# The Development of Latvian Terminology under the Impact of Translation

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of Latvian language and terminology in different time periods has been closely connected with various languages, for instance, with German for several centuries, with Russian for a few decades. From the end of the 20th century, English terminology has been invading the Latvian language. Before Latvia joined the European Union we had made up an inventory of terminology resources. More than 60 dictionaries in different fields of terminology have been published in the subsequent ten years (Skujiņa 2010, 2008/1).

The paper deals with the development of Latvian terminology considering the impact of English as the main contact language for Latvian terminology development. A short representation of the necessary knowledge and skills of the translator is given. To avoid unfounded synonymy, the grouping method for sets of conceptually related terms is considered. The advantage of using ISO terminology standards in coining terms in different fields is discussed. The field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is chosen to illustrate terminological coinage (Ilziņa 2010).

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
## NECESSARY FOR THE TRANSLATOR

In Latvia as well as in other member states of the European Union, documents and texts in English containing a lot of specific terms are

often the source of information. After joining the European Union, the process of communication in English has been expanded. Language service providers have offered a huge quantity of terminology dictionaries and databases on the Internet (Borzovs, Ilziņa, Skujiņa, Vasiļjevs 2006). Almost every term comes with a set of explanations, each of them expressing some characteristics of the concept which correspond to a particular use of the term. The translator has to choose the right one to use.

To achieve mutual understanding and draw conclusions, the translator as well as other term users has to be on the same level of interpretation of the problem. The main tool for successful achievement of this task is well developed terminology of the specific field.

Good knowledge of a foreign language is not all the translator needs to possess. He or she also has to be a specialist of the specific field to be able to choose the most appropriate term for the concept and to apply it to the context.

The term set of every field has to be developed and perfected due to continuous and intensive development of new scientific domains. The necessity of finding conformity with concepts and terms of different fields expressed in different languages right now is a must.

Different languages carry a lot of polysemantic words (Skujiņa 2008/2). It is a natural characteristic of language lexis, but it has a negative impact on the translation process and may introduce notional misunderstanding and jeopardize the accuracy and relevance to the source text. To avoid it, research helps to match the semantics of terms of two languages used mainly in translations.

Furthermore, we can mention that in the second half of the 20th century Latvian terminology was developed by taking into account the systemic models of terms and by observing scientific principles and requirements for new term creation (Skujiņa 2002). The term-formation models of Latvian terminology to this day play an important role in translation and in the creation of new Latvian terms. Due to the urgent need for translation at the end of 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century, it is the context that in most cases dictates which terms should be used.

GROUPING METHOD APPLIED FOR
CREATING "TERM-TO-TERM" MATCHES

At present, the grouping method is applied when it comes to evaluating domain-specific terms. To conform to this grouping method a set of

concept-related terms is selected in two nearest contact languages (main-ly in English and Latvian) and, taking into account the substantial char-acteristics of every concept and deleting the unnecessary synonyms of the term, step-by-step we have been trying to find "term-to-term" matches, first of all in at least two contact languages.

Right now the focus in Latvia is on the quality of scientific research. A set of 12 Latvian terms has been developed and by aligning them with the corresponding English terms the basic terms of general crite-ria for *scientific rigour* were developed as well. There are three groups of these terms, each group consisting of four terms in English and in Latvian:

- terms of general criteria:

|                    |   |                   |
|--------------------|---|-------------------|
| **truth-value**    | – | *patiesums*       |
| **applicability**  | – | *lietojamība*     |
| **consistency**    | – | *konsekventums*   |
| **neutrality**     | – | *neitrālums*      |

- terms of quantitative strategy criteria:

|                      |   |                       |
|----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| **reliability**      | – | *noturīgums; drošums* |
| **internal validity**| – | *iekšējā pamatotība*  |
| **external validity**| – | *ārējā pamatotība*    |
| **objectivity**      | – | *objektīvums*         |

- terms of qualitative strategy criteria:

|                     |   |                   |
|---------------------|---|-------------------|
| **credibility**     | – | *ticamība*        |
| **transferability** | – | *pārnesamība*     |
| **dependability**   | – | *uzticamība*      |
| **confirmability**  | – | *apstiprināmība.* |

To identify conformity at the criteria term level, we have to begin with an analysis of the corresponding concepts, a selection of substantial char-acteristics and their recording in definition. During this process, contrast-ing language settings might be useful. To support this, we can examine the above-mentioned contrasting English and Latvian criteria term set. This can only be achieved if the corresponding specific terms and entities are correctly matched and the correspondence between the terms in dif-ferent languages is established. The following are examples of such terms in English and in Latvian:

- internationalisms, which in English and in Latvian have a similar form and are used to express the same concept, e.g.:

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| *neutrality* | – | *neitralitāte,* |
| *objectivity* | – | *objektivitāte;* |

- English words and Latvian coined words which represent generally used words of Latvian origin and express the same concept, e.g.:

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| *applicability* | – | *lietojamība,* |
| *confirmability* | – | *apstiprināmība,* |
| *credibility* | – | *ticamība,* |
| *transferability* | – | *pārnesamība.* |

Let us look at two figures that demonstrate the ways of seeking adequacy and avoiding synonyms of English and Latvian terms.

**Figure 1**

| English term | **reliability** |
|---|---|
| Latvian synonyms | *ticamība*   *uzticamība*   ***noturīgums***   ***drošums*** |
| English equivalents | **credibility**   **dependability** |

**Figure 2**

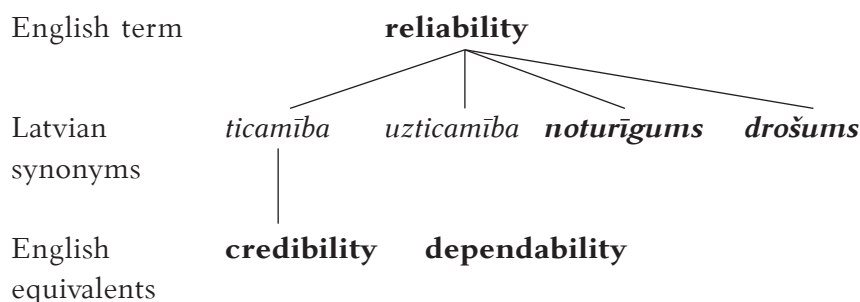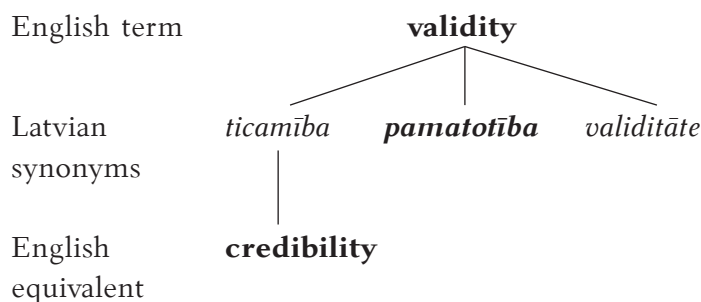| English term | **validity** |
|---|---|
| Latvian synonyms | *ticamība*   ***pamatotība***   *validitāte* |
| English equivalent | **credibility** |

In the figures above the basic terms in English are (written in bold): **reliability** (Figure 1) and **validity** (Figure 2). Each of the basic English terms has corresponding equivalents in Latvian (written in italics): **reliabil**-

**ity** has four synonyms: *ticamība*, *uzticamība*, *noturīgums*, *drošums*, and **va-lidity** has three synonyms: *ticamība*, *pamatotība*, *validitāte*. From these figures we can conclude that there are another two English and Latvian terms that possess a degree of equivalence: **credibility** – *ticamība* and **dependability** – *uzticamība*. Nevertheless, in Latvian the term *pamatotība* is the most convenient equivalent of the English term **validity** (in Latvian, using the English borrowing *validitāte* is not recommended).

With the exception of the term **reliability** (which in Latvian has two partial synonyms), the other cases are devoid of synonymy.

All the terms given in bold (both English and Latvian) are used in the set of the 12 above-mentioned criteria terms.

THE USE OF ISO STANDARDS
OF TERMINOLOGY AS ONE OF THE MEANS
OF ENSURING CORRECT TRANSLATION

One of the best ways of ensuring correct translations in different fields of technology, economics, social sciences, etc. is to use International Terminology Standards. The Standards may be accessed not only by ter-minologists, but by everyone using terminology in their translation work.

The main goal of the International Standards is to provide a system-atic description of concepts in a specific field and to clarify the use of terms in this field. The main purpose of the International Standards is to abstract objects into concepts, which, in a special language, are repre-sented by designations and described by definitions. The set of designa-tions belonging to a special language constitutes the terminology of a specific subject field.

As an example, let us consider implementing ISO terminology in trans-lating documents of ICT, as in coining ICT terms we had to overcome numerous challenges (Borzovs, Ilziņa 2003). These standards are developed to have a unified vantage point on ICT terms, and the main aim of trans-lating them is to equip translators with a tool of finding Latvian equivalents to the corresponding English terms. New devices and new technologies are being launched almost every day, and to describe them and find the suit-able Latvian designation is sometimes rather difficult. In coining a new term, we try to follow with the main approaches to developing terminology imbedded in ISO 1087-1 *Terminology work. Vocabulary. Part 1: Theory and application*, e.g.:

- the usage of the existing word set and new coinages;
- the coining of terms through abbreviation;
- the coining of terms through transfer of meaning from another concept;
- the coining of terms through international term borrowings.

A good source of ICT terms is the set of ISO standards 2382 prepared by TC 4 *Information technology* representing the terms not only of data organization, representation, preparation and processing, but also of computer programming, programming languages, databases and distributed data processing. This entire process of integrated data processing is carried out using the special means and tools set out in security standards, to ensure that data protection, integrity, confidentiality and authentication is taken into consideration and a security level is maintained.

These standards not only establish ICT terms, but every term is supplemented with a definition, so the task of the translator is to check if the chosen term corresponds to the text it is used in.

During the last five years, Latvian terminologists have created approximately 2,500 Latvian ICT terms, equivalents of ISO 2382 standard terms. In addition to the previously coined ICT term databases, the database of these terms is of great value for Latvian ICT terminologists and translators (Ilziņa 2010).

Nevertheless, even terms of ISO standard do not cover every situation which may appear in text translation, and sometimes they include terms that reflect some metaphor or slang as well (Reizniece, Sīlis, Ilziņa, Borzovs 2005). In Latvian terminology they are not welcomed as Latvian terminologists would like to have a proper understanding of term semantics, but a metaphor represents some similarity between the two objects.

Recently, information has expanded from research and communication to a scientific product, spurring the all-pervading need to develop tools to protect the information against ingenious cybercrimes. Many new terms have been coined in this area, including some metaphors, like *virus, Trojan horse, piggyback entry, to scavenge.*

*Virus* (in Latvian *vīruss*) is an unsolicited program which attaches itself to other computer programs and, as they are accessed, performs different unwelcome actions, e.g., damages files, catalogues, computing results and erases memory.

*Trojan horse* (in Latvian *Trojas zirgs)* is a program which pretends to be harmless, but leads to unsanctioned data compiling, distortion and destruction.

*Piggyback entry* (in Latvian *pikpauniska piekļuve*) is unauthorized access to a data processing system using an authorized user's legitimate connection.

*To scavenge* (in Latvian *nesankcionēti rakņāties*) is to illegally hunt for sensitive information across the rest of the data.

A great challenge for the Latvian ICT terminology is represented by English slang, as rather often its meaning is not understandable. Nevertheless, as slang may sometimes express a relevant and common meaning, we have to coin a corresponding Latvian term. As an example we can mention two English words, which do not belong to the natural English language, that is *trolling* and *phishing. Trolling* means sending a false or foolish message to a chat room provoking other users in the chat room to reply and making them appear credulous and stupid. The Latvian equivalent for this term is *liekas diskusijas provocēšana* or *āzēšana.* The term *phishing* means luring users to the web disguised as the sites of actual organizations with the aim of illegally capturing their personal data. The corresponding Latvian term is *personas datu izmānīšana* or *pikšķerēšana.*

CONCLUSIONS

The term set of every field has to be developed, as new scientific fields are continuing to develop all the time. At present, it is necessary to find conformity with concepts and terms expressed in different languages.

Due to the large international interrelation, an opinion exists that all newly coined terms are predominantly borrowings. Nevertheless, by structural semantic analysis of the corresponding English and Latvian terms, we have found that as far as functioning is concerned, well-known terms of Latvian origin dominate.

When a word is applied as a term, it is important that the semantics of the word does not contradict the concept that it will express.

In translations, a certain degree of preference is given to internationalisms of Latin or Greek origin so that their semantics remain the same across languages.

One of the best ways of ensuring correct translations for different fields is to use the International standards on terminology.

The main task of coining Latvian ICT terminology is to judge the necessity of introducing various types of English borrowings, which means finding a balance between terms created on the basis of Latvian words and English borrowings.

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**VERTIMO ĮTAKA LATVIŲ TERMINOLOGIJOS RAIDAI**

Straipsnyje aptariamos problemos, kurios pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais iškyla latvių terminologijai, susiduriančiai su didžiuliu įvairių sričių naujų terminų srautu, ateinančiu iš anglų kalbos ir bandančiu įsitvirtinti latvių kalboje. Terminologai ir vertėjai turi susipažinti su naujomis žinių sritimis, kurti latviškų atitikmenų sudarymo būdus ir taisykles bei stengtis išlaikyti pusiausvyrą tarp latviškų terminų ir iš anglų kalbos perimamų skolinių.

Terminologams ir vertėjams labai padeda įvairių sričių latviškos terminijos duomenų bazės, kurios nuolat papildomos naujais latviškais terminais.

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