From IATE to IATE 2 or when technologies are agents of change and means to improve users' satisfaction

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Abstract

The migration to the revamped, modernised and upgraded InterActive Terminology for Europe, the EU's inter-institutional terminology database, is going through a thorough IT development process designed to produce a brand new tool built around some major requirements as detailed in this paper.

Keeping in mind all improvements required, as defined by a dedicated task force reporting to the IATE Management Group ('IMG'), or needed, due to the obsolescence of some technologies used over the last 12 years or to the availability of new technologies that could better serve users' needs. Taking into account the current state of a tool which had undergone corrective and evolutive maintenance over time with an increasing number of technical limitations, it was proposed and accepted to go for a brand new tool. The rebirth of IATE was announced.

Over the last two years the interinstitutional cooperation took a new rise: all Task Forces of the IMG brought ideas and expressed needs, while engaging in complementary activities, such as a vast cleaning of IATE entries.

The IATE 2 project deliverable will provide enhanced and new features to further improve terminology management. In conjunction with its collaborative platform, EurTerm, it will also strengthen collaborative working with stakeholders.

Keywords: Making life easier for users, responsive web design, integration with Computer Assisted Translation and Terminology (CATT) tools, improved collaborative working, improved return on investment.

1 Looking in the rear-view mirror

In the early 2000s, IATE was a very exciting and challenging project in the field of terminology. Originally born as a project of the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union for its clients¹, it gained a much larger dimension, bringing together Eurodicautom, Euterpe and TIS, the former terminology databases of, respectively, the **European Commission**, the **European Parliament**, and the **Council of the EU**, together with further databases and terminology assets of the current partners of the IATE project, i.e.:

- Court of Justice
- Court of Auditors
- European Economic & Social Committee/Committee of the Regions

¹ Johnson, I. & Macphail, A. (2000). IATE – Inter-Agency Terminology Exchange: Development of a Single Central Terminology Database for the Institutions and Agencies of the European Union (<u>http://mt-archive.info/LREC-2000-Johnson.pdf</u>)

- European Central Bank
- European Investment Bank
- Translation Centre for the Bodies of the EU

The result of this collaborative working is well known, the biggest terminology database in the world. The public (read-only) interface as shown below was released in June 2007 and achieved over 41 million hits in 2015.

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Prior to this, the internal interface as shown below was launched in the summer of 2004. It offers advanced features and different user rights for all EU linguists and drafters. Highly appreciated, IATE Internal had more than 17 million hits in 2015.

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Where the public version of the tool provides read only access to external users, the version used by internal linguists enables read-and-write access and includes additional features (*inter*

alia creation, consultation, editing, validation workflow², user management, content import and export), making IATE Internal a powerful and collaborative ('interactive') terminology management tool.

Hosted by the European Commission in Luxembourg, IATE is supported and developed by the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union and managed by the IATE Management Group ('IMG'), a working party composed of one member per institution or body³.

2 Technological evolutions in the translation world

IATE has undergone ad-hoc evolutive maintenance to satisfy emerging needs over time. In parallel, technologies implemented in the background went somehow old, if not obsolete for some of them or at least challenged by newer ones. Furthermore, translators', interpreters' and terminologists' needs had been evolving a lot since the early 2000s and some technologies contributed to the development and implementation of complementary and somehow competing tools. For example, the implementation of Computer Assisted Translation and Terminology (CATT) tools and Machine Translation (MT) engines, used in association with smaller tools helping translators to (meta)search terms and quotes, led to the redefinition of the processing of documents to be translated. The translation world was entering a new era.

Meanwhile it appeared that translators' reflexes were increasingly influenced by these new assisting technologies and tools, as they were helping them to win the race against shorter deadlines. Nevertheless as all linguistic assets used by such tools are not always of equal and constant quality, their concomitant use creates a perverse effect as some assets might be of different reliability or relevance.



² Johnson, I., Palos-Caravina, M.-J. (2000), 'Validation and Quality Control Issues in a new Web-Based, Interactive Terminology Database for the Institutions and Agencies of the European Union' in *Translating and the computer 22*, Aslib, London

³ <u>http://iate.europa.eu/faq/IATE_FAQ_EN.htm</u> 21

⁴ http://www.termcoord.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Vienna-LSP-2015.pdf

Alongside the implementation of improved and new (CATT) tools, a further step was taken with the introduction of a new mandatory stage into the translation workflow, i.e. the human / semi-automated / automated pre-processing of source documents, with i.a. referencing, pre-formatting, pre-translation with translation memories and MT.

The next step will be the integration of the automatic term recognition module that can be used with various formats and by many user groups. Part of IATE, this module will be the very first one of IATE 2 and will contribute to its increased return on investment.

3 New technologies to satisfy IATE users' needs and to enable the development of new features and enhanced functionalities

New needs emerged over time and numerous requests for improvements were expressed and satisfied. As a consequence, IATE had already been developed and improved on several occasions.

Ultimately, all task forces of the IATE Management Group brought ideas and expressed further needs. Among them, the Data Entry Task Force, renamed IATE 2 Task Force, had the mandate to define the requirements for IATE 2 and adopted a common and harmonised position and approach. They came to the conclusion that, further to technical enhancements, major evolutions were needed:



• New improved layout and look & feel

• Full-text search and predictive text

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• Easier data editing

- Advanced management of references (EUR-Lex)
- Early duplicate detection
- Communication tools (forum, tasks)
- Consolidation and project management tools
- My IATE panel (with user tasks, user statistics, i.a.)

Taking into account the further improvements required as defined above, and the additional ones needed due to the obsolescence of some aging technologies, it was proposed and subsequently agreed to build and create a new tool, IATE 2.

Following this, three main aspects had to be considered: the <u>technologies</u> to keep or to replace, the <u>IT architecture</u> and the <u>database</u> itself, i.e. the linguistic content.

In terms of technologies, several aspects had to be taken on-board, e.g.:

- Implementation of a responsive design (because of the use of laptops, tablets and smart phones)
- Interconnectivity
- More user-friendly interface
- Need for an improvement of the stemming feature

In view of the main needs expressed, the IATE Support & Development Team came to the conclusion that some technologies had to be replaced. For example, despite strong efforts in relation with one of the technologies used so far, no improvement could be achieved and a switch was decided, i.e. to adopt Elasticsearch and Lucene:

- The adaptability and transparency of these technologies, as well as the quality of the results achieved convinced the IATE Support & Development Team that these technologies are best suited to solve the issues detected by users and will allow for the improvement of the search function in IATE 2.
- A copy of the current Oracle database will be kept as back-up for contingency.

Consequently, the IT architecture and the infrastructure had to be redefined. Building on these results, the Support & Development IATE team and its Coordinator, hosted by the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union in Luxembourg, have already laid the first cornerstones of this large IT development project:

- Identifying which IATE parts can be re-used in IATE 2
- Setting-up development, test and user acceptance testing environments
- Selecting new technologies
- Adopting the Agile development practices
- Drafting prioritised user stories involving all stakeholders of the project

Whilst enhancement needs are defined, the foundations are now in place and the developments are on-going. Linguists can also expect over the next 18 months:

- For the current users of IATE Internal:
 - Early duplicate detection
 - Easier editing (creation/update modules)

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- Easier management of references (EUR-Lex)
- Enhanced collaboration and interoperability (APIs, web services)
- Enhanced management of terminology projects within the terminology database
- Quick reporting of problematic content or entries for merging/delete/review/complete in other languages
- On-line statistics on searches and search results
- Watch entries mechanisms
- Term recognition module integrated to Institutions' CATT tool

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- Improved feedback mechanism
- Communication tools (forum, tasks)
- o Contextual help
- My IATE dashboard (with user tasks, user stats, etc.)

- For the current users of IATE Internal and IATE Public:
 - o Full revamping of the user interfaces
 - Advanced search with combined filters
 - Full text search (search in identified database fields)
 - Enhanced indexation of data
 - Responsive design to respond to different target audiences and devices
 - o Accessibility

The third aspect, the linguistic content, is in the hands of all linguists, i.e. translators, language terminologists and central terminologists, with some input from external users and partners.

4 IATE entries

At the same time to the activities described above, it appeared as well necessary to work on the quality of the linguistic content of the tool to better meet users' needs. This is where the interinstitutional cooperation further advanced.

If we first look back through history again, all EU institutions and other project partners already had their own terminology databases when the idea of creating a single central terminology database took root. With objectives, benefits and main features already defined at an early stage, the biggest challenge was the merging of the existing terminology resources and, as a consequence, the consolidation of legacy⁵ terminology in this new tool.

Duplicates and incomplete entries were the 2 main issues identified at that time. Tools were used to detect problematic content but some 16 years after the initial launching of the project, it appears that only a part of the legacy data has been revised or updated.

Considering the growing availability of linguistic assets through various media, the obsolescence of some collections and the impact of the significant increase of the EU official languages, efforts have been (and are still) on the consolidation of duplicates, consolidation of the legacy data in all policy areas which are of relevance for translators at specific moments in time⁶.

A few years after the most recent enlargements of the European Union (2004, 2007 and 2013), the challenges in the field of terminology remain significant within a multilingual framework.

⁵ Rummel, D. & Ball, S. The IATE Project - Towards a Single Terminology Database for the European Union (<u>http://www.mt-archive.info/Aslib-2001-Rummel.pdf</u>)

⁶ Zorrilla-Agut, P. (2014). When IATE met LISE: LISE clean-up and consolidation tools take on the IATE challenge. In G. Budin & V. Lušicky (eds.), *Languages for Special Purposes in a Multilingual, Transcultural World, Proceedings of the 19th European Symposizem on Languages for Special Purposes, 8-10 July 2013, Vienna, Austria.* Vienna: University of Vienna, 536-545.

What are these challenges?

- Fill terminology gap between pre-2004 and post-2004 languages
 - Pre-2004: need for consolidation to reduce the "noise" in IATE
 - Post-2004: need for term creation to reduce the "silence" from IATE
 - "Noise" combined with "silence" means reduced efficiency
- Increase IATE quality
 - Increase number of IATE entries having definition, context and /or note ("added value")
 - Added value: IATE quality indicator

Or to present things differently:

Language	IATE entries (language level) 31.03.2015	Added value	Language	IATE entries (language level) 30.06.2016	Added value
FR	1 064 803	26,8%	FR	1 039 828	27,34%
EN	1 055 123	27,4%	EN	1 038 399	27,76%
DE	783 524	27,0%	DE	761 677	27,75%
IT	567 911	20,1%	ІТ	545 657	20,86%
NL	547 892	23,2%	NL	539 718	23,64%
ES	501 656	15,5%	DA	486 126	18,05%
DA	493 025	17,6%	ES	486 003	16,08%
EL	429 304	17,8%	EL	427 469	18,15%
PT	426 418	15,9%	PT	419 491	16,71%
FI	272 643	23,1%	FI	272 063	23,61%
SV	271 296	23,6%	SV	266 172	24,71%
GA	55 489	3,0%	PL	58 028	55,28%
PL	54 796	52,6%	GA	57 125	4,64%
LA	54 199	6,8%	LA	53 752	6,82%
LT	50 253	40,6%	LT	52 935	44,99%
ET	40 456	48,0%	ET	43 041	50,81%
SL	39 103	53,8%	SL	42 314	56,22%
MT	36 123	60,1%	MT	39 831	64,35%
CS	35 651	47,0%	SK	37 613	60,92%
SK	34 443	57,8%	CS	37 601	51,22%
RO	33 211	56,8%	RO	37 405	62,19%
BG	32 553	62,6%	BG	34 752	64,72%
HU	29 743	66,3%	HU	32 519	67,86%
LV	28 737	59,0%	LV	31 695	60,32%
HR	9 835	79,5%	HR	13 026	79,63%

Various features and methods have been defined and implemented to maintain and clean-up the database. This involves various stakeholders in all project partners, e.g. central terminology services, language terminologists, as well the IATE Support & Development Team. Each of them has a defined role and the combination of their activities ensures the sustainability of linguistic maintenance tasks and the steady enhancement of IATE entries.

All these background activities can be tracked, as the IATE history feature works reasonably well and keeps track of changes to individual fields. This will be retained in IATE 2, considering that this covers internal users' needs, as it makes it possible for them to check changes (who did what and when).

5 Improvement of the return on investment and linguistic content enhancement

The introduction of an automated pre-processing step for documents to be translated, similar to what is done with the translation memories technology, and the growing use of machine translation imply that efforts must be dedicated to the quality of the linguistic content re-used through such automation.

If we go back to the past and analyse previous comments, communications, activities and projects in the field of terminology quality management, it appears that it has been a recurring topic and concern⁷.

As a matter of fact, various strategies and punctual actions were developed and launched over the last 12 years, starting with the introduction and implementation of a validation workflow in IATE and the identification and merging or deletion of duplicates⁸.

As a basic principle, translators, language terminologists and central terminologists respectively have the following specific roles:

- feed the database on the fly,
- check and, where appropriate, validate the data inserted by translators, focus on added value data (e.g. definitions and contexts) and liaise with other terminologists of their language communities,
- coordinate work for all EU official languages, having a multilingual overview of the entries, and request work from language terminologists.

Even if they all have always been involved in the quality enhancement of the IATE database, the scope of the need has never been totally defined as such. Nevertheless, the necessity to improve translation quality thanks to the terminology quality enhancement has been explained and targeted in various publications and through some visible activities⁹.

Further to this, the interinstitutional cooperation in the field of terminology is a powerful driver of the IATE linguistic content enhancement. Central terminology services launch and coordinate multilingual terminology projects and ensure that entries are properly documented in IATE for consistency and precision purposes.

To ensure quality, terminology working is governed by a framework, is carried out according to work programmes and builds on consolidation work. Additionally, feedback received from users is of utmost importance. To broaden the scope of the consolidation work, strategies are defined to identify poor data.

In this context, the IATE Management Group and the central terminologists in most IATE partners play an important role in the quality efforts. IATE falls indeed under the shared responsibility of all EU institutions and bodies involved in the project.

The IMG deals mostly with technical and data management issues. It also handles other issues of interest for interinstitutional cooperation, like training, legal aspects of terminology work and terminology-related tools. The IMG established task forces and working groups to

⁷ Ball, S. (2003). Joined-up Terminology – The IATE system enters production. Translating and the Computer 25, November 2003. [London: ASLIB, 2003]

⁸ Zorrilla-Agut, P. (2013). When IATE met LISE. LSP Symposium - Vienna

Lušicky V. & Wissik T. (2012). Terminology: Don't only collect it, use it! Translating and the Computer Conference, London, 29-30 November 2012

⁹ Zorrilla-Agut, P. (2013). When IATE met LISE. LSP Symposium - Vienna

Lušicky V. & Wissik T. (2012). Terminology: Don't only collect it, use it! Translating and the Computer Conference, London, 29-30 November 2012v

consistently improve IATE, i.e. the interface and its features (through developments done by the IATE Support & Development Team), and the content of the database through various activities and channels:

- **<u>IATE Handbook Task Force</u>**: created to draft the <u>IATE Handbook</u>, a manual for terminologists working in IATE.
- **<u>Data Entry Task Force</u>**: initially created to look for ways to simplify the insertion of new data in IATE, it ended up with the task of drafting the specifications for a future version of IATE (IATE 2.0).
- <u>EurTerm Task Force</u>: ad hoc group discussing the management of the EurTerm collaborative platform.
- **Data Clean-Up Task Force**: created to look into ways of cleaning up the lowquality data in the IATE database to facilitate its integration with CATT tools and MT engines.
- **<u>IATE/Studio Integration Task Force</u>**: created to test and monitor the integration of IATE data into the Term Recognition module.
- <u>Normative Terminology Task Force</u>: created to look into better ways to identify and create sets of reliable data that can be made available through IATE for different purposes. Among them we find the creation of "authorities' tables" (used by the Publications Office) and the integration of IATE data into the CATT tool used by translators.
- <u>Task force for Interinstitutional Cooperation in the field of Terminology</u>: created by the Coordination Committee on Translation (CCT) to look into ways to increase cooperation in the field of terminology. It was not specifically speaking an IMG group, but most of its members were also members of the IMG.
- <u>Group of interinstitutional coordinators</u>: ad hoc group composed of the central terminology coordinators of the most active institutions in the field of terminology. They concentrate on avoiding duplication of efforts and on sharing information about projects underway in each institution. They also have the responsibility for submitting proposals to the IMG concerning data management or technical issues.
- <u>Interinstitutional Taxonomy Group</u>: created to set writing rules for updating Latin and MUL terms (abbreviations) on biological species (fish, animals, plants, micro-organisms, etc., and they also update these rules whenever necessary. This Group also initiates interinstitutional projects to further consolidate the IATE database with the ultimate aim of having a single entry for each taxon.
- <u>Interinstitutional Toponymy Group</u>: informal group created to deal with toponymic entries in IATE.

In the history of IATE, EU terminology services have continuously carried out recurring maintenance tasks, such as consolidation projects, targeted actions according to identified areas of interest, batch clean-up and updates of set of data spotted according to various criteria (e.g. low reliability, missing fields), duplicates, processing of feedback received from internal

and external user). Furthermore, they sometimes commit to broader clean-up projects (e.g. $LISE^{10}$).

The updating/cleaning of IATE entries remains an on-going activity. The overall amount of entries is around 1.4 million multilingual entries, which corresponds to some 8.7 million terms in more than 24 languages.

As mentioned previously, the Data Clean-up Task Force committed to the vast cleaning of IATE entries, whilst the requirements for IATE 2 were being defined. Since its creation at the end of 2014, the Data Clean-Up Task Force has been working intensively.

Several activities were launched by this task force, but even more options to explore were and are proposed, such as the:

- clean-up of terms with brackets and other weird characters,
- building of lists of multilingual duplicates (where the term is duplicated in several languages),
- extraction of entries from other institutions than the Commission with references pointing to Eurodicautom,
- identification and deletion of low quality collections,
- deletion of:
 - entries with "hyperterms" (i.e. where the main term contained as synonym its hyperterm (e.g. "crusher block" + "block")),
 - duplicated sets of entries (i.e. similar sets of entries (glossaries) that had been entered in IATE several times by different institutions).

In a theoretical perspective, various ISO standards of interest and established strategies to clean-up and maintain databases provide a valuable reference framework. However, it appears that IATE is quite unique considering the volume of its contents, with some collections dating back to the 1970s, and the number of languages covered. This particular clean-up effort is mostly driven by the need to eliminate noise from hitlists. This is of particular relevance when it comes to the implementation and systematic use of the Term Recognition Module as part of the automated linguistic pre-processing of files to be translated with a CATT tool.

In this context the Data Clean-up Task Force has identified several ways of selecting data of poor quality and has been deleting and merging content for more than a year now with the participation of all EU institutions. Tens of thousands of low-quality entries have already been deleted or merged and this is only a beginning in this framework. Its members recently focused their work on the clean-up of monolingual entries. Notably, they cause noise in the hitlists obtained by terminologists but this is not the case when it comes to the Term Recognition Module. The focus is now on bilingual entries in all EU pre-2004 official languages. To date, bilingual entries amount some 20% of all entries in IATE.

The clean-up of legacy data has been a recurring topic since the creation of the database¹¹, and it seems that it will remain as such, as the volume of the whole content proves to be an obstacle to the completion of this activity.

¹⁰ Lušicky V. & Wissik T. (2012). Terminology: Don't only collect it, use it! Translating and the Computer Conference, London, 29-30 November 2012

¹¹ Ball, S. (2003). Joined-up Terminology – The IA25 system enters production. Translating and the Computer 25, November 2003. [London: ASLIB, 2003]

Further to the possibilities mentioned and to the criteria defined above, some other strategies could and possibly should be investigated and defined, such as detecting:

- which entries never appears in hitlists results,
- internal inconsistencies (e.g. long terms containing terms already available in simpler entries but with different equivalents).

Nevertheless, considering respectively that:

- central terminologists concentrate on defined topics and areas that are most relevant for translators at specific times,
- the sheer volume of terms available for some languages (e.g. more than 1 million terms each for the English, French and German languages) and the number of staff that should be available to perform such an activity

Therefore priority is currently given to the strategies mentioned above.

6 Collaborative working

Beyond IATE and all the previous mentioned collaborative activities related to its use, feeding and maintenance with numerous stakeholders, another tool must be mentioned, EurTerm. This is the collaborative platform made available to internal translators and terminologists.



EurTerm is dedicated to the sharing of information, resources and of knowledge in the field of terminology between its users. It allows for synergies and collaborations, e.g. on terminology projects. Incidentally, it offers some features of interest for all internal linguists:

- A collection of institutional glossaries and external resources,
- Contact lists of EU terminologists and other experts,
- A calendar for all interinstitutional and international events concerning terminology.

Last but not least, it contains language wikis which can be used by all language communities in a very dynamic manner. Meant to facilitate communication and cooperation in terminology between institutions and with their national linguistic bodies, they contain collaborative spaces for terminology working for each language community and provide a platform for communication, information and knowledge exchange.

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Beyond internal collaborations, possibilities are increased by contacts and cooperation activities with:

- International Organisations for the sharing of terminology resources and to support some terminology projects,
- national authorities and experts for the access to specialised terminologies,
- universities, which make it possible for the academic community and the EU linguists' community to mutually benefit from each other (sharing of several terminology projects and recruitment of numerous trainees every year).

7 Conclusion

Perceived as a success of the interinstitutional cooperation, the IATE project fosters collaborations at various levels and enters a new era thanks to new technologies allowing for enhanced features which will better meet its users' needs.

From a practical, linguistic and terminology perspective, much of the work done in the background by highly motivated internal translators, language terminologists and central terminologists will contribute to the success of IATE 2, whose development is on-going.

IATE 2 in association with EurTerm, its collaborative platform, will continue to build on the achievements of IATE (Internal and Public). This next evolutive phase will sustain the contribution of the IATE project as a whole to the collaboration between linguists for the sake of translation quality. Beyond this, IATE 2 is anticipated to make it possible to take terminology management to a next step.

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- ISO/TC 159 Ergonomics

Johnson, Ian & Macphail, Alastair (2000). IATE – Inter-Agency Terminology Exchange: Development of a Single Central Terminology Database for the Institutions and Agencies of the European Union (<u>http://mt-archive.info/LREC-2000-Johnson.pdf</u>)

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