3. Terminology

3.1. Definition of key terms

According to Sager (1990: 3), the expression terminology has three different meanings. Firstly, it may refer to the theory that deals with the underlying principles and questions concerning the relationships between concepts and terms. It serves as the theoretical basis on which (terminological) activities are carried out (1990: 3). Section 3.2. deals with terminology in this sense.

Secondly, it may be used to refer to the field of activity that is concerned with the collection, description, processing and presentation of terms including the practices and methods used to this end (1990: 2-3). The terms practical terminology (Rey 1995: 135), terminological practice (Cabré 1999: 115), terminography and terminological work (Meyer and Mackintosh 1996: 259) are often used synonymously. Section 4, which sets out the methodological framework of this study, is mainly concerned with terminology in this sense. As scholars prefer terminography to terminology when referring to the practical task of producing dictionaries of terms (Meyer and Mackintosh 1996: 259; Meyer 2001: 279; Temmerman 2000: 230; Cabré 1999: 115), the expression terminography is predominantly used in this context, with the person who builds terminological dictionaries being referred to as terminographer (Meyer and Mackintosh 1996: 259). In fact, terminology is hardly ever used to describe the practice of describing terminological data.

Thirdly, terminology is also used to refer to the vocabulary of a particular subject field (Sager 1990: 3). The terminology of the European Union's development cooperation policy as the object of this research represents the term in its third meaning.

3.2. Development of the field

The study of terminology has a very long tradition, as the question of meaning and the problem of definition have been present in discussions of philosophers and logicians since ancient times (Pozzi 2001: 272). In the 18th and 19th centuries, scientists were the driving forces in terminology, with the naming of concepts in botany, chemistry and zoology being of particular importance. In the 20th century, engineers and technicians became involved since technological progress created the need for naming new concepts and agreeing on the use of terms (Cabré 1999: 1). It was only then that principles
and a methodology began to be developed, giving terminology its scientific orientation (Rey 1995: 49).

The Austrian engineer Eugen Wüster is considered the founder of modern terminology, emerging in the 1930s and leading to the development of the three classical schools of terminology: the Austrian (or Vienna) School, of which Wüster is the main representative, the Soviet School and the Prague School (Cabré 1999: 7). From these three centres of traditional terminology, interest in terminology spread to a number of regions, each of which has its own socio-political research environment and consequently research orientations (Cabré 1999: 12). The approach of the Nordic countries (Belgium and Scandinavia), with Laurén, Myking and Picht as their main representatives, is oriented towards the Vienna School (Pilke and Toft 2006: 36), whereas the priorities and theories of terminology research in Canada as well as in Romance language countries differ quite substantially from the ideas of Wüster and his disciples. The latter also holds true for the leading researchers in terminology of recent years: Juan C. Sager, M. Teresa Cabré and Rita Temmerman.

3.2.1. Traditional terminology: the Vienna School of Terminology

The Vienna School of Terminology is the best known and most elaborate of the three classical schools. Based on the work of Wüster, it has been further developed by Budin, Felber and Galinski.

Wüster regards terminology as an interdisciplinary but independent subject which links to other disciplines, viz. linguistics, ontology, logic, information science and the special subject fields (Felber 2001: 32). His "General Theory of Terminology"6 is concerned with the nature of concepts, conceptual relations, the relationships between terms and concepts as well as with assigning designations to concepts.

One of the key principles of Wüster's theory is the onomasiological approach. He claims that terminology has to start with the concept, which is considered independent from the term:

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6 Wüster, whose work was initially published in German, uses the term Allgemeine Terminologielehre. The English terms employed to describe Wüster's ideas in this book have been taken from two sources, viz. Felber 1984 and Temmerman 2000.
"Jede Terminologiearbeit geht von den Begriffen aus. [...] Das Reich der Begriffe wird in der Terminologie als unabhängig vom Reich der Benennungen (= Termini) angesehen" (Wüster 1991: 1).

Whereas lexicographers follow a semasiological approach, starting with the word and looking for its meaning, the onomasiological approach requires terminologists to start with the concept, which represents the meaning, and look for its name. Thus, the difference between semasiology and onomasiology is in the perspective from which the relationship between a word and its meaning is examined (Cabré 1999: 7-8; Sager 1990: 56; Temmerman 2000: 4-5).

In traditional terminology the concept represents a "unit of thought" (Wüster 1991: 8). It is a mental representation of an individual object and consists of a number of characteristics which serve to describe a certain quality of the object (Felber 1984: 115 and 117). Therefore, the concept corresponds to the "content of a term" (Wüster 1991: 8) or the "meaning of a term" (Felber 1984: 103). The idea of traditional terminology is to look at concepts as elements of "concept systems" in which the place of the individual concept depends on its relationship with other concepts (Temmerman 2000: 7).

The "terminological definition" refers to the description of a concept by means of known concepts (Wüster 1991: 33). With the concept being part of a concept system, its definition aims at a clear delineation of concepts within the same concept system. Wüster states:

"Die Definitionen aller Begriffe eines Begriffssystems müssen so aufeinander abgestimmt werden, daß die Begriffe klar voneinander abgegrenzt werden" (Wüster 1991: 33).

Wüster and later Felber distinguish between the "intensional" and the "extensional" definition. The former consists of "a specification of the characteristics of the concept to be defined" (Felber 1984: 160), whereas the latter is an "enumeration of all species, [sic!] which are at the same level of
abstraction, or of all individual objects belonging to the concept defined" (1984: 163).

Another key element of traditional terminology is the "designation"\textsuperscript{12}, i.e. a term which may be a word or a word group consisting of one or more morphemes (Wüster 1991: 36), permanently assigned to a concept, with the principle of univocity\textsuperscript{13} being of utmost importance. Univocity combines monosymy, which means that one concept has only one designation, and mononymy, which indicates that one term refers to only one concept. Thus, synonymy and polysemy are eliminated (Temmerman 2000: 10).

The permanent assignment of a concept to a term is either given by linguistic usage or carried out through a deliberate decision of individuals or specialists of terminology commissions (Felber 1984: 182). The latter is evidence of the importance of active language creation and shaping in traditional terminology, with the standardisation of terms\textsuperscript{14} as its main objective (Temmerman 2000: 10-11).

The prescriptive and normative character of Wüster's work is reflected in his quest for the harmonisation of terminology principles which led to the establishment of international organisations in the field of terminology, most importantly the Technical Committee 37 'Terminology' of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and Infoterm (Wüster 2004: 298; Budin 2006: 98).

\textbf{3.2.2. The Canadian approach to terminology}

Bilingual Canada has always been in a unique situation as regards terminology (L'Homme 2006: 56). Two governmental organisations conduct terminological work but they do so for different reasons and with different applications in mind. The overall focus of the federal government of Canada is translation, with a separate administrative agency, the Translation Bureau, responsible for the translation of all official texts from French to English and vice versa as well as for all questions related to specialised terminology (Cabré

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\textsuperscript{12} Benennung

\textsuperscript{13} Wüster uses the term \textit{eineindeutig} to describe the idea of univocity: "d.h., daß grundsätzlich jedem Begriff nur eine einzige Benennung zugeordnet ist, und umgekehrt. ... Es sollte also weder mehrdeutige Bennungen (Homonyme and Polyseme), noch Mehrfachbenennungen für einen Begriff (Synonyme) geben" (Wüster 1991: 87).

\textsuperscript{14} Sprachnormung (Wüster 1991: 97)
The federal government of Quebec has authorised the Office de la Langue Française to promote the French language, with terminology services being part of a broader language planning policy (Cabré 1999: 16 and 22).

According to L’Homme (2006: 55), Canadian terminology work at both the governmental and the academic level was initially influenced by the Vienna School but, driven by its specific needs and research priorities, soon developed several idiosyncratic features. Since the 1990s, terminology research has moved towards a conceptual corpus-based approach, with corpora and their application in terminology as one of the main research issues, especially in the work of the group around Ingrid Meyer at the University of Ottawa (L’Homme 2006: 62).

### 3.2.3. Recent developments in terminology

The use of texts and corpora has also been of great importance in terminology research in France and Spain, where researchers have taken a rather critical stance towards the prescriptive Wüsterian approach, creating a trend which is called socioterminology (Temmerman 2000: 31). Its representatives focus on the study of parole, i.e. real language use, acknowledging diversity in language and the variety of cultural and social settings (Costa 2006: 82 and 87).

An overview of activities in the field of terminology would not be complete without mentioning the names of three outstanding researchers who have contributed to the shaping of terminology theory and thus the further development of the discipline. Juan C. Sager, M. Teresa Cabré and Rita Temmerman may be regarded as the most influential researchers in terminology of recent years and simultaneously represent the most severe critics of the traditional school.

Sager denies the field of terminology the status of an independent discipline, claiming that

"there is no substantial body of literature which could support the proclamation of terminology as a separate discipline and there is not likely to be. Everything of import that can be said about terminology is more appropriately said in the context of linguistics or information science or computational linguistics" (Sager 1990: 1).

He views terminology as a number of practices around the creation, collection and explication of terms (Sager 1990: 1). Although Sager acknowledges the different approaches of lexicographers and terminologists, the former using
the semasiological, the latter following an onomasiological approach, he realises that practical terminology work is often similar to lexicography.

"In reality the onomasiological approach only characterises the scientist who has to find a name for a new concept [...] the terminologist, like the lexicographer, usually has an existing body of terms to start with. Only rarely is a terminologist involved in the process of naming an original concept" (Sager 1990: 56).

Sager argues for a corpus-based approach to lexical data collection, with terms being studied in the context of communicative situations. He accepts the existence of synonyms since "one concept can have as many linguistic representations as there are distinct communicative situations" (1990: 58) and also allows for homonymy, which means that a term has more than one meaning (1990: 59).

Sager considers the traditional approach to definition too strict a pattern to follow in practice (1990: 42). Instead, he sees definitions as part of the semantic specification of a term, which includes context and usage information (1990: 44). As a definition may be used by non-specialists in order to gain an understanding of a term, it is necessary to describe the term in a generally comprehensible way and to include encyclopaedic information (1990: 49).

Cabré regards Wüster's "General Theory of Terminology" as an "idealised theory of terms" (Cabré 1995: 14) which fails to take the real use of terms into account, with terminological data appearing in their natural environment in discourse and characterised by different registers, ambiguity and lack of regularity (Cabré 2003: 178). She recommends accepting the role of diversity in terminology in order to cope with the complexity and dynamics of reality, arguing that "terminology was born from diversity and owes much of its expansion to the diversity of its approaches, applications, functions, and training" (1995: 1).

Cabré's own contribution to a theory that may come up to the complexity of terms is called the Theory of Doors (Cabré 2003: 186). According to Cabré, the elements of terminology are the terminological units, which represent units of knowledge, units of language and units of communication. The description of a terminological unit must address these three dimensions and therefore contain a cognitive (the concept), linguistic (the term) and socio-communicative (the situation) aspect (2003: 183). The three dimensions represent the three doors that can be used to get direct access to the object at the centre of terminology, the terminological unit. This is most accurately explained by Cabré:
"The conceptual strand of a unit [...] may be the door to the description and explanation of terminological units, without thereby rejecting their multidimensionality. Equally, its linguistic strand is another door to description. [...] Even though we analyse them as linguistic units, they do not lose their cognitive and social nature. Finally, if we approach terminology via the door of communication we are faced with different communicative situations in which linguistic units share the expressive space with those of other systems of communication" (Cabré 2003: 187).

In her book *Towards New Ways of Terminology Description* (2000), Rita Temmerman, the leading researcher in what is now being called sociocognitive terminology, questions several basic ideas of traditional terminology. In general, she criticises the traditional school's objective of standardisation, observing that "vocabulary, which is part of language, is treated as if it could be standardised in the same way as types of paint and varnish or parts of aircraft and space vehicles" (2000: 12). Moreover, she considers several aspects of traditional terminology to be subject to wishful thinking. First, since many concepts are in fact anything but clear-cut, she doubts the possibility of clearly delineating concepts on the basis of a comparison of their characteristics (2000: 7). Furthermore, giving an intensional definition, which represents the preferred type of definition in traditional terminology, is simply not possible or sensible for many concepts (2007: 10). Temmerman also opposes the idea of univocity of terms as she has found evidence that "polysemy and synonymy are necessary (functional) and inevitable aspects of terminology" (2000: 14).

Sociocognitive terminology replaces the traditional concept approach with a category approach (Temmerman 2000: 65) and, in contrast to traditional terminology, does not start with concepts but with units of understanding most of which have a prototype structure and are therefore better referred to as categories (2000: 224). Instead of definitions which give the essential characteristics of concepts, units of understanding require definitions consisting of different modules of information that may carry more or less essential information depending on the type of unit of understanding (2000: 226). The univocity ideal in traditional terminology gives way to the view that polysemy and synonymy can be utilised to develop understanding and therefore have a functional purpose (2000: 133 and 228).