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Historical Considerations on Terminological Work.
Case Colombia

The present contribution is a brief critical description on how terminological work has been changing and adapting according to two main factors. One factor is the epistemological discussion among diverse approaches to terminology management, lexicography and terminography; these, as close related terms to terminological work. Another important factor is the development of Information and Communication Technologies and its influence in methods and procedures in terminological work. These two factors are necessary when trying to understand the course of terminology work in Colombia.

To bring up the discussion about methodological aspects in terminology management, it would be convenient and useful to make a brief mention to the development of the epistemological discussion with two approaches to this issue: On one hand, there is lexicography, in general sense. It can be described as a set of linguistic product types enabling accurate communication in a specific subject field. On the other hand, there is the lexicography for technical languages, which has developed to become specialized lexicography and then to become terminography (Lauren/Myking/Picht 1998: 304). These two approaches describing methodological aspects in terminology management have paved the road to separate specialized lexicography from terminography, which has been also often coined as terminological work. This to describing methods and procedures used by professionals in the different subject fields in preparing, designing, implementing and retrieving from terminological resources.

The development of computer-based systems applied to the terminography began to generate terms such as "computer-assisted

terminography ", which, in the words of Arnzt, Picht and Mayer: "Is related to the theory of terminology and lexicography, which has procedures for the collection, preparation, classification and presentation of terminological data, and computer-assisted terminology work is defined as "[...] (systematic) preparation, management and the preparation of terminology in one or more languages from the bases of the methods developed in the theory of terminology and the computer-assisted terminography" (Arnzt/Picht/Mayer 2004: 229).

As already stayed, these two factors are crucial to evidence the development of terminology work in Colombia as it is going to be unfold.

Terminology as a scientific discipline.

The father of contemporary terminology is Eugen Wüster. He wrote the basis for terminology as a scientific discipline along with their first publications. "International Language standardization in technology, particularly in electrical engineering", (1931) can be considered as the basis of today's terminology work (Diaz, 2010). Nevertheless, is "The general introduction to terminology and terminological lexicography" the origins of terminology as a scientific discipline. Wüster considered the harmonization of international terminology work as a key factor, not only to consolidate the ideas presented in his work, but also to establish common practices in managing terminologies across different specialized fields. The creation of the Technical Committee ISO /TC37 in 1936 was a critical part in disseminating his ideas as well.

Briefly described, the button line of Wüster's approach to terminology is the consolidation of terminological principles applied to multiple subject fields and in multiple languages. Terminology science, in this sense, is multidisciplinary taking elements from other sciences to approach central issues to terminology such as: concepts, objects and representations. Terminology built knowledge by combining; philosophy (logic, ontology, epistemology), applied linguistics, information and communication sciences, as well as others such as: information management, knowledge organization, documentation and Standar-

dization (Budin/Galinski/Nebodity/Thaller 1988). Wüster's ideas about terminology at that point in time started a whole new avenue of discussion upon how then specialized vocabulary should be managed. Traditional approaches to technical lexicography were very much oriented to considerate the relationship word – meaning in specialized contexts. Allocating the core of terminology in the connection of concepts with the objects in the real world and their representations was a milestone to develop specialized lexicography, terminography and terminology work.

Terminology in Colombia

Terminology as a scientific discipline and its applications has a recent history in Colombia and in the rest of Latin America (Quiroz 2002: 4). The 80's mark the first contact with terminology mostly through librarian's activities, such as, information analysis and retrieval. It is later in the 90's that the first results of terminology work start to appear, these within the areas of librarianship and specialized lexicography (Cardona 2002: 23). Terminology has consolidated in the region by the birth of the Ibero American Terminology Network (RITerm) in 1998.

In the case of Colombia several academic events lead by Colombian universities helped to consolidate terminology in the research agenda nationwide. The University of Antioquia (Medellín) along with the University of Valle (Cali) gave birth to the Colombian Terminology Network ColTerm in 1995. At the same time research groups promoting terminology work and applications started to appear. The Research Group in Terminology and Translation GITT, TraduTerm, Center for the research in terminology CITerm are some examples. Research groups started to develop applied research projects in various topics, such as: sugar cane, tropical diseases, volcanology, among others. Universities started also to include terminology in their curricula. Here it is necessary to mention the fact that, most of professionals involved in these early times of terminology in Colombia were foreign language teachers, translators and interprets. Thus, the first generation of Colombian terminologists came from these professions.

International cooperated work

The participation of international institutions has contributed to the development of terminology and terminology work in Colombia. Institutions such as: The Kent State University, the Copenhagen Business School, the University Pompeu Fabra, the International Information Centre for Terminology InfoTerm, the International Institute for Terminology Research IIFT, the Society for Terminology and Knowledge Transfer GTW, the University of Applied Sciences Cologne, the University of Vienna, are some of them. But the most important international organization participating in the shaping of terminology work in Colombia is the technical committee ISO / TC37. The Colombian delegation have been working in this committee since 2003. Such participation allowed terminology standardization processes to be known in Colombia. As stated by Castrillón:

"{…} the participation of Colombia in the technical committee ISO / TC37 is the result of the efforts done by Colombian researchers in standardization and terminology setting their research projects to the progress of the science and technology at the national and international level with the application of quality standards" (Castrillón, E.R. 2003: 44)
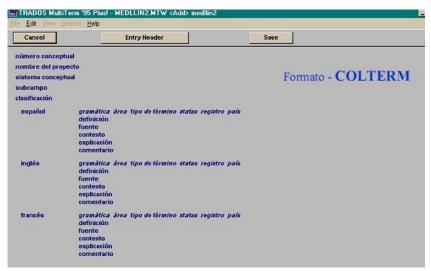
The influence of standardization activities concerning terminology work is a key element in understanding the terminology work in Colombia. The Colombian Terminolgoy Network ColTerm stablished in 2000 the priorities in terminology work for Colombia. These are the role of terminology in knowledge transfer by means of terminology harmonization as hub for the scientific, technical, economic and social development of the country by implementing a terminology infrastructure (Plested/Giraldo 2000a).

The terminology infrastructure suggested by the authors consists of the combination of efforts in different sectors. The academic work done in different universities, as well as the cooperation with international institutions, and the wide range of applied research projects need to be supported by the Colombian government's effort in providing political frame, resources and institutional validity to these efforts.

Terminology work in Colombia

As a result, the research activities carried out by research groups in different universities in Colombia and the Colombian Terminology Network ColTerm the issue of terminology became relevant in the country. Many researchers new to the topic were trained in terminology standards and terminology work assisted as well by international organizations and universities. At the same time the ColTerm format for terminology database was created. The terminology research work carried out within the various universities was key to assimilate international standards regarding terminology data management. These, along with the wide range of applicated research projects paved the path to establish a format as a methodology to create and maintain terminology data bases. The ColTerm format for terminology data bases is founded upon ISO /TC 37 terminology standards such as: ISO 704 (2000) Terminology Work, Principles and methods, ISO 860 (2007) Terminology Work, harmonization of concepts and terms, ISO 29383 Terminology Policies, among others.

From the theoretical perspective, the ColTerm format is based upon the WIKO model (Budin, 1996), which considers terminology as the core element organizing knowledge, information and communication systems. From the methodology perspective, the ColTerm format takes terminology track and analysis as fundamental tools. This perspective allows to collect and revise in specialized texts from a specific domain all the relevant information cleansing concepts and definitions attached to terms. This method uses lexicological and terminological analysis seeking to recognize and understand a given specific domain to decompose its knowledge's object from its contextualized terminological components (Plested/Giraldo 2000a).

Taken from: Presentación del Formato Colterm (Plested 2000b)

This screenshot shows a concrete example of a concept network within the field of social and human sciences at the University of Antioquia developed in 2000. Here it is possible to see entries number identification category, grammar categories, subject field, subfield, entry status, country, language, project name. Following terminology standards indications in harmonizing terminology work in different languages. This concept network was built upon the template TRADOS software ver. 95.

Colombian Institute for Standarization and Certification ICONTEC

Icontec is a private, nonprofit institute in charge of promoting standarization. metrology and certification processes in Colombia. This institute embraces national government representatives. as well as, associations for production, distribution and commercialization of products and services.

Within the organization and functioning of Icontec, there is the National Standardization Department, which manages, nationwide, standard's production and its main objective is to support commercial exchange, communication and technology transfer by the production of standards at national and international level. The National Standardiza-

tion Department counts on numerous standards technical committees. These technical committees are committed to elaborating and updating of standards documents assigned to different working groups. The working groups are made of Icontect representatives and experts in the different technical and specialized issues they work on (health, metrology, engineering, documentation, among many others).

In the field of terminology, the work done by research groups and the efforts made in various universities paved the way to acknowledging how crucial terminology work is for a country's social and economic development. The mirror committee ISO/ TC37 was stablished in 2002 under the supervision of the research group for terminology and translation at the University of Antioquia. Icontec started to participate as Colombian national commission in the ISO / TC37 general meetings increasing the relevance of terminology standardization for the country's interests. These first participations of the Colombian delegation allowed to configure a national agenda regarding the specific objectives in the international technical committee. The first of them was the participation in the project to create an ISO standard on translation services providing.

One of the greatest achievements for the development of the terminology work in Colombia was the creation of the Icontec technical committee 218 "Terminology and other linguistic and content resources". Along with the experience gained throughout the previous years, the international participation and the analysis of the Colombian context, terminology work started to be related to translation and interpreting activities. As a result, Icontec issued in 2010 the first national standard on translation services and the requirements to provide these services: NTC 5808.

Conclusions

As it is clear to infer from the brief description presented the history of terminology as scientific discipline is recent. More recent is the history of terminology work in Colombia. This history has been marked by the pioneering efforts of professionals in the academic world.

The role of research groups and their applied research projects drawn attention to the issue of terminology at the official level.

The creation of regional and national networks around the issue of terminology and its applications must be understood as a relevant evidence of the influence of these ideas in the Latin American and Colombian academic circles.

The role of international networks engaged in terminology activities has been also a buster in developing terminology work in Colombia. Infoterm and its active participation in academic events, as well as it commitment in bringing together language industry actors and academics is worth to mention.

It is also important to mention the close relationship of translation and interpreting professional areas to terminology and terminology work. From the Colombian experience the advantages seen in applying terminology work were specially considered by professionals in these areas.

The dwell of a technical committee within the Colombian standards body Icontec is a clear signal of the progress in appreciating terminology and its applications within the national interests.

Challenges of terminology work in Colombia

Ever since the introduction of terminology in research and academic activities in Colombia, the concern about its potential has grown. The variety of research projects is proof of its great potential for the advance of science and knowledge organization. Nevertheless, much of these efforts has come from universities and professional network's initiatives. More effort has to be done in applying terminology work for the economic and social development of the country. This effort can not only come from the academic sector, since the benefits of language resources development and structured content by using terminology principles can help to achieve more accurate communication.

The influence of the prescriptive terminology approach to the Colombian terminology work development is clear and it has marked the development of the issue in this country. It is also very important to mention the fact that in Colombia the approach to terminology presen-

ted in this brief description has have wide audience among academics and professionals. Thought, this hasn't been the only approach to terminology since there are also research groups and academics educated in other terminology traditions.

Standardization processes are crucial to understand the development of terminology in Colombia. Not only because of its influence, but also because it has created a national identity in terminology work. The inspiration received by the activities and active participation of the Colombian delegation throughout the years have also fostered the creation of a national mirror committee at Icontec. This national mirror committee continuous to represent Colombia at the annual general meeting of ISO / TC37 and getting knowledge in terminology work and standardization. The creation of the technical national standard in translation services is a huge achievement in terms of the professionalization of these kind of services in the country and it was consequence of the work done in terminology standardization at the international level.

Much more work is still needed to explore the full potential of terminology work in achieving accurate communication in technical and scientific communities. Moreover, the application of terminology work in the national interest of economic internationalization is a key element. The establishment of terminology infrastructure mentioned by Colombian terminology experts require the harmonization of policies in the government sector. Without the political willingness it is almost impossible to push forward the implementation of terminology policies supporting the advance of national interest in a wide variety of subject fields.

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რეზიუმე

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