

2. Research rationale and research questions

Starting with a brief account of the European Union's language regime, I will describe the phenomenon of Eurolect and the EU's efforts to provide terminological resources. I would argue, however, that the latter are not sufficient to meet the needs of their users.

Contrary to the EU's official language policy with its current 23 official and working languages, which enjoy equal rights, English and French have established themselves as the Union's principal languages (Truchot 2003: 101). Consequently, as Caliendo (2004: 160) points out, Community legislation is not co-drafted in all the official and working languages but translated, with the first draft acting as the source text for translations into all the other languages. Unsurprisingly, preparatory work for legislation and drafting are mainly carried out in one of the so-called *de facto drafting languages* (Phillipson 2003: 120), i.e. English or French or, to a lesser extent, German. Nevertheless, all versions including the draft are considered original and are equally authoritative (Caliendo 2004: 160).

Drafting is often done by non-native speakers, which unavoidably has a negative impact on the quality of the documents (Caliendo 2004: 161). In this regard, Reichling notes:

"These are therefore false originals, written in a translated language, containing suspect terminology. Or they are written by a native speaker who knows nothing of the subject: all our Parliaments discuss subjects with which its members are scarcely familiar, our newspapers, even in their scientific and technical columns [sic!] are noted for their incorrect use of terms [...] There is therefore a growing hiatus between what a terminology should be – and what it sometimes is" (Reichling 1998: 2143).

This illustrates that the dominance of English and French is not only a highly political issue but also has far-reaching implications. In addition to the incorrect or inadequate use of terminology, it has brought about linguistic phenomena such as *franglais* or *frenghish*, a mixture of the two tongues, as well as "a lingo of terms, titles, references and abbreviations" that is comprehensible only to EU officials, yet shared by all members of the bureaucracy irrespective of their nationality and mother tongue (de Swaan 2001: 173).

Critics, in particular Eurosceptics, have often referred to this lingo – the EU's specific vocabulary – as *Eurospeak*. Scruton, a conservative British philosopher, defined *Eurospeak* as "the official language of the European

Union" and compared it to Marxist Newspeak, accusing the EU of using a language that "protects the privileges of the Eurocrats as effectively as Newspeak protected the power of Communists" ("Enter Newspeak": 41). In the conservative *European Journal*, former World Bank advisor Marsden warned EU citizens of being misled by EU jargon and contrasts "the ordinary meaning of words with the EC's [European Commission's] stated or apparent objectives" (Marsden 2000: 5). Peter Hain, British Minister of State for Europe at the time, called for "plain language, not virtually unintelligible Eurobabble understood only by a European elite" ("Europe must modernise": 4).

Criticism has also been expressed by linguists. For example, Tosi complains that the language of the EU institutions is continuously transformed into Eurospeak, which is not only disliked but hardly understood by most Europeans. He blames lexical vagueness and weak logical connections for making it sound abstract and awkward (Tosi 2005: 385). Pym criticises the syntactic complexity and distinctive terminology which he claims to be typical of EU documents (2000: 3). Features such as long convoluted sentences, connected subordinate clauses, the excessive use of nominalisations and jargon make it exceedingly difficult to get messages through to European citizens and therefore add to the public indifference to EU affairs (Pym 2000: 3-4).

On a more positive note, Caliendo uses the relatively neutral term *Eurolanguage* to refer to the language of European legislation, which she describes as a "functional vehicle for supranational communication" between the Member States and a "lingua franca for specialists in the same field" (2004: 163). She considers it a language for special purposes (LSP) that is used by experts in order to discuss technical issues and that has its own lexicon resulting from the need to constantly coin new words for new concepts in EU politics (Caliendo 2004: 163). Caliendo follows Goffin (1994 and 1998), who refers to the language used in Community texts as *Eurolect*, which is "no different in origin, semantic organization or morpho-syntagmatic characteristics from any other specialized dialect" (1994: 636). Eurolect exists and functions as a subsystem within the natural languages (1998: 2136), just as the creation of Eurolexemes is only natural, considering the need to describe and manage the mass of new concepts whose creation has been and will be necessary for the building of Europe (1994: 636).

The necessity of appropriate multilingual terminology in the EU has existed from the outset, with its own in-house terminology service being established as early as in 1958. It was organised and developed within the

Commission's Translation Service as terminological work was mainly needed to support translation (Reichling 1998: 2138). According to Goffin (1998: 2125), the work of the EU's terminographers evolved from the creation of modest bilingual collections of terminology to the production of extensive, illustrated multilingual dictionaries. While in many cases these products are collectively referred to as *vocabularies*, *phraseological dictionaries* or *glossaries*, Goffin prefers the term *terminographical work* to account for the fact that they represent translation-oriented, multilingual collections of critically compiled and documented terminologies designed for translators (Goffin 1998: 2125-2126; own translation³).

EURODICAUTOM, the European Commission's multilingual term bank designed at the beginning of the 1970s, used to be the backbone of EU-specific terminology (Reichling 1998: 2139). At the end of the 1990s, it was decided to combine it with several other databases, the most important ones being the Council's TIS (Terminological Information System) and the Parliament's EUTERPE (Exploitation Unifiée de la Terminologie au Parlement Européen), to form IATE⁴, which has been used by the EU institutions and agencies since summer 2004 (European Commission Website 2006). IATE is meant to provide a web-based infrastructure for all of the EU's terminology resources, integrating the terminological databases of the various institutions into a single one (European Communities Website 2007).

Despite this effort to create a single reference point for EU terminology, numerous other terminology resources still remain on EU websites, which can be classified into the following groups:

- Some Directorates General and agencies offer their own domain-specific glossaries, which not only differ in terms of structure, layout and contents but also show considerable discrepancies as to the number of terms offered as well as the level of detail and quality of the information given for each term.

3 "für Übersetzer bestimmte, übersetzungsorientierte, mehrsprachige Sammlungen von kritisch erarbeiteten, dokumentierten Terminologien. Unsererseits möchten wir zur Bezeichnung dieser Werke den Oberbegriff "Terminographische Arbeit" vorschlagen (Goffin 1998: 2125-2126).

4 At the project stage, IATE was said to stand for Inter-Agency Terminology Exchange. It is now, however, advertised as Inter-Active Terminology for Europe (URL: <http://iate.europa.eu/iatediff>).

- The European Commission maintains the EUROPA Glossary⁵, which focuses on general issues and institutional aspects. While the information it offers is certainly useful from a terminological point of view, its major shortcoming is the rather limited range of terms, i.e. only 233 entries, which results from the fact that it does not go into details of individual policy areas. For example, it contains only three terms in the field of development cooperation policy: *development aid*, *humanitarian aid* and *European Development Fund* (European Union Website 2006).
- The Directorate General for Development (DG Development), which is in charge of formulating the EU's development cooperation policy, offers – both electronically and in paper format – a manual called 'A to Z: List of Abbreviations' (European Commission 2004). This publication lists 271 entries, the majority of which represent acronyms relevant to the field of development cooperation policy, for which it provides the full terms and, in most cases, brief descriptions. Despite its title, some entries are clearly not abbreviations, e.g. *Cotonou Agreement* and *European Commission*, and may have been included on other grounds. The manual is undoubtedly of only limited use the more so as it dates back to 2004 and therefore does not contain the latest conceptual developments in the domain. Moreover, it merely lists the abbreviations and terms in alphabetic order without giving any contextual information or describing their relations with other terms. Hence users are not provided with sufficient information that allows them to see the bigger picture. Additionally, DG Development fails to explain the ideas on which the compilation of abbreviations is based. Therefore, several questions remain unanswered, e.g.: are the contents of the manual restricted to a particular time period? According to which criteria have the entries been selected? Which documents have been used to compile the data and why?

With regard to European development cooperation policy, the existing resources are clearly of limited relevance and usefulness. Not only is the above-mentioned manual the only publication in this domain that comes close to what may be considered a terminology resource, but a careful examination of the manual also reveals a number of deficiencies which can be seen as typical of conventional terminologies. As a matter of fact, there has not been any work in this field to date that provides more than just a superficial compilation of terms.

5 EUROPA Glossary website: http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/index_en.htm

There is therefore a great need for a thorough study of EU terminology in the field of development cooperation policy that tries to remedy the difficulties and defects of existing resources following the principles of terminological work suggested by academic research. This study aims to provide a comprehensive and systematic overview of the specialist lexicon of this domain and strives to answer the following research questions:

- What are the key concepts that constitute the European Union's development cooperation policy? In which terms do they manifest themselves?
- Which concepts (and terms) were used in the various stages of the European Union's development cooperation policy since 1957?
- In what ways have changes in the European Union's development cooperation policy been reflected in its terminology?
- In what manner has the terminology of the European Union's development cooperation policy been shaped by ideological beliefs?

It follows that the synchronic perspective providing a record of current terminology is complemented by an analysis of the terminologies of earlier eras of European development cooperation policy. According to Sager, a diachronic view enables the study of language development as it allows for revealing changes in the meaning of lexical items. In addition, it facilitates the identification of conceptual changes which may have been difficult to recognise otherwise (Sager 1990: 132). The need for a diachronic perspective is particularly evident considering the plurality of approaches the EU has followed in development cooperation policy since 1957, which is likely to have found its way into language.

