, and work is pain-staking and thankless. The fear of leaving things unfinished has long weighed heavily on much lexicographical output.

2. Some of your work focuses on areas such as games and proverbs. How do popular traditions, songs and stories influence linguistic and terminological language research?

Like all varieties of Spanish, the Canarian dialect is wonderfully rich its expressions and proverbs. In 2000, my colleague Isabel González Aguiar and I published *Diccionario de expresiones y refranes del español de Canarias* (Dictionary of Spanish words and proverbs from the Canary Islands), one of the very few compendia on Spanish regional or national phraseology. Latin American Academies have also been running similar projects. Phraseology, both in its theoretical and practical aspects, is a relatively new discipline with a promising future. It is a part of natural language that is intrinsically linked to nature and culture, yet at the same time it shares many similarities with other languages, such as a preponderance of words relating to the human body.

3. Another line of your work is research into Canarian dialectology. What is Canarian Spanish?

Canarian Spanish is a sub-variety of what is known as Southern, Atlantic or Latin American Spanish. At least in terms of its pronunciation and grammar, Canarian Spanish is much closer to Latin American Spanish – the Caribbean and West Indies varieties in particular – than Peninsular Spanish. Historically speaking, however, our language was greatly influenced by the Kingdom of Castile's Atlantic expansion, led by Western Andalusia in the early 16th century, which took place after the Castilian conquest of our islands. The similarities between the respective conquest and colonisation of the Canary Islands and America explain why both varieties of Spanish have many linguistic aspects in common. Words that are specific to Canarian Spanish are the product of a need to describe our nature and culture, and are influenced by Portuguese terms (of which there are reportedly at least 2 000), Americanisms, Guanche words and archaisms.

4. In which lexical field does Canarian Spanish differ most from Peninsular Spanish?

Each natural language's vocabulary adapts to the particularities of its physical and cultural environment. In addition to words that were influenced by history, there are a plethora of specific words for flora, fauna, ethnography, agriculture, livestock, fishing, gastronomy, folklore, local sports, recreational activities and so on.

5. How far advanced is research into Guanche, a language spoken by the indigenous Canarian peoples?

Over the past twenty or thirty years there has been considerable interest in pre-hispanic 'linguistic relics' in the Canary Islands. In addition to research into the few Guanche voices that are left, we are also researching local place names and surnames, which have left a considerable mark on the Canary Islands. Certain research-related problems remain almost insurmountable, however: the degree to which these relics have been hispanised, the diversity of the current Berber dialect, the shortage of Berber language experts, ideological prejudices and so on.

6. In early 2015, the Canary Islands' Parliament and the Academy of the Canarian Language (ACL) signed a cooperation agreement. What influence does such an important institution have on preserving Canarian Spanish?

Under the current agreement, the ACL advises the regional Parliament on all matters falling within its field of expertise and in exchange it receives a small yearly sum which it uses to fund its activities such as its publications, bibliography and conferences. The ACL advises on general aspects of Spanish, since several of its members are Spanish language specialists, and provides guidance on specific issues relating to Canarian Spanish such as in the legal field. The ACL hopes that institutional cooperation will yield positive results in the future.

7. The Canary Islands and Latin America enjoy a close relationship. Are there any projects or institutions researching linguistic ties?

Although in the past we have occasionally worked with academies in Cuba and Venezuela, our working relationship can be put under strain because all Latin American Academies must have their work approved by the Real Academia Española (RAE), which acts as the official authority. The RAE has indeed raised a number of reservations about ACL's work. The RAE appears to take the view that any project of this kind may give rise to nationalism or independence movements. Let me be clear: the ACL has never been politically motivated and its members hold a wide variety of political views.

8. The ACL has compiled a range of linguistic materials. Could you explain how terms are included in the dictionary on the ACL website?

The ACL works in a similar way to the RAE, albeit on a smaller scale. Work is split between designated committees, such as specific committees for lexicography, place names and Canarian literature. The Lexicography committee created the Diccionario básico de canarismos (Basic Dictionary of Canarian terms), which can be publically accessed via the ACL website. We are currently working on the Diccionario general de canarismos (General dictionary of Canarian terms), which will hopefully include a large number of Canarian terms (probably more than 25 million) – not just one-word terms but also expressions. We also try to provide example sentences, etymologies and other relevant information. We work using linguistic differentiation, meaning that we collect terms which, even though they may appear in other variants of Spanish, aren't widely used. The committee also answers any questions that are sent via our website, which inspired us to publish the manual on Dudas más frecuentes sobre el español de Canarias (Frequently asked questions on Canarian Spanish) in 2015.

9. The EU gives citizens, lawyers, translators and linguists public access to IATE, in an effort to explain the terms used by the various EU institutions. Do you use it? Do you think it provides enough information on specific projects in the Canary Islands, such as the Canary Islands Special Zone (ZEC), or the outermost regions (OR), which include items covered by the Register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indications (PGI)?

I have to confess that I don't, although I would like to use these IT tools and their functions when conducting linguistic research in the future.

10. Do you think that the people of the Canary Islands realise how important it is to keep their language alive? Are they interested in their own traditions? What will happen to certain linguistic uses in the future?

Opinions vary. Educated people are often aware of the fact that our Spanish is fine just as it is. People with a lower level of education, however, often think that they don't speak Spanish properly and they frequently blame their own language limitations on Canarian Spanish. Many people believe that we don't speak Spanish properly because we don't speak like the rest of Spain – the language that we hear in the national media. Our standard language, however, is much closer to Peninsular Spanish than to the most widely spoken form of the language, i.e. Latin American Spanish. We shouldn't forget that linguistic complexities are in fact cultural complexities and that these are often unique. Scientifically speaking, Canarian linguistic peculiarities are as different as those found in any other language. The process of globalisation, which is engulfing western society, is having a homogenising effect on the Canarian language (and may even be jeopardising Canarian culture), although we aren't going to be losing any sleep over it.

Interviewer, Ana Bennasar

Born in La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain), she holds a degree in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria with Spanish, French, English, and Arabic as her main working languages. Since 2010, she has been collaborating as a translator for several international organizations and NGOs to improve her professional skills in the field of translation of texts about human rights, immigration, and international cooperation. Ana is interested in law and finance, especially in regions such as Africa, the Middle East and Europe, and she recently finished a MA in Institutional Translation and obtained the ECQA certificate in terminology management.





Interview with Louis-Jean Rousseau

Louis-Jean Rousseau is a major player in international cooperation on language planning and terminology. During his career, he served as Secretary General of the Réseau international de néologie et de terminologie (RINT) and the Réseau international francophone d'aménagement linguistique (RIFAL), Chairman of Sub-Committee 1 (terminologie et ressources linguistiques: principes et méthodes) ISO/TC 37 Terminology and other language and content resources. He remains very active in the Réseau panlatin de terminologie (REALITER), as well as within many other networks.

Read our interview with Louis-Jean Rousseau in **French** [here](#).

1. **Mr Rousseau, what is it about terminology that gets you so fired up?**

For as long as I can remember, I've always been passionate about words – their form, their meaning and the way they are used in different contexts. That's definitely what prompted me to study linguistics. Terminology then seemed like the obvious next step.

What I love about terminology is not just the process of naming things, but also the cognitive aspect. The ability to name things helps us to understand the world around us and classify our knowledge. The 'communication' aspect is also very interesting – as the modern world becomes more and more technologised, terminology and, more broadly, technological jargon are becoming part of everyday language. Terminology is therefore a valuable tool for acquiring knowledge and disseminating it to an ever wider audience.

2. **You have spent most of your career working for the Office québécois de la langue française (OQLF). How has terminology changed since you started?**

At that time – in the 1970s – terminology, which had emerged in Canada as a branch of translation, was being used in Quebec as a language policy tool as part of the drive to make French the lingua franca in public life and, in particular, working life. In order to respond properly to the huge need for terminology in Quebecois society, we had to develop a methodology that could be used to create, process and disseminate terminology in many walks of life. The methodology we developed combined the cognitive approach to terminology, corpus linguistics (long before terminotics was invented) and something that would later be called socioterminology, given that we saw the need to take account of the way the language was used in everyday exchanges. This huge project laid the foundations for the Banque de terminologie du Québec (Quebec terminology bank), which we now call the Grand dictionnaire terminologique.

Nowadays, given the plethora of terminological resources available, terminologists mainly work on updating terms, keeping an eye out for neologisms and monitoring the way existing terminology is evolving. The biggest change has been the introduction of IT tools at every stage of terminology work: the many tools that can be integrated into or linked to terminologists' work stations have boosted productivity and efficiency enormously.

3. You worked for three years at the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) as the head of language policy and language development. Could you tell us a little more about your work there?

My work at the OIF concerned the promotion of linguistic diversity, which was seen as a key issue at the time. In 2001, the ministers of culture and the governments of the Frenchspeaking countries had adopted the Cotonou Plan on cultural and linguistic diversity, which encouraged French-speakers to reflect on the issue of languages (French and partner languages), their status, their use and their development.

The objectives of the Cotonou Plan were to implement language policies and create structures which would foster the harmonious development of the French language and its partner languages and to strengthen the role played by those languages as vectors of expression for creators and in the areas of development, education, training, information and communication in the French-speaking world – the common denominator in all those activities being the use of those languages. The plan set out three areas of action:

- the French language;
- the partner languages;
- relations with other linguistic communities (Spanish-speaking, Portuguese-speaking, Russian-speaking, etc.).

My work involved creating programmes and activities that could help to achieve those objectives, in particular in collaboration with many other partners and networks, including RIFAL (Réseau international francophone d'aménagement linguistique), REALITER (Réseau panlatin de terminologie) and other national and international organisations.

4. You are a founding member of REALITER. When Parliament's terminology work was presented at the 2015 research day, what were your impressions?

The REALITER network, which has existed for more than 20 years, is very important and can serve as an example for other language communities. The main objective in setting up the network was to promote the harmonised development of the modern Romance languages, given that they have common roots, similar lexical forms and similar morphemes. In the minds of its founders, the purpose of REALITER was to achieve the following:

- to establish common methodological principles for joint projects;
- to carry out joint research and create tools to promote the development of modern Romance languages;
- to carry out joint multilingual terminology work in shared areas of interest that affect society;
- to share reference materials;

- to give language communities the chance to learn from each other by fostering exchanges of specialist teachers, experts, students and educational materials.

Many of these objectives have been achieved at least in part, and joint research has been put into practice in the form of the annual research days. I was not able to take part in the 2015 REALITER day you mentioned, but I think we should be pleased that this network, which must remain a source of inspiration for terminologists, is still active.

5. The 12th REALITER research day will have the theme ‘Terminology and Standardisation’. In your view, what is the relationship between terminology and standardisation?

Terminological standardisation is not only used in national terminology organisations, but forms part of technical standardisation at international level, in particular under the ISO. To my mind, we have to distinguish between terminology work, the main objective of which is to describe and organise sets of terms, and terminological standardisation, which must be based on rigorous terminology work, but takes that work a stage further by assessing real-life usage for the purpose of harmonising terminology use to some degree in an effort to facilitate mutual comprehension. Terminology work can be carried out in many different settings: firms, public authorities, national or international organisations, university research, etc. However, terminological standardisation is usually done by authoritative organisations specialising in the area. What is more, terminological standardisation is usually the result of consensus between terminology users, because it has to be based on real usage and meet certain linguistic and socioterminological criteria.

6. You are now working as a private consultant. Does your work involve terminology?

My work in terminology concerns issues of methodology and the research underlying terminology. I attend many conferences and publish on a regular basis. I also contribute to the work of ISO Technical Committee 37 (Terminology and other language and content resources) and get involved in the organisation and implementation of terminology work, in particular in the context of language planning programmes.

7. Are you familiar with IATE, the EU’s terminology database? What do you think of it? Do you use it?

Even though I no longer regularly use term banks, I have worked extensively in the area. All the large term banks which now exist have individual characteristics which reflect, in particular, the needs of their target users, their IT infrastructure, their dissemination policy and their original objectives. IATE was created in response to the challenges of multilingual translation in the European Institutions in their various policy areas. Having consulted IATE on a number of occasions, and having familiarised myself with its structure, I think it meets its objectives well. As is always the case with large terminology databases drawn from a wide range of sources, it inevitably contains multiple and sometimes conflicting entries, but that’s a problem that can be fixed by means of continuous updating work. IATE’s best qualities are its wealth of content, its topicality and its user-friendliness.

While we’re on the subject of terminology databases, the use of multiple databases by translators is an issue that comes up frequently. Given the large number of terminology databases available, and given that they cannot all be consulted at once, it has been suggested that they should all be merged into one.

A few years ago, I chaired a working group that proposed the creation of a terminology portal that could give translators simultaneous access to several databases at once, making their work and the work of other users easier. We can hardly expect all databases to be merged, given the diverse nature of their content, structures and dissemination policies, and so the portal would have been the ideal tool for all translators working privately or inhouse. Unfortunately, the lack of financial support from the organisations that had initially backed the project meant that it never came to fruition.

8. How do you envisage the future of terminology as a discipline? Do you think it offers opportunities for young people?

Today, terminology is omnipresent in the following areas:

- design;
- knowledge creation and transfer;
- information processing;
- information and textual and documentary data management;
- economic, scientific and cultural exchanges;
- e-commerce.

It is used in information and communication technologies, which are becoming ever more complex and involve a great deal of linguistic creativity:

- documentary computer science;
- the creation of ontologies;
- expert systems;
- text analysis and generation tools;
- computerassisted translation tools, lexicomatics and terminotics;
- revision and editing tools;
- automatic text entry;
- speech recognition tools;
- localisation;
- road traffic tools (navigators, search engines, etc.).

Listing just a few of its areas of application shows that there is a bright future for terminology, even if it sometimes goes by other names.



Interviewer

Lucile Mirande-Bret studied Translation (French, English and Spanish) and graduated with a MA in Terminology at the Institut Libre Marie Haps in Brussels. During her MA, she volunteered as a Dialog Assistant Liaison during the Special Olympic European Summer Games in Antwerp to provide language assistance in a variety of tasks to the Slovak delegation. Then, after an enriching terminology traineeship in a translation agency in Madrid in 2015, she decided to stay in the city in order to gain experience and worked for a few months in a technology company as a translator. She joined the TermCoord trainee team in April 2016.

Interview with Ioannis Saridakis



The terminological resources and databases of the Greek language translation services of the EU institutions and public organisations in Greece and Cyprus should become common resources and be harmonised so that they initially become available to all players

Mr Ioannis Saridakis is a Greek chemical engineer and, at the same time, an administrative member of the Greek Organisation of Standardisation of Terminology (ELOT). He has been actively involved in the standardisation of terminology and is currently participating in the creation of the Greek Terminology Network.

1. We are used to people who work with terminology being linguists. Yet, you studied Chemical Engineering and you have a passion for terminology. What is terminology for a non-linguist and how important is the role it can play in a scientific field, like chemistry?

Certainly we, as Greeks, have a passion for the Greek language as the vehicle of our history and culture. But the 'passion' you refer to is fanned mainly by challenges and the uncertainty inherent in terminological work. Challenges, uncertainty and the ensuing human errors have the following three (3) sources:

- a) the description or definition of a concept to distinguish it from related or similar meanings;
- b) creating terminology and selecting the word or term, since words can have multiple meanings; and
- c) the equivalence or equality of a concept and term or the extent to which the word or term selected renders the specific meaning to indicate the concept.

Terminology therefore primarily concerns the object of knowledge itself and, secondarily, language. It deals with units of knowledge, concepts, how a new concept is created on the basis of observation and the study of the characteristics of the 'objects' of our inner and outer worlds, its relationship with other concepts, how it is defined, the various ways of classification according to use and the needs of various users and stakeholders. Terminology provides a 'key' for you to approach critically the knowledge of each field of knowledge so that you can understand, challenge and / or add to knowledge. Chemistry is a terminological 'success story' because the establishment of a chemical nomenclature ensured a one-to-one correspondence between its 'subjects' and 'concepts' and prevented failures in communication not only within one language but also between different languages.

2. What made you decide to focus on terminology on a professional level?

Professional reasons. I work for the Greek Standards Organisation. One key aspect of standardisation is the standardisation of terminology. Its aim is to achieve unambiguous communication between inputs and recipients / users and other stakeholders of the various 'objects of standardisation'. A failure to communicate the quality of the products and services provided by businesses/organisations 'has a cost' and may also have important consequences e.g. for the safety of workers/consumers/citizens, but also for sales and the continued success of an organisation. Human error is the cause of most failures and is very often due to a failure of communication. Avoiding reasonably foreseeable failures in communication is the great challenge of terminology standardisation: each concept in a given field of knowledge must correspond to a term or symbol and each term / symbol to a single concept.

3. Do you think that terminology should be taught as a separate discipline at universities, or maybe integrated in other disciplines apart from linguistics and do you consider it as an asset for young people in the labour market?

Terminology concerns all disciplines and should be taught at every institute of higher education. It is an essential tool for understanding and familiarising ourselves with a subject that lies outside the curricula of the subjects we have studied; it also provides interdisciplinary skills and makes it easier to understand the communication needs of different stakeholders. In particular, for professionals/staff members, it helps to boost their capacity to use their expert knowledge in any working environment, their capacity for teamwork with staff with different specialisations or knowledge bases and their ability to understand others, to communicate with them and to engage in effective and efficient cooperation with them.

4. In the International Network of National Linguistic Authorities, EFNIL, several countries are represented by their Standardisation Agency, equivalent to ELOT. What is the role of ELOT in language and terminology matters in Greece and on the international level?

I believe the Greek Language Centre represents Greece, but unfortunately, I don't really know. The production of Greek terminology, e.g. by ELETOT, and the standardisation of terminology by the technical standardisation committees and ELOT contribute to the enrichment and development of the Greek language and improving communication in Greek. In cooperation with European and international language networks such as EFNIL, ELOT is able to supply data and assist in the dissemination of its terminological products.

5. You are now in the process of building a Greek Terminology Network. Can you tell us how this initiative started and what the aim of this network should be?

The Greek Language and Translation Terminology Network aims to achieve agreement on, introduce and establish the use of, among translators in the EU institutions and generally translators working in Greece and Cyprus, equivalent and commonly accepted terms in Greek to designate specific concepts. Terminological harmonisation in the community of Greek language translation professionals, i.e. translators, experts, terminologists, terminology and translation project managers and managers of translations agencies will

contribute to the communication of information and knowledge and facilitate the participation of all Greek language users to economic, social and political developments at national, European and international level. It will also provide the international community with widely accepted Greek terms and contribute to mutual understanding, familiarisation and exchanges of cultural experiences and economic transactions with modern Greece and Cyprus.

6. Do you agree that the standardisation of terminology is a task that should be performed in cooperation between terminologists/linguists and national field experts?

Of course, since they have the main input in terminological and translation work and they form the majority of information and knowledge communication managers.

7. Which of the available EU terminology resources could contribute to the standardisation of Greek terminology and how can they be used? Do you think that a wide collaborative space regrouping all efforts on national and EU level would permit a better cooperation and sharing of terminology?

The terminological resources and databases of the Greek language translation services of the EU institutions and public organisations in Greece and Cyprus should become common resources and be harmonised so that they initially become available to all players with the aim of gradually attaining a greater degree of harmonisation and consistency. For the choice of the preferred term for the designation of novel concepts by a given body, there should be an obligation to inform and consult with others so that the most acceptable term is selected or at least the word matching a concept in a specific communication context should be released so as to supplement the appropriate terminology databases and especially IATE e.g. with the synonymous term for a given concept.

8. Could you give us some suggestions on how Greek terminology in IATE could be improved in order to better serve its users?

a) It should become more 'concept-centric.' Each entry should correspond to one concept per thematic area. Each term corresponding to a given concept must be properly labelled so that synonymous terms in the same language can be seen.

b) There should be an assessment of the degree of acceptability of terms per concept with a ranking of 'preferred', 'acceptable' or 'inappropriate' terms. For acceptable terms, information should be provided on a possible framework for use e.g. geographical (Cyprus or Greece) or a specific legislative framework and communication framework e.g. institutional documents or professional environment.

c) For Greek terminology in particular, the shortage of Greek-language equivalents for concepts should be tackled. There are some concepts in IATE that are designated by English or other terms, but no equivalent Greek terms are mentioned.



Ioanna Kotsia

Born in 1987, Ioanna comes from Greece with a great interest in languages, translation and terminology. She has a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Athens. The MSc in Scientific, Technical and Medical Translation with Translation Technology at University College London (UCL) was a door to the world of Terminology, mainly with her thesis. She has lately worked as a Project Manager in Translation Company. She had a three month traineeship in the unit of Development of Applications and IT Systems (DAS) at the European Parliament, and now she is exploring even more the world of terminology at TermCoord.

Interview with Federica Scarpa



[IATE] It contains millions of terms and in all the 24 official language of the EU, making it the first port of call for any professional translator and translator trainee when faced with a translation task focusing on a specialised domain they are not already familiar with.

Federica Scarpa is a full Professor of English Language and Translation at the Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies (IUSLIT) of the University of Trieste, where she teaches Specialised Translation.

She has published extensively on specialised translation (her book “La traduzione specializzata”, Hoepli, Milan, is now in its second edition) with a particular focus on legal translation, corpora-based Translation Studies in the specialist domains of IT, migration studies, medicine and law, and on a professional approach to translator training, founded both on an ethics of translation as service and on the synergies that should exist between academia and the translation industry in order to raise the translator’s professional profile.

1. How did you first become interested in terminology?

My interest in terminology started in 1989, when I was recruited by Microsoft as Italian Language Specialist to work at its Dublin-based International Product Group. At the time I was a young lecturer at the SSLMIT of the University of Trieste on a sabbatical to read for an M.Phil. in Linguistics at Trinity College Dublin. That very year, Microsoft was moving its localisation team for Danish, Dutch, Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and, crucially, Italian, from its headquarters in Redmond (Seattle) to Dublin, at a time when Ireland was establishing a fiscal and legal framework which had also attracted to the country other IT organisations such as Intel, ADOBE and Oracle.

An important part of my responsibility for language usage in all Microsoft products and services aimed at the Italian market was the standardisation of terminology. In those days, the awareness of language usage among hardware and software developers was rather low and the very idea of localisation was still in its infancy. This meant that there were many terminological inconsistencies among Microsoft products, but also between Microsoft products and those of other software and hardware firms.

For example, the Italian translation of Save was “salvare” in MS Word for Windows but “archiviare” in MS Word for the Macintosh. Likewise, the Italian translation of directory was “directory” for Microsoft products but a now-sounding rather dated “direttorio” for IBM. The approach to terminology was term-oriented and very basic lists of terms and their translations were compiled in Excel spreadsheets with no definitions or contexts provided, but only the specification of the product where a term occurred. Since then things have

of course changed a lot, as described in her TermCoord interview by Licia Corbolante, who succeeded me as Microsoft Italian Specialist in 2001, when I decided to leave Microsoft to go back to my job in Trieste.

2. You are mainly dealing with specialised translation. How important do you think terminological research is for a translator, especially when working on technical and specialised texts?

Knowing how to search for terminology, evaluate the reliability of documentary sources, make the correct terminological choice and manage terminology for future reference, and being able to do all this both quickly and effectively, is paramount in professional technical and scientific translation. In the EMT (European Master's in Translation) reference framework, terminological and documentary research make up the so-called "Information-mining competence", one of the six competences of professional translation yielding the training objectives to be achieved, acquired and mastered at the end of any university-level translator-training programme worth its salt.

Of course, these six competences are interdependent and other competences apply to the information-mining one: knowing how to search for appropriate information to gain a better grasp of the thematic aspects of a document and learning to develop one's knowledge and terminology/phraseology in specialist fields and applications (thematic competence), and knowing how to create and manage a database (technological competence).

3. In your essay 'L'influsso dell'inglese sulle lingue speciali', you point out that Anglicisms are now frequently used in Italian not just in specialised languages, but rather in everyday language, and that they are often used by people who don't have a real knowledge of the English language. Do you think there is a possibility that this massive use of Anglicisms might impoverish the Italian language?

I think that Anglicisms introduced in Italian as a direct result of specialised translation – direct borrowings, calques, and even grammatical constructions – are generally to be considered as an enrichment of the Italian language. They are usually functional to the specialised meanings of languages for specific purposes and come from language-changing creative processes which are inherent in cultural contacts.

To try and bar the entry of these foreign words into Italian would be senseless, as it is undeniable that in Italian Anglicisms are preferred for their conciseness (e.g. in ICT security, the borrowing "key escrow" instead of the rather unwieldy "deposito di una copia della chiave") and/or their symbolism and connotative power (e.g. "big bang" and "quark"). And it would also be useless: as we all know, English has now become the international language of science and technology (as well as business and law).

However, for someone like myself, who has taught specialised translation from English to Italian for more than 30 years, it is rather difficult to believe that, putting aside these perfectly plausible practical and sociological motivations, often the real reasons for choosing an Anglicism rather than an existing Italian equivalent or translating an English word into Italian, do not lie elsewhere – for example, in the laziness of a so-called 'translator', who more often than not in specialised translation is not a professional translator but merely a domain expert who 'knows' English. The evidence of this is to be found in the reasons why Anglicisms are often imported, e.g. the difficulty of finding an easy/adequate translation for words ending

with a preposition (“turnover”, “top-down”) or with an –ing form (“computer profiling”, “aliasing”). It is because of these self-styled improvised translators that the danger of impoverishing Italian is becoming real in today’s cultural context, where in fact even professional writers often use Italian carelessly, unlovingly and, ultimately, arrogantly, because by using English borrowings instead of existing more transparent Italian equivalents they are not bothered whether their message is really comprehensible to everyone.

4. Together with Marella Magris, Maria Teresa Musacchio and Lorenza Rega you co-wrote *Manuale di Terminologia*, a collection of contributions by Italian and foreign linguists. How did you first decide to write this manual, and why did you choose to structure it like this?

The *Manuale di Terminologia* the four of us co-edited in 2002 was the first volume on terminology in Italian and was the direct result of the work we had done in previous years constructing the SSLMIT TERMit multilingual terminology database. The contributions had a theoretical base but also a mainly didactic-methodological orientation, as suggested by the sub-title “Aspetti teorici, metodologici e applicativi”.

Besides the four chapters we contributed ourselves (“Le relazioni concettuali” by Marella Magris, “I tecnicismi collaterali” by Maria Teresa Musacchio, “Il termine in un’ottica terminologica plurilingue” by Lorenza Rega, and “Terminologia e lingue speciali” by myself), some Italian specialists and also some internationally-known experts made their own contributions, such as Khurshid Ahmad, Bassey E. Antia and Felix Mayer. The reason why we chose to structure the volume as an edited collection of papers by various authors, each addressing in turn the basic concepts of terminology, rather than as a monograph co-written just by ourselves is stated in the Introduction of the book: the intention of providing a review of the ‘polyphony of voices’ currently characterising the theories, methods and applications of terminology. Today, more than 10 years later, these different approaches are still relevant, though there have been important developments in the methodologies of the discipline which make the undertaking of a revised edition of the volume necessary.

5. The former SSLMIT in Trieste has been working on TERMit for several years. Could you tell us what it is and how the project first started?

The TERMit (Terminologia per Interpreti e Traduttori) project started at the very beginning of the 1990s with the aim of systematising the terminological work carried out at the SSLMIT and making it more accessible. The ‘founding mothers’ of the project were Marella Magris, Maria Teresa Musacchio (who later moved to the University of Padova), Lorenza Rega and myself, and the first ‘commissioner’ of multilingual terminology collections was the CDI (Centro di Documentazione Italiano) of the EU Commission in the person of its then Director Daniela Murillo Perdomo, who used to send us from Brussels on a regular basis a list of very specialised topics in need of multilingual terminology, from which students choosing terminology for their dissertation could make their choice.

Besides this list, she also used to send us the documentation relating to the specific topic chosen by the student, from which the different terms in Italian and the other language(s) could be extracted in their context of occurrence in order to create conceptual correspondences between the terms in different languages. Back then, all documentation was paper-based and communication was exclusively via fax or surface mail, and the resulting terminology collections were sent to Brussels as more or less ponderous tomes, to be stacked on the shelves of the CDI as reference sources for the Italian translators and interpreters working

at the EU. Thanks to the advent of mass-scale personal computing, the TERMit project has now become a multilingual terminology database counting about 350 collections in Italian (the pivot language) and mainly in English, French, German and Spanish (but also Croatian, Dutch, Russian and Slovenian) relating to specialised domains ranging from economics and law, through IT and engineering, to pharmaceuticals and biotechnology.

6. It's mainly students who are working on implementing TERMit, choosing the topics and the languages to work on. Is there ever any specific need, such as a particular topic to work on, or a language to be added, or even a new analysis to be carried out for specific reasons? How do you deal with such specific needs?

After many years in which students could choose the topics and languages to work on for their terminology collection, students choosing to do their dissertation on terminology are now increasingly asked to work on a specific topic in the language/s of their choice. This is mainly dictated by the needs of a database whose distribution of topics across the different languages has to be balanced by means of some planning and coordination, which are both carried out by Marella Magris.

Besides the integration of an existing terminology collection by adding a new language and/or updating it because of new developments in the specialised field it refers to, students may be asked to do their terminology work on a completely new collection. This can be either as a result of a specific request by a colleague specialising in a technical or scientific discipline, who is then going to be the external expert checking the accuracy of the specialised information provided in the collection, or as part of a wider research project carried out in the department where terminology is not the main focus, with the latter increasingly taking place after the SSLMIT merged with the School of Law of the University of Trieste in 2012.

7. On the website, TERMit is described as being a *translation-oriented*. What does this mean and how is it different from other termbases?

TERMit is a concept-oriented (rather than lemma-oriented) multilingual database aimed first and foremost at translators and interpreters, though of course its terminology records can be very useful also for linguists and experts from other disciplines. Being concept-oriented, the correspondences between terms in different languages are created at the conceptual level, i.e. the starting point for each terminology record is the concept ("What is X called?"), rather than the term itself ("What does X mean?") as in a lemma-oriented approach to terminology. This is a reflection of natural mental processes and makes the translation process easier because the translator can:

- use different records to store the different meanings that the same term may have within the same discipline or in different disciplines: for example, the IT meaning and the medical meaning of the term "virus" can be stored in two different records and need not be stored in the same one (as in dictionaries: lexicographic approach);
- store in the same database an unlimited number of languages;
- look for a term irrespective of the direction of the source-language/target-language pair.

8. Do you know IATE, InterActive Terminology for Europe? Do you use it in your job?

IATE is an authoritative and very valuable online resource that is available to all, also allowing external users to provide suggestions on the development and improvement of its contents. It contains millions of terms and in all the 24 official language of the EU, making it the first port of call for any professional translator and translator trainee when faced with a translation task focusing on a specialised domain they are not already familiar with.

9. Which, do you think, are the main differences between IATE and TERMit, not just from a structural point of view but also as far as the content is concerned?

There are obvious differences between the two databases concerning sheer size, number of languages and specialised domains covered, that make a comparison nearly impossible. However, besides the fact that TERMit has ceased to be online for technical problems that we hope to solve in the not too distant future, another difference between the two databases can be found at the level of the content of individual records, where the information provided in TERMit is much more detailed. Each TERMit record contains not only the main term in the source language and its equivalent in the target language, but also a whole set of extremely valuable additional information that helps the translator make the correct terminological choice. This additional information is contained in specific fields where a practically unlimited amount of information can be inserted:

- the conceptual fields Subject, Subfield and Concept field, based on the «Dewey Decimal Classification», whereby a concept is identified via a discipline, a more specific domain and a subdomain in order to avoid homonyms;
- the fields Definition, Context, Note (where explanatory notes may be provided also via images and links to other websites), Related words (containing the terms in a direct conceptual relation with the concept of the main term) and Types of relation (specifying the type of conceptual relation between the main term and its related terms, i.e. subordinate, superordinate, coordinate, antonym or general);
- the linguistic fields Morphosyntax, Grammar, Category, Lexica, Usage label, Regional label, Style label, Phraseology and Synonyms, containing information on the part of speech (noun, phrase, verb etc.) and the grammatical use (e.g. if a term is used only in the plural) of the term, the category it belongs to (abbreviation, acronym etc.), whether it has been found in specialised dictionaries, its register (formal, colloquial, official), whether it is used in specific geographical regions (for English: United States, United Kingdom, Canada etc.), the most frequent phraseologisms containing the main term and its synonyms;
- the bibliographic field Source, containing all the information on the sources of the term, of its definition(s), of its context(s) as well as of the specialised dictionaries where the main term has been found;
- the field Equivalence it-en (or, depending on the languages, it-fr, it-de), containing information on the degree of equivalence between the two terms that, in the two languages, represent the relevant concept.
- Of course, all this information is not always necessary, and we are planning to develop a tool enabling users to visualise, besides the full set of fields, also a limited number of fields according to the specific task at hand.

About the interviewer



Maria Bregolato was born in 1989 in Padua (Italy), she earned a Master's Degree in Translation and Conference Interpreting at the Advanced School of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators (SSLMIT) of Trieste, with a thesis on terminology. During University she had the opportunity to travel and spent a semester at the Filozofski Fakultet in Zagreb, where she returned to complete her thesis, and a month in Valjevo (SRB) to perfect her knowledge of Croatian and Serbian. Moreover, she spent two months in Johannesburg (RSA) for her curricular internship. While still at University, she translated several documents for the Department of Physics of the University of Trieste, as well as for an engineering company based in Rijeka (HR). Since graduation, she has worked as a freelance translator for different clients, and attended seminars both in Italy and abroad.

Interview with Tomáš Sovinec



Tomáš Sovinec has a degree in German and Croatian studies, a doctorate in translation and interpretation at Faculty of Arts of the Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. His research is focused on translation studies, especially simultaneous interpreting from an interdisciplinary point of view. Currently he is a member of a team of researchers working on the project Transius, which is focused on legal translation from and into less frequent languages with respect to Slovak as source and target language(fphil.uniba.sk/katedry-a-odborne-pracoviska/katedra-germanistiky-nederlandistiky-a-skandinavistiky/veda-a-vyskum-wissenschaft-und-forschung/apvv/transius/o-projekte-about-the-project/) Since 2002 he is working as an freelance interpreter and translator. He interprets for political leaders such as Angela Merkel, Martin Schulz, Andrej Kiska in his home country and abroad and also for businesses, NGO-s etc.. At the Faculty of Arts of the Comenius University in Bratislava he works at the Department of German, Dutch and Scandinavian studies as an assistant professor since 2007.

1. You are an academic at Comenius University in Bratislava, where you teach translation of technical texts, as well as consecutive and simultaneous interpreting. How do you prepare your students to cope with such a diversity of terminological demands in various fields?

Yes, I am an assistant professor at the Department of German, Dutch and Scandinavian Studies, teaching the courses you have mentioned. In my courses I try to unveil the world of real texts, which I have already translated, and I also share with my students the methods I use to cope with the challenge of translating technical texts. I work with them on various topics and try to be not only a teacher but also an adviser and a partner for them. I try to explain to the students how to deal with various challenges that may occur when translating this kind of text, which is not always easy because they have not yet had experience with this type of translation. But to come back to your question, various fields require specialised glossaries, which are very closely connected with the word 'terminology'. It is therefore crucial to have the correct terminology at hand. The students have to be able to prepare their own glossaries by using dictionaries, terminological databases, etc.

2. You also work as an interpreter. Does terminology play a role in the preparation for interpreting? Do you prepare a special terminological list beforehand?

I would say that terminology, together with a very good knowledge of the culture and customs of your client, is one of the most important things when interpreting. I always prepare a glossary. Even when I am

already familiar with the topic, I always compile a special glossary or update the existing one. In our jargon we call this a 'crutch', which helps us to manage various challenging situations that occur during every interpreting task.

3. How does an interpreter cope with the situation when he or she is 'missing a word'?

Interpreting is an 'art of a moment', which means that you have to make decisions within a few seconds. Then you have to wait for the response from the other party to find out whether you have used an appropriate word or term. Words can change the meaning of a sentence, and this can cause political or even security tensions, especially during 'high-level' interpreting.

4. You have had the opportunity to interpret for Angela Merkel. How did you prepare for this occasion and what were the main challenges?

I have had the opportunity to interpret for Angela Merkel a couple of times, and as she is one of the five most influential public figures in the world it was a real challenge indeed. In my opinion, she has a 'positive aura'. That aura helps you to suppress your own stress as an interpreter, and then you just have to do your best. To prepare myself, I listened to and viewed some of her public speeches on the internet. I listened carefully to how she was speaking, noting which words and terms she often uses. Then I studied in detail all the information about the current political situation in Europe and Central Europe, and the attitudes of Germany towards crucial topics.

5. As a translator of technical texts, how do you search for terms in a specific field and how do you make sure that they are appropriate and accurate?

When I need to translate technical texts I always do a so-called 'first scan' of the document, picking out the terms which I do not know or which could be problematic. Then I search in dictionaries, both online and offline, terminological databases and my own glossaries, and I also try to contact my client for advice.

6. IATE is the European Union's interinstitutional terminology database. Do you have any experience with IATE, and if so, what do you think of it?

To be honest, I am not yet very familiar with IATE. I have heard about the Slovak STS (Slovak Terminology Network) and read that the 12th conference of the STS was held last year in Nitra under the auspices of the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU. The topic of the conference in Nitra was 'Energy in translation'. I think that databases such as IATE need further publicity to become better known among translators, and they can certainly be useful tools for us.

7. How do you view terminology in Slovakia? Is the Slovak terminology database sufficient for translators and their needs?

As I have already mentioned, the STS (Slovak Terminology Network) is one of our national databases. The question is whether STS is sufficient for our translators in Slovakia. I have visited the IATE website and I think IATE is already proving to be a very useful tool for many colleagues in Slovakia.

8. You have published an article entitled ‘Was macht einen Dolmetscher zum richtigen Dolmetscher?’ (What makes an interpreter a good interpreter?). Will you tell us the secret?

I was doing some research in this field and tried, using case studies, to ask my colleagues’ opinions on the qualities required of an interpreter. In my article I tried to explain the secret of becoming a good interpreter. Another good definition of the characteristics of an interpreter is that of Henderson, who wrote that an interpreter is: ‘A self-reliant, articulate extrovert, quick and intelligent, a jack of all trades and something of an actor, superficial, arrogant, liking variety and at times anxious and frustrated’ (Henderson 1980:223). I also asked my students, and they came up with a very interesting definition, that an interpreter has to be a kind of ‘sponge’, always ready to absorb new information and then reproduce it. So the secret is a mixture of knowledge, skills, talent and resilience.

9. Do you have any interesting or funny stories to share about your professional experience?

This is the hardest question you can ask an interpreter, who has the obligation of secrecy 😊, but I will tell you a couple of things I think the readers of this interview will find funny. First, sometimes I try to observe my counterparts’ feet under the table and to recognise from the movements of their feet whether they are stressed or not. The reason for this observation is that I recognised myself that while interpreting even my feet are very tense and strained, as they would be at the start of the hundred metres sprint race in a track and field competition. Secondly, sometimes I am sitting at the table and my clients are talking, for example, in English, not using my service. In these situations I can enjoy the cuisine and listen to the politicians’ conversation. But there is always a ‘but’: if there is a term which my clients do not know, they always ask me and I have to be ready to tell them...so you can never relax, it is always about professional readiness, but despite this I like my job very much.

About the interviewer

Ivana Kuriačková, a study visitor at TermCoord. Ivana holds a Bachelor degree in Translation and Interpreting from the Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. She also studied German Philology at the University of Vienna, Austria, as part of the Erasmus Study Programme. Her passion for languages led her steps to Luxembourg, where she is currently doing a Master Degree in Learning and Communication in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts at the University of Luxembourg.





Interview with Cristina Valentini

Multilingualism represents a challenge and an opportunity in that terminology is made available in WIPO Pearl in unusual language combinations and in languages in which terminology has to date had little currency.

Cristina Valentini is Head of the Terminology Unit, Support Section, PCT Translation Service, at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), in Geneva. She has been working at WIPO since 2010 and her main tasks involve the design and development of terminology resources and guidelines, and terminology workflow management. In 2009 she received a Ph.D. in Languages, Cultures, and Intercultural Communication from the University of Bologna, Italy.

From 2002 to 2010, **Cristina Valentini** also worked as a researcher at the University of Bologna in topics such as terminology and simultaneous interpreting, occupational health and safety terminology, harmonization of data categories in multilingual and multidisciplinary terminology databases, multimedia corpora design, application of corpus linguistics methods to audiovisual translation research, and child language brokering.

1. You have a PhD in Multimedia Corpora and Audiovisual Translation from the University of Bologna. Why terminology?

My first field of research was terminology. It all started in the early 2000s when I was graduating from the Advanced School of Modern Languages of the University of Bologna at Forlì (former SSLMIT, now DIT – Department of Interpretation and Translation). Back then, I was required to choose an innovative subject of investigation for my Master's dissertation in conference interpreting and found out that little had been written on terminology and interpreting, and particularly the terminology needs of simultaneous interpreters in the booth.

I decided to run a world survey via ALLC on this particular aspect of the profession. As a case study, I chose to work in the field of health and safety at work, a particularly hot topic at the time as a result of the incorporation of some European Directives into Italian law. This second part of the work eventually provided the basis for the development of "EOHS Term", a multilingual database project funded by the Italian National Institute for Occupational Safety and Prevention (ISPESL).

After my graduation, I spent 5 months working as a trainee in the Terminology Group of the Translation Service of the European Commission in Luxembourg in the pre-IATE era. Subsequently, I continued doing research in the field of terminology at the University of Bologna focusing in particular on the standardization

of data categories to harmonise terminology collections compiled by students in different fields. Meanwhile, my supervisor, Prof. Marcello Soffritti, had started working on a new project, the development of a multimedia corpus for conducting empirical research in the field of audio-visual translation (FORLIXT 1), which eventually became the topic of my doctoral thesis. The study of innovative research methods in the analysis of audio-visual texts has proved very useful for my work in terminology at WIPO. I am thinking in particular of the need to define corpus building criteria and classification principles for annotating linguistic data, two topics that are closely related to methods of term extraction and classification of concepts in terminology collections.

2. The section of WIPO dealing with patents is called the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Division. The PCT system has 10 official languages – Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. What are the specific challenges for terminology in this multilingual setting?

WIPO administers many IP Treaties, amongst which is the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). The PCT system provides for a unified procedure for filing patent applications internationally, and for improving access to patent applications worldwide, achieved by publishing international applications and translations of titles, abstracts, and drawings of such applications in PATENTSCOPE, the WIPO patent database. These translations are made available in English and French from the ten PCT publication languages, namely the six UN official languages -Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish- and German, Japanese, Korean, and Portuguese, whilst translations of search and patentability reports are also published, in English.

Compiling multilingual terminology in this particular setting presents a twofold challenge that involves, on the one hand, language and, on the other, concept coverage. The ten official languages each need to be adequately represented from a numerical point of view, with the ideal objective being to provide a designation in each language for each concept; however, this is not easy to achieve. In addition, and more generally, whilst it is not uncommon to meet professional linguists (translators or terminologists) who have certain European PCT languages in their language combination (e.g. German, English, French, Spanish), it is more difficult to find language experts skilled in language combinations such as, for example, Chinese-Spanish, Korean-Arabic, Japanese-Russian who could assess equivalence of designations between such languages. Different academic approaches to the study of languages and translation, as well as geographical specificities, may pose additional problems: for instance, terminology is not a traditional component of translation and interpreting curricula in some Asian countries; Arabic tends to show a relatively low level of standardization of technical terms compared to other languages due to the existence of concurrent regional varieties. The situation is such that in many cases English becomes the pivot language for assessing cross-linguistic equivalence in our termbase, regardless of the fact that the concept may have originated in a different language.

The second challenge is related to the broad range of subject fields relevant for patents and the availability of literature in such fields in the different languages. Creating a database of interest for patents means including concepts from virtually any field in which human activities can develop. This is already a tremendous challenge, which is complicated further by the need to find evidence for terms in ten different languages. A correlation often exists between a language and a subject field, with repercussions on the documentation available for term extraction. Each language can be more or less associated with specific fields of activity, depending on the vitality of the businesses and economy at a certain point in time of

the country or countries in which the language is spoken, and this is reflected in the numbers of patents filed nationally and internationally. In this context, English is currently the acknowledged lingua franca of science and technology (researchers are encouraged to publish their papers in English worldwide), and this can limit even more the resources available in the various languages and the development of specific terminologies.

Finally, it is worth remembering that, unlike other sectors of WIPO and other international organizations, in the PCT we mainly extract terminology from documents that we do not originally draft and which, because of their very nature, may include terms whose identification can be very demanding.

3. A patent is both a technical and legal text. How would you characterise the terminology of this text type?

Patents are complex text types. The rights that they confer are territorial and consequently patent language may be construed differently according to the jurisdiction. Moreover, a patent is composed of different sections (i.e. abstract, claims, description or specification) in which the legal and technical nature of patents is evidenced to a different extent, with the description normally being closer to technical and scientific texts, and claims conversely more similar to legal texts. In addition, there is a tension in patent language between the need for clarity and the need for protection. As such, patent drafters do use precise and accurate terminology in order for experts to understand and reproduce the invention, but they also often resort to vague and descriptive terminology as they seek to broaden the scope of protection for their invention. In fact, patent drafting manuals often recommend authors to become their own lexicographers and to define their terms so that they can convey the meaning they want them to convey.

In this context, it is obvious that the lexicalization of concepts and the choice of determiners and qualifiers in a designation is never random or neutral. Patents are characterized by a high degree of terminological variation, both conceptual and denominative: new concepts are often established only in order for the document to comply with the specific legal function sought; established terms may be given new meanings and accepted synonymy challenged. Whilst some of these terms may be regarded as “true neologisms”, reflecting the science-in-the-making process, others are only valid and accurate within the scope of the patent application in which they appear. All these considerations can make the extraction of scientific and technical terms from the patent literature and termbase compilation a very challenging endeavour. Conversely, patents offer the added value of containing definitions which – provided they are carefully checked – can be used to enhance terminology compilation.

4. WIPO Pearl is WIPO’s multilingual terminology portal, giving access to scientific and technical terms derived from patent documents. Could you tell us a bit more about this free multilingual terminology database?

WIPO Pearl constitutes the first attempt to make freely available a multilingual terminology database of scientific and technical terms extracted from patents in 10 languages. The portal currently includes data from the PCT Termbase, the terminology database being developed in the PCT Translation Service of WIPO.

The main challenge in designing WIPO Pearl was to develop an interface that would give a wide range of users direct access to patent terminology, and to use terminology as a relay point for searching other databases such as PATENTSCOPE. Our aim was to make key information immediately visible. Thus, in the

traditional Linguistic Search, the view of the hit list results includes indication of the subject field and subfield, preferred term, synonyms/abbreviations and, where relevant, term usage. Definitions in the context field are a mouse-click away. Term reliability is clearly indicated by coloured flags, and the user can filter the results upstream or downstream, as desired. If fuller terminological information is desired for the record, this can be accessed in another tab.

Moreover, searched terms can be displayed innovatively in clusters in the Concept Map View, or searched and displayed directly via the Concept Map Search Interface, which offers a graphical representation of semantic relations existing between concepts in a specific subfield.

Hence, for the first time in an institutional terminology portal, WIPO Pearl combines traditional linguistic search with an ontology browsing option. Taken together, these features allow WIPO Pearl to be regarded more as a knowledge tool than a traditional terminology portal.

Concept-orientation, multidisciplinary and multilingualism are the features that make this resource especially interesting not only for language professionals but for the patent community and the public at large. In particular, multilingualism represents a challenge and an opportunity in that terminology is made available in WIPO Pearl in unusual language combinations and in languages in which terminology has to date had little currency. We hope that WIPO Pearl can become a reference for terminology in such languages.

5. All content in WIPO Pearl has been validated and given a term reliability score. How does the validation process work and who are its main stakeholders?

All content in WIPO Pearl is human-generated and validated. Validation is the first step in ensuring the quality of a termbase. Every contribution made to the PCT Termbase is subject to the scrutiny of a validator. No term block is published in WIPO Pearl until it has been awarded the status “validated”, the only exception being WIPO MT results, derived from WIPO’s patent trained machine translation engine, that are provided in case an equivalent in one of the target languages has not yet been entered in the PCT Termbase.

How does it work in practice? Concepts and terms are contributed daily by our staff terminologists, translators and short-term terminology trainees. Each term is then assigned to a validator (typically another fellow terminologist and/or translator, ideally a native speaker of the language of the term in question). Terminology validation involves confirming that a record accurately reflects the expression of a single concept and that the term in a given language is indeed the most accurate designation for that concept. In addition, validation also ensures that the content of each field is formally consistent with the principles established in our terminology guidelines.

Further, when terms are switched from “candidate” to “validated”, a term reliability score is assigned according to a scale of 1 to 4. The type of term and the nature of the validation are the two main criteria here. When the term is a proposed term (no reliable source is found) the score assigned can be 1 or 2 depending if the validation was carried out by the PCT Translation Service only or by the PCT Translation Service and external subject field experts. Conversely, if a reliable source can be found, the term is assigned a score of 3 (validation by the PCT Translation Service only) or 4, the maximum level of reliability in WIPO Pearl if both the PCT Translation Service and external subject field experts validated the entry.

Maintaining the necessary levels of quality in terminology validation is paramount to delivering a reliable product that users can trust. As such, before publication, a series of semi-automated checks is also run

on validated term blocks with the aim of identifying any termbase fields that may have been filled in incorrectly. This further ensures quality.

6. WIPO Pearl was launched in September 2014 and currently contains some 16,300 concepts and over 110,000 terms. How do you envision WIPO Pearl in ten years' time?

Grown, matured, both in quantity and quality, and more and more popular among a growing number and variety of users! WIPO Pearl is still a very young resource. We plan soon to add terminology collections from other sectors of WIPO (e.g. copyright, brands and designs) and this will broaden the scope of the portal.

We hope to develop a network of partners that would help further to position WIPO Pearl as a key resource in the field of patent and IP terminology worldwide. We want to involve subject field experts in the validation process and establish partnerships with scientific and technical institutions. We also want to extend our collaboration with students in universities in which terminology is taught, and we would welcome approaches for collaboration from universities or research establishments.

Finally, we hope that WIPO Pearl will continue to offer a number of distinct advantages by favouring enhancement of document search and access to knowledge embedded in patents and IP documentation via increasingly accurate and user-friendly concept maps.

In a world in which users do not want to be overburdened by unverified information, it is important that WIPO Pearl continues to strive for quality. Reliable language resources are essential to supporting the knowledge and content industries, and our aim is for WIPO Pearl to be perceived as a reference for multilingual scientific, technical and legal terminology.

7. How do you see the future of terminology not only in multilingual public organizations, in particular in multilingual business organizations?

Terminology is a key component of the world as we know it and will know it. I can see two complementary ways in which terminology can play an important role for public institutions and private businesses alike. On one hand, the third generation Web which is synonymous with semantic web, natural language processing, data mining, and knowledge, language independent, networks in which concept-based terminology can provide a common framework for comparing and bringing together the different languages; on the other, the need to go towards the locale in which accurate terminology compilation in the most disparate languages can help to reach people in the most remote corners of the world. In both scenarios, trust and confidence should be the goals of any terminology endeavour.

About the interviewer

Ana Rita Remígio holds a PhD in Linguistics – Terminology – from the University of Aveiro, Portugal. Her academic background also includes a graduation in English and German Teaching from the same university, and a Post-Graduation Course in Computer Assisted Translation from the Institute of Accounting and Administration of Oporto. Ana Rita has worked as Technology Transfer Project Manager at the University of Aveiro from 2009 to 2013, has also taught 'Terminology and Translation Technologies' at the Polytechnic School of Technology and Management of Águeda for several years, and has worked as a Patent translator. Currently Ana Rita Remígio is a Portuguese Patent and Trademark Attorney and a European Trademark and Design Attorney. Both worlds – Terminology and Intellectual Property – daily meet in patent translation, revision and drafting.





Interview with Adrian Wymann

Interview with Adrian Wymann, Head of the Swiss Chancellery's Terminology Section

Adrian Wymann (born 1964) studied General Linguistics, Sociology and Korean Studies at the Universities of Bern and Zurich and wrote his PhD about „The Expression of Modality in Korean“(1996). After several years as a research assistant for projects at the University of Berne (inter alia text optimization in the public administration and the evaluation of the language questions of the Swiss census of 1990) and as a research associate for various Swiss federal offices, he first became vice-director of the section Workforce and Immigration for the Federal Office for Migration in 2005. Later he became Director of the department Work and Integration in the same office, until he switched to the Federal Chancellery in 2011. Since then he holds the function of the Head of the Terminology section. He has significantly contributed to development of the Swiss terminology database TERMDAT. From 2013 to 2014 he served as president of the Conference of Translation Services of European States (COTSOES) and helped to strengthen the cooperation and networking between translators and terminologists across all of Europe.

1. As a linguist, you could choose many different kinds of job: how did you end up in terminology and what do you find most interesting about your work?

I came to terminology indirectly. My previous work, for almost 15 years, was in the field of migration – and, in fact, that had been something of a professional diversion for me. So when I became Head of the Terminology Section at the Swiss Chancellery I was really returning to my vocational roots.

What I find fascinating about the actual work I do is its variety. On the one hand, terminology in the Swiss Federal Administration plays a core role in facilitating multilingualism, and we therefore have five working languages (German, French, Italian, Romansh and English), all of which are spoken within my team – so it is an ideal working environment for language enthusiasts. On the other hand, our work spans all the subject areas dealt with by a modern government, so the diversity in terms of content is almost unlimited: drones, VAT, flood defences, research and innovation, social security evoting, sport – you name it, we cover it. And that means we are in active contact with specialists in those fields, which is another thing that makes our job particularly interesting. Frequently, too, our work touches on all sorts of actual linguistic issues, for example when we are dealing with neologisms.

2. What exactly does the Swiss Chancellery's Terminology Section do, and what does your job, as Head of it, entail? Have your duties changed much in recent years?

The tasks that the Terminology Section of the Swiss Chancellery performs are set out very succinctly in Article 15 of the Regulation of 14 November 2012 on Federal Administration Language Services: it organises and coordinates terminology work for the Federal Administration, manages the TERMDAT central terminology database and, working with the various Departments (i.e. Ministries), implements terminology projects.

As Section Head, I have to ensure, most importantly, that all the pre-requisites are in place for delivering a high-quality service, and I have to pursue and promote interaction with the language services and sector-specific services of the various government departments. Another ongoing part of my job is awareness-raising among decision makers about the implications and the importance of systematic terminology work. It goes without saying that these tasks are expanding – while our resources are shrinking – and the only way to stay more or less on top of it all is by relying on IT tools. We keep a very close eye on developments on that front, and that is also where we have seen the greatest change in the way we work.

3. What is special about terminology work in Switzerland? Are there specific difficulties you face, or specific advantages you have? And have these changed down the years?

Multilingualism is a defining characteristic of Switzerland, the country is enriched by it and it contributes to our identity – but it is not something that 'just happens' and it cannot be taken for granted. Multilingual communication about specialist subject matter, which is what goes on in, and is generated by, the Swiss Federal Administration, relies crucially on congruent multilingual terminology. So we see our work – always in four and sometimes in five languages – as contributing significantly to multilingualism both at official level and among individuals.

Something I would describe not as a difficulty but certainly as a challenge is the decentralised way in which Switzerland, as a federation, is administered – and that is why we also cooperate closely with the four multilingual cantons of Bern, Fribourg, Valais and Graubünden. This ongoing interaction at various levels is, in turn, an advantage because it means that very specific terminology needs (in relation to a current referendum, for example) are regularly flagged up. Other basic requirements are for the proper coordination of terminology work and rapid access to relevant information – and we try to deliver on both those fronts on a daily basis. The biggest change has been in the speed with which new terminology needs arise and develop.

4. About TERMDAT, the Swiss terminology database: how important is it nationally and internationally and who uses it?

TERMDAT, the Swiss Federal Administration's terminology database, contains approximately 400 000 multilingual entries in Switzerland's four official languages (German, French, Italian and Romansh) as well as English. While there is a certain emphasis on terms from Swiss Federal law, the full range of subject matter that the Federal Administration covers is reflected there. TERMDAT's importance lies, without a doubt, in its ability to supply equivalent terms, which frequently form the basis for multilingual communication on sector-specific topics in the official languages (and English). TERMDAT can tell you, for example, how to say

‘spending brake’ in French, or ‘net migration’ in Italian, or ‘plea of nullity’ in Romansh, or ‘majority of cantons’ in German.

TERMDAT has been accessible online (www.termdat.ch) since 2013, there are no restrictions on using it and it is free – and we have all been amazed by the level of demand for it. Of the more than 10 million searches performed in the database by users worldwide in 2015, approximately three-quarters were by users in Switzerland. Most of the non-Swiss users are in our neighbouring countries but it is fair to say that people all over the world consult TERMDAT regularly.

5. Why are English and other non-Swiss languages included in TERMDAT?

English is not one of Switzerland’s official languages but it plays an important role in the country. This is particularly true in the private sector, notably in the export and services sectors and in tourism. In the public sector, while there is no rule that documents have to be published in English, an English version of important statutory texts is available (although it is not deemed authentic for legal purposes). As a European country, Switzerland has close ties with the European Union and, for that reason (even post Brexit), the Federal Chancellery follows the conventions of UK English, except in the case of documents intended specifically for a US readership. Equivalent entries in TERMDAT in other languages come mainly from multilateral projects – and it is worth pointing out here that TERMDAT is designed to be able to display terms in an unlimited number of languages, reproducing all their different alphabets and special characters.

6. There is a link from the Terminology Section website to the European terminology database IATE. What is IATE’s role in relation to what you do, and do you personally work with it?

IATE plays an important role. Looking back, systematic terminology work in the Swiss Federal Administration began in the 1980s in the days of Eurodicautom, so we were in contact for many years, with two-way data exchanges. Several years ago, however, we decided to discontinue these data transfers because the current standard of networking makes them unnecessary. Basically, anyone looking for Swiss terminology will find it in TERMDAT, while for anything else we recommend, and indeed we use, IATE. It is possible that a meta-search engine could, in future, link user access to the two databases as necessary. At the moment, however, our approaches are not entirely identical, for example on issues like copyright (where we have a very open stance).

7. How, in your view, does IATE relate to TERMDAT and vice versa?

We no longer maintain collections of terms imported from one another but there is ongoing contact and exchange, mostly about methodology and workflow issues. For our part, we appreciate being able to discuss these matters openly with colleagues – and we also meet up at least once a year in the Terminology Working Group of the Conference of Translation Services of European States (COTSOES).

8. Have you come into contact with the European Parliament's Terminology Coordination Unit and, if so, are there areas of mutual interest between your Service and it?

The fact that our resources are limited restricts us in terms of contact with foreign and international terminology bodies. To date, we have focused mainly on COTSOES, IATE, the German-language Terminology Council RaDT, the Italian Terminology Association Ass.I.Term and the French General Commission for Terminology. Specific questions frequently lead to new contacts so we might well be in touch with the EP Terminology Coordination Unit in the future.

- Read the interview in German [here](#).

About the interviewer

Martina Christen, study visitor at TermCoord. Born in Zurich (Switzerland) in 1991. After her Bachelor Studies in Sociology and Social Sciences at the University of Basel she wanted a taste of working abroad and decided to accept an internship at the Swiss Embassy in Luxembourg. Convinced by the Luxembourgish lifestyle, she stayed and is now doing a Master Degree in Learning and Communication in Multilingual and Multicultural Contexts at the University of Luxembourg. Her focus lies on topics of migration, integration, intercultural communication, social inequality and multilingualism. As a mediaphile, she volunteers as a Facebook manager for a Red Cross vintage store and has several ongoing public Facebook and Instagram projects.





Interview with Folkert Zijlstra

Folkert Zijlstra studied English and International Relations at the universities of Utrecht (the Netherlands), Birmingham and Sussex (the United Kingdom). After his studies, he started his career in the travel industry, where he specialised in IATA (International Air Transport Association) fare construction and special fares. In 1989 he joined the Netherlands Ministry of Defence as an English translator and rapidly became head of its translation service. In 1995 he started participating in the NATO Terminology Programme as a delegate for the Netherlands and joined NATO in 2005 as a terminologist, subsequently becoming Senior Terminologist and Head of the NATO Terminology Office, part of the NATO Standardisation Office.

1. **‘Why is terminology your passion?’ is the title of our collection of interviews with prominent terminologists. I would like to start this interview by asking you how you would reply to this question?**

In a way you could say that terminology is ‘applied philosophy’, in the sense that it forces you to think about the nature of a concept, that is: to think about the essence of something, about what it really is. This is an exercise I enjoy.

2. **What feeds your passion for terminology, and what was your journey to become Head of the Terminology Service of the NATO Standardisation Office?**

As I said, I like the reflective nature of the work and the fact that it leads to something concrete and useful. In the NATO Terminology Office, in our role as ‘coordinators’ of a terminology process involving many different parts, actors and bodies in the Alliance, we interact with and meet many different people, which is also a great bonus!

In the early 1990s, when I had just become head of the Translation Service of the Netherlands Ministry of Defence, they asked me whether I was interested in becoming a member of the Netherlands delegation to one of NATO’s major terminology fora. One meeting led to another, since I took great pleasure in the discussions that we had at these meetings and in meeting colleagues from other member nations.

At the beginning of the millennium, NATO decided that its terminology should be developed and approved according to the same rules and standards and that they would hire a professional terminologist to support the effort. Since I had certain ideas about what should ideally be done by ‘Brussels’, I decided to try my luck and simply filled out an application form.

Less than a year after I was finally hired, the then head of the office, a Canadian lieutenant colonel, was assigned to another function by his authorities in Ottawa and left the office without being replaced. I offered to try to fill the gap. After that it took several years to get this previously military position 'civilianised', and my appointment as head was only recently formalised.

3. What is the role of terminology in NATO?

The main function of NATO terminology is to facilitate communication – between different member nations and with NATO's partner nations. So, in that sense, terminology in NATO is no different from that in other organisations, whether national or international, private or public. I am told that sometimes NATO's terminology even helps create clarity in the jargon used in different services of the armed forces of the same country – especially the English-speaking member nations.

What makes the role of terminology in NATO different, however, is that NATO has gone one step further, by recognising that terminology is a crucial enabler of what is referred to as 'interoperability' between the member and partner nations, i.e. the ability to cooperate in pursuit of common objectives. If you need to work together to achieve the same goals, you must be sure that you are talking about the same things – otherwise you are talking at cross-purposes. As a result of this, NATO has adopted a formal process for the development and approval of terminology, called the NATO Terminology Programme, and when the terminology is officially approved, 'NATO Agreed', it must be used in the documents that NATO produces.

4. In 2015 NATOTerm was introduced as a migration from the NATO Terminology Management System (NTMS). What makes NATOTerm an improvement on the former NTMS?

In June 2015 we launched [NATOTerm](#) (TermOTAN in French) as the successor system to the NATO Terminology Management System (NTMS), which had been developed internally in NATO. The NTMS was only accessible via the internal networks and the protected site of the NATO Standardisation Office. By contrast, NATOTerm is accessible to the public. This change was required because of an official policy objective.

More important for the NATO Terminology Office, as managers of NATO's terminology, is that NATOTerm is a uninotational, or concept-based, database, which the NTMS was not. This is a huge relief, of course. I think that NATOTerm is also an improvement for the users, because, irrespective of the designation of a concept they use to search NATOTerm, the system will take them to the record for the concept, where they will see all the data and metadata at a glance.

5. The status of the terminology in NATOTerm is either 'NATO Agreed', 'Not NATO Agreed' or 'Cancelled'. What is the validation procedure for a term to be labelled 'NATO Agreed'?

I have already mentioned the NATO Terminology Programme. Under this programme, authors of NATO documents must use NATO-Agreed terminology if available, and if necessary submit proposals to add their new terminology, to modify existing NATO-Agreed terminology or even to cancel existing NATO-Agreed terminology for the key concepts they use in their documents. So the terminology is developed by the experts themselves. When the NATO Terminology Office receives the proposals, they are checked

for consistency with our internal standard for writing terminology, which is based on the ISO standards for terminology work, as well as for consistency with existing NATO-Agreed terminology, consistency between the English and French, etc. The NATO Terminology Office also proposes changes and improvements if necessary – in dialogue with the experts, of course. When they are happy with the substance, and the NATO Terminology Office with the form, we submit the proposal to the relevant senior committee of the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest decision-making body, for approval by the member nations. In addition to this work, i.e. the 'regular' work in our office, the NATO Terminology Office is working on importing the legacy terminology. Almost from NATO's establishment in 1949, its specialist communities have felt the need to lay down their terminology in all manner of 'glossaries', 'lexicons', 'definition lists', 'dictionaries', etc. We have approximately two dozen of them. Since the NATO Terminology Programme, with its more formal and prescriptive approach to terminology, was only established at the beginning of the millennium, there is an enormous amount of terminology that has been used for decades but is not, strictly speaking, 'NATO Agreed'. We have therefore established a calendar to import this legacy terminology into NATOTerm by 2019. The preparation of the import files is going to take up a lot of our time in the next few years – even without the quality assurance that we apply to 'regular' terminology proposals. This terminology will have a different status in the database. The idea is that this terminology, once it is in NATOTerm, will be processed for 'NATO Agreement' as the need arises over the years ahead.

6. How would you compare and/or differentiate between our interinstitutional termbase IATE and the NATOTerm database?

Like NATOTerm, IATE is a very user-friendly database, which we use from time to time. Of course, IATE has many more languages than NATOTerm, which requires the user to indicate his or her preferences for the search results. In NATOTerm, the user only needs to indicate the language preference for the interface and the source language. Like NATOTerm, IATE uses a taxonomy. In NATOTerm we still have a great many entries without taxons, but we are working on that. NATOTerm also allows users to filter terminology by almost any field in the record. This is important for our specialist communities, who wish to be able to 'recreate' their specialist 'glossaries', 'lexicons', etc. by extracting the data from NATOTerm.

7. How do you envisage the future of NATOTerm? What plans do you have for its future development that you can share with us?

Well, I have just mentioned the importing of legacy terminology. Another, similar, project is the importing of terminology from other major standard-developing organisations, such as ISO, ICAO, IEC, CEN-CENELEC or IEEE, contained in NATO 'glossaries', 'lexicons', etc. That is to say: terminology that is used by NATO, but that has not been developed by NATO itself. By the way, this is in line with the general principle in NATO terminology of using civilian terminology as much as possible – just as NATO uses other appropriate civilian standards whenever possible. This civilian terminology will also be imported into NATOTerm 'as is' and its status will be 'NATO Adopted'. Yet another status!

In 2017 we will also enhance NATOTerm with an 'export facility', which allows users to print off a terminology collection that they have filtered. We could perhaps also see the addition of more languages to NATOTerm. Technically, this not a problem, because the system can handle any alphabet, as well as collections in different databases. However, this data would then have to be added as non-official data, in the sense that NATO will not take responsibility for it. So, who knows, one day...? This should keep us busy for a while!

8. Recently, in October 2016, you visited our Terminology Coordination Unit. What did you take from this meeting? Do you have insights from NATO that could benefit terminologists globally?

What I took away from this meeting was that the work done by the Terminology Coordination Unit enables terminology units throughout the EU institutions to do their work, by creating what is in fact the necessary infrastructure and conditions for them. It would be great if we had a separate service for this at NATO Headquarters, but then, of course, we are much smaller and we only have two official languages. On the other hand, we also enjoy doing some of the kind of work done by the Terminology Coordination Unit ourselves, managing NATOTerm, giving terminology workshops to the specialist communities in NATO, etc. In fact, there is quite a lot on the plus side, as it brings a lot of variety – but we need to keep it manageable, of course. When you ask if there is anything terminologists around the world can learn in particular from NATO, I think that it is the regime of prescriptive terminology. By introducing new rules for terminology at the beginning of this millennium, NATO has set a very high standard of accountability and transparency as a public organisation. To be fair though, I have to add that there are still parts of NATO where we need ‘to spread the gospel’!

Furthermore, it is also quite a labour-intensive process, which we are trying to streamline. What I can say, though, is that most other terminologists that I have met would probably agree with me that terminology work, like translation, gives a great deal of satisfaction. I count myself lucky to be doing it!

Giulia Mattoni

Born in Ancona, Italy, Giulia holds a BA in Modern and Contemporary Literature from the University of Macerata and an MSc in Translation Technology from Dublin City University. She also studied at the University of Alicante in Spain, as part of the Erasmus Study Programme. She gained experience in machine translation through her Master’s thesis, which was conducted in collaboration with two industrial partners, Keywords Studios and KantanMT, and consisted in evaluating the feasibility of integrating statistical machine translation and post-editing into the game localisation industry.





Interview with Alicia María Zorrilla

Alicia María Zorrilla is an Argentine linguist specialized in normative grammar and lexicography. She obtained a degree in Philosophy and Letters at the Complutense University of Madrid and a PhD in Letters at Salvador University in Argentina. Her reputation allowed her to become the vice-president of the Academia Argentina de Letras (Argentine Academy of Letters), which carries out research on local popular vocabulary and publishes works on the norms of written and oral Spanish. She is also a member of the [Real Academia Española](#) (Royal Spanish Academy), which participates in the creation of standardized dictionaries for general and specific uses of Spanish. With other member institutions, she carries out terminology research in the field of Grammar.

Dr. Zorrilla is a founding member of the Fundación Litterae, a training and research facility which offers grammar, lexicology and terminology courses. Her foundation has created an innovative degree in proofreading for translators. Both she and her foundation work closely with translation and editing associations in Argentina.

Read our interview with Alicia María Zorrilla in **Spanish** [here](#).

1. Dr. Zorrilla, in your various books, you write about normative grammar and the correct use of language. As a member of the Argentine Academy of Letters or AAL, you help define the norms for the local variety of Spanish. From a normative point of view, how does one use become preferable to another in a particular region?

Pragmatic norms come from actual speech, from each individual's creativity. People put their language into practice when they speak. Through this practice, they reinforce what they have learned and come up with new words and phrases, which can spread through continued use. The preference for one word over another depends on the choices made by speakers. In Spanish, if they colloquially say *delante de mí*; *debajo de la mesa*; *en busca de su hijo*; *detrás de la puerta* es porque *ante mí*; *bajo la mesa*; *en pos de su hijo* y *tras la puerta* [1], this is because they consider the latter to be more formal, more appropriate for literature than for spoken language. The context, i.e. the linguistic environment, imbues a word or phrase with meaning and value.

[1] Note: possible equivalents in English may be: "the person in front of me" instead of "the person before me", "from now on" instead of "henceforth", "under the table" instead of "beneath the table", or "do a task" instead of "execute a task".

2. Some of your works have dealt with lexicography. Much of the literature on the matter highlights the differences between lexicography and terminology[2]. Do you think there is a relationship between the two? Are there similarities?

From my point of view, lexicography cannot exist without terminology. As part of Linguistics, the former works with various theories to create dictionaries or glossaries, the latter records terms that are specific to a certain type of science, discipline or subject-matter. A term is a word, a linguistic unit, and it is part of a dictionary or glossary. I think there is a fruitful interaction between them.

[2] For example, www.termnet.org and the [Lexikos journal](#).

3. When a specific foreign word or phrase is widely used in a specialized or scientific domain to refer to a new concept, does the norm usually dictate that this word be replaced by a synonym or a neologism? How can we make sure the specialized/scientific community understands this alternative and uses it to replace the foreign word?

Xenisms or foreignisms in their original form can be used in italics[3] if they do not have a translation. If there is a synonym that is not a foreignism, it is advisable to use the latter. It is true that in the context of science and technology, this is not always a possibility because some specialized foreignisms are very common. In such cases, they should be used in italics the first time they are used in each text.

[3] Note that Zorrilla is referring to stylistic and lexical rules for Spanish that can also be applied to English but not necessarily to all languages. Foreignisms in science and technology are very common in Spanish (especially so-called Anglicisms and Gallicisms), while in these fields, English tends to use neologisms.

4. When can a neologism in a specialized domain be considered correct by the general norm? How does the AAL work with these new specialized terms?

When a neologism is morphologically well-formed and it is appropriate for the meaning it is intended to convey, it is no longer considered a neologism, if it is extensively used in its specialized field. The Academia Argentina de Letras (Argentine Academy of Letters), much like other Spanish Language Academies, researches new terms and sends the [Real Academia Española](#) (Royal Spanish Academy) reports on the matter. They are then included in scholarly guidelines (or norms) and are recorded in the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (Spanish Language Dictionary) if their extended use is confirmed.

5. You have created many workshops, courses, and institutions for editors. You are a founding member of the Fundación Litterae, a training institution for editors and translators, which sometimes offers terminology workshops. The Foundation has created the degree in Editing for Translators. Is there a difference between editors of monolingual texts and translation editors? In your opinion, could terminology studies be relevant for both or is this field outside of their scope?

The LITTERAE Foundation, of which I have been the president for 23 years, has created a degree, the International Proofreader for Spanish, with the support of the Fundéu[4] [Urgent Spanish Foundation]. It is aimed at professionals who wish to work in a new field and improve their writing skills. It is a two-year course. If students pass the first year, they become copyholders. If they pass the second year, they become

international proofreaders. There is an optional third year in order to obtain an Advanced Diploma in Spanish Proofreading. We also offer a course for Spanish translation editing so that translators can correct their own mistakes. It is not a degree, but rather a certificate detailing the classes each student has passed. There are four subjects: Spanish Grammar, Spanish Linguistic Norms, Norms for Written Language, and Text Editing.

This year we have a new degree: Spanish Translation Editing. It consists of a two year program and it includes classes with specialized terminology for translators, such as legal and economic/financial translation editing, literary translation editing, scientific and technical translation editing and Terminology.

[4] The Fundación del Español Urgente is a non-profit organization based in Spain founded in 2005 with the aim of fostering the accepted, normatively correct use of Spanish in the media. It is sponsored by the EFE Agency and the BBVA bank and counseled by the Royal Spanish Academy. It publishes subject-specific glossaries for current media topics such as environment, sports, politics, geography, etc., focusing on the norms that regulate the correct use of each lexical unit.

6. When translating a specialized text in a field that is constantly changing, a translator may find several different options in the target language to translate the same term in the source language. Sometimes the most widely used of these alternatives are foreign words or neologisms that not always conform to the norm. In your opinion, what factor/s should prevail when deciding which translation is correct? (For example, should we prioritize frequency of use, adaptability to the norm, reference to scholarly uses, etc.)

From the point of view of my academic background, the scholarly norm should prevail. But many neologisms are well formed, and meet the requirements of the grammatical system. Their extended use indicates that they are necessary because there are no appropriate substitutes in the target language. In these cases, if they make a text clearer and follow local linguistic norms, they should be accepted. Of course, we must always take into account the kind of text with which we are working. Translating a novel is not the same as translating a medical or legal text.

It is important not to use a neologism for a word that already exists in the target language, since this would show poor vocabulary on the translator's part. For example, in Spanish, the following lexical neologisms should not be used: *accesar instead of acceder; *aconsejamiento [advise] instead of consejo; *atractividad [attractiveness] instead of atractivo; *negligen [neglect] instead of descuidan; *profesionabilidad [professionalism] instead of profesionalidad; *similaridades [similarities] instead of semejanzas; *usabilidad [usability] instead of uso.

Some semantic neologisms that should not be accepted in Spanish are: **detentar** [hold] instead of ejercer [exercise], desempeñar [perform] o poseer [possess]; **insumir** [invest/involve] instead of consumir [consume/take up]; **suplantar** [impersonate] instead of reemplazar [replace], suplir [make up for] or sustituir [substitute].

7. What is the aim of the Academia Argentina de Letras (AAL)? What type of research does it carry out?

The tasks carried out by the AAL, founded in Buenos Aires on August 13th 1931, are the following: unifying the study of speech and of texts produced in Argentina in order to enrich the language; being in charge of creating, judging and regulating national literary awards; promoting ways to better Argentine theater, as it is key for popular culture and education; safeguarding the correct use of the language, through direct intervention or by helping national and province departments or individuals who may ask for its counsel.

The AAL carries out lexicographic and lexicological research and periodically publishes its *Diccionario del habla de los argentinos* [Dictionary of Argentine Spoken Spanish]. It also publishes a series of glossaries ("The Academy and the Language of the People") focused the specialized language of breads, homemade deserts, meats, politics, barrels, babies, folk medicine in the province of San Juan, cars, cycling, Andean mountaineering, mate^[5], folk weapons, tango, local dancing, theater, basketry, etc.

In short, the aim of the AAL is not only to record the characteristics of the Spanish spoken in the River Plate region or in the Argentine territory, but also to take action to regulate the use of the language and stimulate literary studies.

I also wish to highlight the work of our [Library](#), founded in 1932, which houses the most important book collection in the country. It is specialized in Linguistics, and in Argentine, Spanish and Hispano-American literature. Its director and some of its librarians carry out research that is later published by this institution.

^[5] Mate is a traditional South American infused drink.

8. How does the Academia Argentina de Letras (AAL) cooperate with the Real Academia Española (Royal Spanish Academy) and other Latin American institutions? How is this cooperation coordinated/ managed?

The AAL has a Department of Philological Research, made up of graduate and postgraduate scholars specialized in Letters. This Department collaborates with plenary sessions of scholars, prepares comments and additions to the *Diccionario de la lengua española* [Dictionary of the Spanish Language] and updates local lexical studies. The reports issued by this Department are sent to the Real Academia Española [Royal Spanish Academy] to supplement future editions of its Dictionary.

Today, this book is prepared by 22 [Spanish Language Academies](#) and its acronym is no longer DRAE (Royal Spanish Academy Dictionary) but rather DLE (Dictionary of the Spanish Language)^[6]. With other Latin American academic institutions, the AAL can work as a consultant in a specific subject-matter if asked to do so. Institutions combine their efforts to unify the Spanish language.

^[6] In Spanish, the name changed from "Diccionario de la Real Academia Española" to "Diccionario de la Lengua Española".

9. Do you find that the work that AAL and RAE do can benefit from and/or contribute to international terminology databases? Do you use terminology databases as a scholarly source for your research?

Of course. I am sure that the Department of Philological Research at the AAL uses them.

I specialize in Spanish Linguistic Norms, which means that I constantly study the norms that regulate the correct way to express oneself in oral and written form in Spanish. My focus is on Argentine linguistic norms. However, I work with Grammar terminology as well. At the moment I am part of the Interacademy Commission constituted to create a [Glossary of Grammar Terms](#). This project is carried out by 22 Spanish Academies and I represent the Argentine Academy of Letters and I coordinate the work done by the River Plate linguistic region (Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay).

10. Have you ever worked with the InterActive Terminology for Europe database – IATE? Do you believe it could also be useful for editors and translators in other regions?

I have never worked with IATE. However, thanks to this interview, I was able to access the database and, after searching some terms, I find it can be a useful tool for translators in my country.



Interviewer

María Julia Francés has a degree in translation by the “Olga Cossetini” Institute for Higher Education and the University of Rosario, Argentina. She specializes in intercultural communication and cooperation through media projects. She also studied International Relations and is currently a student at the University of Barcelona’s Postgraduate program in International Cultural Cooperation and Management. She was a study visitor at TermCoord, the [Terminology Coordination Unit](#) at the European Parliament.

Interview with Anne Zribi-Hertz



The study of creole languages calls for a focus on both synchronic description and diachronic change. What is more, creole languages generally tend to be viewed in their social environment (including by their own speakers) as less important than their 'lexifier' languages (for example, French-based creoles are generally regarded as less prestigious than French). There is therefore also a sound political, social and educational justification for working on the linguistic description of creole grammars.

Anne Zribi-Hertz obtained a doctorate (Doctorat d'Etat) from the University of Paris 8 in 1986. She is now emeritus professor at the same university and head of the Creole Grammar Research Group (GRGC) at the CNRS/University of Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis Structures Formelles du Langage (formal language structures) Joint Research Unit (UMR 7023). The GRGC, which is made up of creole specialists from France and a number of other countries, holds monthly seminars on creole languages and their grammars. Professor Zribi-Hertz's work focuses on descriptive, comparative and theoretical morphosyntax. She has published papers on French (both standard and non-standard) and English and on a range of typologically diverse languages including French-based creoles.

1. When and why did you decide to study creole languages?

I first started getting interested in creole languages – specifically French-based creoles – in the early 1980s, after my university (formerly known as the Centre Universitaire Expérimental de Vincennes) moved to Saint-Denis in 1981, when it started to take in large numbers of students from the northern suburbs of Paris, who included many French speakers (either monolingual or bilingual) from modest social backgrounds as well as many immigrants with native languages other than French. Realising that we (the teaching staff) had to adjust our teaching methods and courses to this new student intake, I suggested to a number of my colleagues that we should take advantage of our university's linguistic diversity to apply the tools we had developed on the basis of our linguistic theories (whatever they might be) to the study of the languages actually spoken by our students. The range of languages open to us was fairly broad (a paradise for linguists!) and included French-based creoles, spoken mainly at the time by students from the French Antilles and Mauritius. The other languages widely spoken at Paris 8 in the early 1980s included Farsi, Azeri Turkish (from Azerbaijan) and a range of languages from French-speaking Africa (such as Lingala, Kikongo, Bambara, Wolof, Sango and Malagasy). My general approach was to study all the languages to which I could have direct access and to make use of the treasure trove offered to me to test out linguistic theories against actual data (in what would be a form of continuing training for me as a linguist) and to spark an interest in linguistics in my students (in particular in syntax, which is what I was teaching).

French-lexifier creoles interested me first and foremost in my capacity as a linguist, owing to their complex relationship with French, which raises a number of theoretical issues that are well-known to creolists and is an interesting starting point for the study of the patterns of linguistic change. They also interested me as a teacher and educator, because I had the impression that students who were bilingual in French and creole often – not always, but often – had problems mastering standard French. Assuming that these problems had to be language-based, I thought that the best way of helping these students to improve their academic performance was to train them to make a clear separation between their two ‘in-built’ grammars – French grammar and creole grammar – by examining them both objectively and on an equal footing, using the same tools. I subsequently mentored two creole-speaking students – one from Haiti, the other from Mauritius – in their studies, and they both went on to obtain a doctorate, writing their theses on the morphosyntax of their creoles, and now have teaching posts in their own countries. While working alongside them, I learned a lot about the grammar of their two creole languages and about creole grammars in general.

2. Which creole languages do you study?

The presence of creole-speaking students at Paris 8 has given me direct access to Martinican, Gaudaloupean, Haitian and Guyanese Creole, as well as to Mauritian Creole (but only once to Reunion Creole). The creoles I have studied in greatest detail (and published papers on) are Mauritian Creole (in the 1980s), Haitian Creole (since 2002) and Martinican Creole (since 2013).

3. Have you had a chance to study creole languages directly in creole-speaking communities?

I have never done any actual ‘fieldwork’ in the normal sense of the term, meaning that I have not gone out to record people in creole-speaking areas. My focus is on generative linguistics, which sees the grammar of a language as first and foremost an in-built grammar which is fundamentally ideolectal, i.e. recorded in the speaker’s brain. So, in order to explore the properties of a creole grammar, I have no need to travel because I have the opportunity, in Paris, to work with carefully chosen speakers/consultants. One could therefore say that I have been doing fieldwork for more than 30 years without ever actually going ‘out into the field’. All the speakers/consultants (student linguists) with whom I have co-authored articles have been highly motivated and have played their role as consultants with great intelligence and to great effect. The type of work I have been doing (focusing on morphosyntactical issues, which are necessarily linked to semantics) cannot be performed on the basis of recordings of the spontaneous speech of a variety of people made ‘out in the field’. Linguistic fieldwork (in the normal sense of the term) has a different output from what I do, taking the form of records of features or expressions, linguistic maps and suchlike.

I have been able to gain direct access to data on creole languages from the students with whom I have been working. The students in turn have had direct access to other speakers with whom to discuss the data, to make acceptability judgments, to check and produce other data, and so on. For example, the Martinican student with whom I am currently working lives in Paris but is constantly getting in touch with friends and family members based in Martinique, whom he bombards with questions on data. The examples we select for the papers we produce, and the interpretations and acceptability judgments we make have all been validated by more than one speaker, not because I have any doubts about the fundamentally ideolectal nature of any in-built grammar, but because this process of comparing and checking data

gives our consultants the opportunity to clarify and organise their knowledge and understanding of their languages.

4. You head up the Creole Grammar Research Group. Can you say what the group's aims are and what it does?

The Creole Grammar Research Group (GRGC) was officially set up in 2006 in my research unit (Formal Language Structures) at the National Scientific Research Centre (CNRS). Prior to the group's establishment, various research activities relating to creole languages had been going on in the linguistics department at Paris 8 University since the 1980s (tutored projects focusing on creole grammar, study days on creole languages, etc.). So the new group, which was given a name but no budget of any kind, merely served to give a higher profile to a process that had started many years earlier. From the outset, we decided we would be a research group that: (i) focused on creole grammars (leaving aside the sociolinguistics of creole-speaking communities, the teaching of French in those communities, creole culture and literature and so on); and (ii) was 'international', rather than specifically French, and would work together with creolists in other countries, starting with those at the University of Amsterdam, where Enoch Aboh, Hans den Besten and Norval Smith were taking a keen interest in creole languages in general and Surinamese creoles and Afrikaans in particular. Characteristics (i) and (ii) set us apart from the Comité International d'Etudes Créoles (international committee for creole studies) set up in Aix-en-Provence by Robert Chaudenson, which had a more general (less grammar-oriented) remit, was primarily French (the project was funded by the Agence de la Francophonie) and focused on French-based creoles.

The aim of our group was simply to create a stimulating, interactive environment in Paris for linguists working on creole grammars. We hold monthly seminars, always on a Monday afternoon at the CNRS centre in rue Pouchet (which is where the Paris 8 University's linguistics lab is based). Each seminar is organised around one or two papers, some given by Parisian members of the group (who present their current work) and others by external researchers who have something to present (and who are always welcome). The regular group is small but lively, and the discussions, which are often attended by visitors, are always friendly and non-partisan. So it's all very positive. The GRGC has been a useful prop for a number of creole-speaking creolists working on their doctorates: the University of Paris can already boast three theses (two already completed, by Henri [Paris 7] and Alleesaib [Paris 8] on Mauritian Creole and Glaude [Paris 8] on Haitian Creole, and a third still in progress at Paris 7 [Hassamal]), while a number of other creolist doctoral students from foreign universities (Rome, Geneva, Amsterdam, and now a Czech university) have come (or intend to come) to present papers.

Alongside the GRGC, since 2011 we have been receiving funding from the CNRS for an international research group set up to provide a network for creole researchers who up to then had been working on their own at universities scattered across Europe (Coimbra, Lisbon, Berlin, London, Amsterdam, Orleans, Lyon, Paris 7 and Paris 8): <<http://www.pidgins-creoles.cnrs.fr/home>>. This international programme will come to an end this year, but we just learned it will be extended under the acronym PCG 'Pidgin and Creole Grammars'. It has given our work a very welcome boost and has raised our profile.

5. What status do creole languages have in linguistics?

From the standpoint of their grammars (i.e. their phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic features), creoles are natural languages like any other languages. To date, no one has identified a single

linguistic feature that is shared by all creole languages and specific to those languages (i.e. is not found in any other languages). The principal distinguishing feature of creoles is the external factors that resulted in their emergence as languages, by which I mean the language contact which resulted in the organic acquisition of an L2 (second language) which was dominant in the social context by speakers of L1 languages that were typologically very different from the target language. These factors provided fertile ground for a process of grammatical hybridisation (for example, Indo-European language x African language(s) —> French-, Portuguese-, English- or Dutch-based creoles; Arabic x African language(s) —> Juba Arabic), which understandably fascinates a number of linguists; in this connection see Enoch Aboh's (a member of GRGC and PCG) fascinating recent book *Complex processes in new languages*, published in 2015 by John Benjamins.

Because creole grammars are very obviously hybrid (all grammars are perhaps hybrid, but less obviously so), more than any other grammar they prompt the linguists studying them to delve into the linguistic changes that led to the emergence of the languages' features, and to focus simultaneously on synchronic and diachronic patterns.

6. Why is it important to study creole languages? What contribution does the study of these languages make to linguistics?

This question is not very different from the previous one. The study of creole languages calls for a focus on both synchronic description and diachronic change. What is more, creole languages generally tend to be viewed in their social environment (including by their own speakers) as less important than their 'lexifier' languages (for example, French-based creoles are generally regarded as less prestigious than French). There is therefore also a sound political, social and educational justification for working on the linguistic description of creole grammars:

- political and social justification: the standardisation of creole grammars (involving the setting of rules and the adoption of an official written form) is a precondition for the official recognition of the languages, and hence their promotion and their use for administrative, educational (in school textbooks) and other purposes. This is particularly important in a country like Haiti, where only 15% of the population has a proper grasp of French;
- educational justification: creole speakers will be able to gain a better grasp of the standard lexifier language (taught in school and whose use is expected in formal situations) if they are able to neatly separate the two grammars — that of the lexifier, that of the creole — and thus to (proudly) acknowledge themselves as clearly bilingual.

7. What future do you see for creole language studies? What are the main problems that need to be resolved?

The linguistic study of creoles is dependent on scholars' interest in these languages and on the opportunities they have to study them, which are in turn dependent on a range of both internal (scientific) and external (political) factors. Creoles are currently studied both by non-creole speakers (or at least non-native speakers) – for example, Dutch scholars studying Surinamese creoles or Afrikaans, English scholars studying English-based creoles, and French or Romance-language diachronic researchers studying French-based or Romance-language-based creoles – and by creole-speaking linguists, for example in the French Caribbean, Jamaica, Haiti, Mauritius, but also in Europe and the United States. The future of creole studies will perhaps not be the same in European and American universities as in creole-speaking countries or territories, and in the latter, in those where creole is an official language craving for standardization

(e.g. Haiti) and those in which things are more complicated (e.g. Martinique, where creole coexists with national French as a 'regional' language). There is yet an enormous amount of scholarly research to be done on creole grammars with the tools and methods of modern science and linguistics — detailed descriptive monographs are needed for every one of them, covering all modules of grammar (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics); computerised databases would be welcome, as well as in-depth work on the development of each grammar, following for instance the 'hybridation' path explored by Aboh 2015 which implies a polyvalent sort of linguistic and historical expertise. I therefore sincerely hope that research projects on creole grammars will keep being encouraged across the world by scholarly institutions.

Interviewer:

Michal Kováč is studying for a doctorate in French philology in the Romance Language Institute at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. He completed a traineeship in the European Parliament's Slovak Translation Unit and took part in a study visit to Parliament's TermCoord Unit in Luxembourg. He loves France, the French language and history and has a keen interest in French-based creoles and in terminology.



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