A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF TRANSLATION-ORIENTED TERMINOLOGY IN THE CANADIAN TERMINOLOGY OF SCIENCE

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Abstract: *The paper deals with the origins of translation-oriented terminology in Canada and the role it plays in the Canadian terminology of science. We define the concept of translation-oriented terminology with regard to other new approaches to terminology research. We provide background information on language policy in Canada to determine the main factors that have shaped translation-oriented terminology development at the very beginning. We also try to identify those factors which later ensured that terminology becomes an autonomous discipline in Canada with an undeniably important place in translation-oriented terminology.*

Keywords: *terminology, translation, Canada, bilingualism, glossary*

Introduction

In this paper, we provide a brief historical excursus into terminology in Canada in order to identify major political and linguistic impulses which caused translation-oriented terminology to become its irreplaceable part. First, we would like to define basic concepts that we will be using in our paper. *Translation* and *terminology* are central terms of both translatology and terminology sciences, they represent their alpha and omega, and we would argue that they have received the most attention from researches in the given fields. For the purposes of this paper, we won't refer to *translation* in its general and most common meaning as *interlingual transfer,* but we will interpret it rather as professional (non-literary) translation due to the exclusively professional nature of terminology itself. Our reasoning is based on the definition provided by V. Šebestová and J. Šebesta (213), according to whom non-literary (professional) translation includes any translation not related to fiction, poetry, and drama, that is to say, genres of fiction. Masár (17), one of the fathers of Slovak terminology science, defines the concept of terminology as follows: terminology as *science* (study of term creation, use, and properties) and terminology as *a set of terms* (a set of specialized expressions from different fields of science). J. C. Sager (17) adds the third meaning of terminology – the set of practices and methods used for the collection, description and presentation of terms). Therefore, translation-oriented terminology implicitly refers not to translation in general but is understood in terms of non-literary translation.

On the specific relation of translation and terminology

Before we start discussing translation-oriented terminology, we consider important to point out some features that these disciplines have in common as well as those causing them to differ from each other. Firstly, according to Cabré, both disciplines have an interdisciplinary character as they have emerged because of the necessity to respond to the needs of specialized communication – either by creating concepts and terms (terminology) or by enabling specialized communication between speakers of two different languages (specialized translation). Another feature that they

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have in common is the use of semasiological[1] (from terms to concepts) and onomasiological (from concepts to terms) approaches. As to the differences, translation in itself can be considered final; meanwhile terminology has a pre-final nature. Moreover, the relation between terminology and translation is an asymmetrical one because specialized translation needs terminology to communicate specialized knowledge, whereas we don't necessarily need translation in order to do terminology (Navarro 66).

Translation-oriented terminology in relation to other approaches to terminology

Within the Slovak context, the most attention has been paid to translation-oriented terminology as a separate terminological approach in the research work of Jana Levická. In her paper entitled *Terminological Theories in Francophone Countries*, Levická distinguishes three types of current terminological approaches: *socioterminology* (studying specialized language in relation to society and language users), *text terminology* (terms are being assessed on the basis of their relation to the text they occur in), and *translation-oriented terminology*. The last approach is defined as a process of equating terms coming from at least two different languages. The output of this process is terminological work intended primarily for translation industry, namely translators and interpreters.

Translation-oriented terminology[2] is governed by the ISO standard ISO 12616:2002 *Information and Documentation. Translation-oriented Terminography.* Its content is defined as follows: "The main purpose of the given international standard is to enable translators and support teams to record, maintain and quickly and easily look up terminological information related to translators' work."

The first terminographical studies in Canada

According to Cabré (14), translation-oriented terminology is mainly represented in countries (Canada, Belgium) and provinces (Quebec, Wallonia) with two or more official languages, as well as in international institutions (The European Union, The United Nations). In this paper, the focus is on the Canadian background.

We share Levická's belief (21) that the traductological perspective of Canadian terminological activities was determined at the national level by a series of changes in the language policy of this bilingual state in 1970s. Nevertheless, terminological activities as such may be observed in Canada in a lesser scope and at a rather local level a few centuries earlier. Kerpan (45) even claims that ever since there was contact between two languages, ever since there was translation in Canada and Quebec, there has necessarily been terminology. We have selected two very early terminological studies with a direct link to translatological activities.

In the 16th century, Jacques Cartier, the French navigator and explorer under a commission from King Francis I, elaborated a glossary of terms. His work was a result of the first interlingual contacts in Canada and is closely related to the power interests of France. In the years 1534-1542, Cartier made three overseas voyages to explore the territory of today's Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Based on his encounters with indigenous tribes, he elaborated a glossary of terms from the language of the Iroquois tribe of Stadaconé and Hochelanga. The list of terms designated figures, parts of

[1] According to L'Homme (1115), the use of semasiological processes in terminology came about as a response of some researchers who viewed onomasiological approach in terminology as insufficient to account for the complexity of modern applications of this discipline.
[2] Another term is *comparative terminology* (Pavel, Nolet xvii).

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human body, animal species, and elements of nature, family members, and even several short sentences (Raimbault 56-62).

A true milestone in the history of Canadian terminological research was the year 1902, marked by the issuance of the first study of terminological nature, *Terminologie – Les Chemins de Fer* (*Terminology – Railways*). The author – Joseph-Évariste Prince – is known as a pioneer of Canadian terminology practice. At that time, he used methods specific to professional terminologists a century later. The study was published by the Society of French Speech of Canada in order to defend and promote the position of the French language in Canada (Delisle, "Les origines" 27-28).

According to Delisle ("Les origines" 29-30), the study may be considered to be the first terminographical work in Canada based on the following distinctive features:

1. It is thematically focused and deals with a specialized language (railways);
2. It delimits the topic to more narrow areas (railway construction and operation);
3. It verifies the reliability of the source document and gives terms references;
4. It uses the method of extraction of original texts; therefore we can speak of terminological, not lexicographical work, with a set of terms (and not a dictionary) as its result;
5. It represents comparative research and the author tries to equate the French and English terms in the best possible way;
6. It lists synonyms and all necessary references.

Therefore, based on the above-mentioned criteria, it can be assumed that the greatest contribution of the study consists in a clearly defined methodology with the aim to process terminology of a specific field. Moreover, it is a comparative research and matching of terms from the terminological systems of two languages. This approach was revived half a century later.

Translation as a stimulus for terminological activities

The conditions for the development of translation in Canada were mostly created by the adoption of numerous laws and policies on language use. The first impulse, ensuring the need for translation of official administrative documents and the boom of translation practice at the turn of 19th and 20th century, was the adoption of The British North America Act in 1867. The Act established English and French as official languages in Canada. The need for translation was also conditioned by the presence of Anglophone Canadians in the industrial and commercial sectors. Simultaneously, the need for setting clear methods of terminological research began to emerge. Translators were asked to include terminological activities into their translating assignments. Some of them even made the collected records available to the public in the form of vocabularies, glossaries or translator's notes (Delisle, "Les origines" 27).

The Translation Bureau Act was adopted in 1934 in order to centralize all translation departments of the federal government and to bring together hundreds of translators of different ministries. The Official Languages Act (1969) provided each Canadian citizen with a right to communicate with the authorities in the official language of their choice. The Act resulted from the initiative of Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and his vision of Canada, bilingual from one coast to the other. Approximately 1,000 employees of the Translation Bureau have been systematically translating documents of the federal administration, dealing with texts of other than just administrative or legal nature. They were translating highly specialized texts coming from different areas of social life while the utmost accuracy was required. They consulted not only lexicographical manuals, but they also sought advice and help from experts in the field, and in some cases, created the terms themselves (Nakos 211-212).

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The Golden Age of Terminology (the 1960s and 1970s)

In the 1960s, terminological activities were flourishing. The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants issued the accounting terminology, supplemented by a bilingual glossary of accounting terms in 1963. Two years later, the Society of Translators and Interpreters in Canada initiated a colloquium of translators and linguists. In its conclusions, they conveyed the idea that translators should also process articles and publications, thematically related to the translated texts, and that some employees of translation departments should be exclusively assigned to the task of processing thematically focused texts. In the same vein, Jean Dalbernet published an article entitled "Towards a Better Coordination of Terminology Research and Documentation" (Kerpan 25). We can therefore observe the first attempts to separate terminological activities from translation as early as in the 1960s.

This was fully accomplished at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s. Until the end of the 1960s, terminological activity went hand in hand with translation. However, at the turn of decades, terminology was considered an autonomous discipline which could be done independently of translation or for the need of translators. Translators thus naturally abandoned their terminological activities and started to focus primarily on translation (Urrutia Badiola 1155).

The seventh decade of the 20th century was marked by numerous fruitful activities in the field of terminology in Canada. Their origins lied in the political and linguistic changes – in the promulgation of bilingualism in federal institutions and the francization of Quebec. This major transition from monolingualism to concurrent use of the English and French languages has created a great demand for the services of both translators and terminologists (Kerpan 45).

As a result, activities were developed in several areas. The first one represents the organisation of colloquiums on terminological issues. The idea was initiated by a prominent professor of terminology, Guy Rondeau. Apart from defining terminology as an autonomous discipline, the aim of colloquiums was also to put forward the questions of terminological normalisation and methodology. The most important of them are listed below:

1972 – *Les données terminologiques / Terminological Data*

1975 – *Essai de définition de la terminologie / An Attempt to Define Terminology*

1976 – *Fondements d'une méthodologie générale de la recherche et de la normalisation en terminologie et documentation / Foundations of a General Methology of Research, Normalisation in Terminology and Documentation*

1977 – *Colloque international de terminologie (linguistique, sciences et techniques, terminologie et traduction, terminologie informatique et documentation / International Colloquium on Terminology (Linguistics, Science and Technology, Terminology and Translation, Terminology and Informatics and Documentation)*

Secondly, the 1970s also mark the beginning of the era of terminology data banks. The creation of translation-oriented terminology was, among other things, a result of great inconsistency and variability of source terms which didn't have any known equivalents in the target language. Or, on the contrary, translators were not able to select the correct equivalent from several possible options. Terminology varied not only from one text to another, but also from one translator to others. Therefore, in 1974, the Council of Ministers entrusted the Translation Bureau with the standardization of the French and English terminology used in the Federal Public Service and in the Parliamentary bodies in Canada (Nakos 213). This work resulted in the creation of a bilingual terminology data bank called Termium. Its core consisted of the terminology data bank of the

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University of Montreal, BTUM (150,000 terms), supplemented by the terminological records from translators themselves (Termium I). Subsequently, terminological records underwent a process of cleaning by terminologists to ensure correctness of contained information[3] (Nakos 213).

The Terminology and Standardization Directorate (TSD) of the Translation Bureau proposed the following approach to the process of official terminology approval. It consists of the following steps: submission of departmental request for standardization to TSD, consultation of those who can be interested in or affected by the request, evaluation of needs, adoption of standardization process by all concerned (secretariat), establishment of terminology case files, creation of a terminology committee, transmission of terminology case files to committee members, transmission of member feedback to committee secretariat, organization of a meeting to establish a consensus, selection of a distribution strategy for approved terminology, preparation of language notice to be posted on Translation Bureau's Extranet and Internet sites, and update of TERMIUM®. This highly detailed approach is in line with the essence of translation bureau's language management activities, i.e., to achieve perfection in communication in English and French (Pavel, Nolet 31-32).

Full legal status for terminologists

Terminologists got a job within translation or linguistic unit of administration, international organisations (International Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal), state-owned companies (Radio-Canada) and others (IBM, Bell Canada). Their task was to elaborate terminological records which consisted of: an entry term, synonyms, spelling or regional variants, information on term reliability, definition, reliable reference, bibliographic and oral sources, notes (or illustrations), date and name of the terminologist who created the record. It is worth noting that terminologists attributed the same level of importance to the English and French language. At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, the profession of a terminologist gained the same prestige as the one of a translator or interpreter and was recognized as a pivotal element enabling communication among linguists, officers, and experts from the field (Nakos 214).

Terminologists have gained their status and the *raison d'être* of their profession in two stages: firstly, among other linguists and then "from the outside", that is to say among other professions and general public. At the beginning of the 2nd millennium, there were initiatives aimed at making terminology more visible and justifying its profitability in both the public and private sector. These initiatives were also inextricably linked to an effort to prove that terminology belongs to necessary investment areas accompanying technological innovations within the North American and Quebec context (Urrutia Badiola 1155).

A Note on Legal Terminology in Canada

Legal terminology has a special place within Canadian translation-oriented terminology. In Canada, bilingual legal dictionaries have been produced since 1937 when A. Macdonald Langstaff published the *French-English, English-French Law Dictionary*. The official bilingualism in Canada and the coexistence of two legal systems – *Common Law* and *Droit Civil* – have also led to the emergence of new experts (lawyer-linguists, lawyer-terminologists) and legal terminology. These experts have to master not only general terminology, but also legal terminology, and assess terms from both linguistic and legal perspective.

[3] *TERMIUM Plus*® is the latest version of terminology data bank Termium and belongs among the largest terminology and linguistic data banks in the world. It contains terms from four languages: English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. Besides *Termium Plus*, another well-known Canadian terminology bank is the *Grand dictionnaire terminologique.*

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Nowadays, Canadian expertise in legal terminology is recognized throughout the world. Translator Wallace Schwavb, specialist on law and insurance and author of several bilingual lexicons, considers legal terminology, mainly the English dictionaries of civil law of Quebec and the French dictionaries of common law, to be a national treasure. These ensure that, in terms of the coexistence of two legal systems, Canada is twenty years ahead of the European Union (Urrutia Badiola 1159).

Furthermore, Canadian *bijuralism* represents an exception to the general principle of terminological work, i.e. "one terminological record per concept and one concept record" due to the difference in concept delimitation. The correspondence of terms from these two legal traditions is, in some cases, only partial, and therefore terms from one language that designate concepts in the first legal system are adopted to designate more-or-less equivalent concepts in the second legal system – or sometimes new terms must be created (Pavel, Nolet 54).

Within this context, Dion (43-44) distinguishes three types of juridical situations:

a) The unijural situation occurs when a statutory provision is based on a concept (or term) which is unique to the *common law* in both language versions. An illustration of this situation is for example the English expression *special damages*[4] and the French term *dommages-intérêts spéciaux* which are both specific to the common law. Whereas in the civil law tradition, we would have the following terms: *pre-trial pecuniary loss* corresponding to *pertes pécuniaires antérieures au procès*.
b) The semi-bijural situation is defined as a scenario when a French legal provision is based on notions (or terms) specific to the civil law, while the English language version on notions (or terms) specific to the common law. To demonstrate this, we can provide the English-French equivalents *real property*[5] and *immeuble*. The term *immeuble* specific to the civil law is used only in the French version, whereas the term *real property* specific to the common law is used in the English version only.
c) In relation to the above-mentioned example, the bijural situation occurs when the French term *biens réels* is included in the French version of a provision so as to take into account the French common law, and on the other hand, the term *immovable* is included in the English language version so as to take into account the English civil law.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have tried to point out the main circumstances that conditioned the development of translation-oriented terminology within the Canadian context. Based on our brief excursus into the history of terminology in Canada, it can be said that the emergence of translation-oriented terminology was a logical response to the English-French bilingualism which was permanently present in the translation of a great amount of highly specialised and thematically diverse documents. This process inevitably led to cooperation with experts from the field, elaboration of terminological glossaries and harmonization of terms from individual fields. Nowadays, Canada belongs to leaders in the fields of translation-oriented terminology with important terminology data banks such as *Termium Plus* and *Le grand dictionnaire terminologique* (GDT).

[4] The Crown Liability and Proceedings Act, subsection 31(3).
[5] The Federal Real Property Act, section 20.

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