
LEGAL
TERMINOLOGY
WORKSHOP

TERMINOLOGY COORDINATION UNIT



DG TRAD

**OPTIMISE PROACTIVE
TERMINOLOGY
SERVICES BY
TERMCOORD**

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THE EXAMPLE OF THE CATALAN MEP IMMUNITY FILE



- Catalan independence movement
- Catalonia: one of the autonomous communities of Spain
- distinct language, rich culture and history
- 1 October 2017: a referendum on self-determination, banned by Spain's Constitutional Court
- October 2019: some Catalan politicians and activists sentenced to jail and others fined by the Spanish Supreme Court



GENERAL CONTEXT: TRANSLATION FILE

1000+ pages, 3+ months, 15 languages

Spanish original, FR+EN courtesy translations

Spanish mef, reread, EN+FR revision

Judgement available at: [C.G.P.J - Noticias Judiciales \(poderjudicial.es\)](https://www.poderjudicial.es/cgpj/noticias-judiciales)

Sentencia núm. 459/2019 de 14/10/2019: **580 pages** (largest document in the file that encompassed more than 16 documents)



CAUSA ESPECIAL núm.: 20907/2017
Ponente: Excmo. Sr. D. Manuel Marchena Gómez
Letrada de la Administración de Justicia: Ilma. Sra. Dña. María Antonia Cao Barredo

TRIBUNAL SUPREMO
Sala de lo Penal

Sentencia núm. 459/2019

Excmos. Sres. y Excmo. Sra.



E.g.:

Generalitat/Generalidad (the institutional system of Catalonia for self-government: the Parliament, the Presidency, the Government and other)

Consejería de Presidencia (Department of Presidency)

Vicepresidencia (Ministry of the Vice-presidency and of the Economy and Finance)

Govern and Spanish government

Parlament and Spanish Parliament



MOSSOS D'ESQUADRA / GUARDIA CIVIL CUERPO NACIONAL DE POLICÍA / POLICÍA LOCAL

The challenge is to strike the balance between readability (if we leave all names in SL) and the need for accurate non-misleading translation (difficult, if possible at all, when we use generalization strategy).

Example: 4 different forces of police, having their role in the events and mentioned in the case.



- **Terminology?**

especially proper names, e.g. *Generalitat*, *Mossos d'Esquadra*) Yes, for translation purposes (in spite of that such not connotative notions cannot have definitions).

- **Trap of equivalence?**

between Scylla and Charybdis: usually no equivalent or there is a false (misleading) equivalent

- **Subjective decisions?**

very difficult to discuss: no formal criteria for strategic choices (subjective evaluation of the balance between the faithfulness to the maxima of exactness and the readability of the translation)

- **Criteria for decision?**

light in the dark: guidelines from the top (e.g. Catalan can be left in original) and negative criteria (for rejection of misleading, inexact or unreadable)



TRANSLATION STRATEGIES FOR SPANISH/CATALAN REALITIES

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Most popular strategy (safer? easier? more exact? less time consuming?):

foreignization: from radical to soft

BG: правителството на Generalitat (Govern de la Generalitat)

DE: Govern de la Generalitat (katalanische Regierung)

Less popular strategy (forced by a low tolerance of a particular foreignization in a particular language? empathy with a reader (readability argument)?):

limited universalization

LT: Katalonijos autonominės srities vyriausybė

CZ: katalánské samosprávy

Rare strategy:

towards exonymy (deriving a specific name in your language corresponding to the language norms)

FI: Generalitatin (genitive: of Generalitat)



Three accusation parties:

Ministerio Fiscal / Ministerio Publico / Fiscalia (Public Prosecutor's Office) – main strategy: translate

Abogacía General del Estado (Legal Service of the Spanish Government) – main strategy: translate

EN: State Legal Service, FR: Bureau de l'Avocat général de l'État

acusación / acción popular (*actio popularis*)

(Acusación Popular/*acusación popular*) – main strategy: translate

EN: *acusación popular*, BG: *actio popularis*



TRANSLATION STRATEGIES: LEGAL CONCEPTS

Most popular strategy:

domestication (SL term in parentheses at first mention)

- find equivalents in target language, adapt the translation to the legal system of the target language country if possible, paraphrase if no equivalent

concepts without equivalents:

foreignization (translation at first mention), paraphrase

Other considerations: false friends (same term, different concept), one language - more legal systems

Example: rebellion (rebelión), sedition (sedición)



Coordination methods:

- file coordinator/wiki page
- language unit coordinator
- shared Excel/Word glossary tables
- termbases
- e-mails
- meetings/video calls
- main reviser/rereader

Suggestions:

- protected shared tools
- spreadsheet that allows simultaneous editing (such as googledocs)
- organise comments and replies on wiki into threads
- language-specific restricted wiki forums
- use termbase from earlier stage
- termbase sharing
- regular meetings



Micro-level (LL):

1. **clear strategies:** to reduce lengthy (endless?) discussions
2. **embracing the emotional aspect (well being):** management of stress and personal involvement
3. **knowledge management:** coping with mega learning and needs for external help
4. **strong coordination**

Macro-level (LIL):

1. **potential for time-saving cooperation** (invaluable and immediate help from the Spanish colleagues, sharing term tables)
2. **potential for avoiding effort duplication** (lists of terms)
3. **potential for synergy** (info sessions and sharing strategies/approaches)
4. ?

