

Infoterm Annual Report 2004

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- 0 Introduction*
- 1 Standardization and related activities*
- 2 Project activities*
- 3 International Terminology Awards*
- 4 Association matters*
- 5 Conference activities*
- 6 Liaison activities*



Infoterm Annual Report 2004

Over the year 2004, Infoterm's activities concentrated on:

- Standardization activities especially geared towards fundamental methodology standards related to comprehensive content management, content integration and semantic interoperability;
- Engaging in joint activities with UNESCO;
- Promotion of and lobbying for terminology at international, regional and national levels;
- Provision of assistance to newly emerging terminology networks;
- Streamlining Infoterm Library's at the University of Applied Sciences Cologne.

As all Infoterm activities are highly interconnected in order to benefit from synergies, the foci mentioned above can be found in some or most of the project, conference, liaison as well as standardization activities listed below.

Standardization and related activities

ISO/TC 37 "Terminology and other language and content resources"

After 2000, ISO/TC 37 had defined its core competence in the "standardization of language-related aspects of content in the multilingual information and knowledge society". Intensive talks at a "strategic discussion" meeting of the Advisory Group of ISO/TC 37, held at UNESCO Headquarters on 19-20 August 2004, prior to its annual meetings week, led to the recommendation to extend ISO/TC 37's title to "Terminology and other language and content resources". Its scope should therefore be reformulated as follows "Standardization of principles, methods and applications relating to terminology and other language and content resources in the contexts of multilingual communication and cultural diversity".

The ISO/TC 37 meetings in Paris at AFNOR 2004-08-23-27 had the highest number of participants ever in the history of ISO/TC 37: nearly 100 delegates from more than 21 countries and many organizations in liaison with ISO/TC 37. During these meetings at TC level as well as at sub-committee level the above-mentioned recommendations were finetuned. Concerted ballots within the TC as well as within its SCs resulted in the new title and scope of ISO/TC 37, while those of the SCs still need to be finalized.

Thus topics, which are of crucial importance for the development of the semantic web, such as content integration, semantic interoperability and content management are now covered by the scope of ISO/TC 37.

Right after the ISO/TC 37 meetings, a special gathering on "Multimodal contents and data categories (metadata) took place on 27 August on the premises of the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), Paris. Representatives of standardizing bodies and project partners in EU projects on metadata tried to find an answer to the question "Who are the most important users of ISO/TC 37?". On the one hand, everybody is engaged in some kind of specialized or professional communication in spoken or written form. On the other hand, there is the new world of semantic networks, as well as the semantic web, knowledge ordering, ontologies, topic maps etc. Many people are striving for the same goal: to make knowledge 'processable' and thus easily available at everybody's fingertips. But there the next barrier is emerging: the lack of "semantic interoperability". Yet, various communities working on knowledge representation,

ordering and processing in different quarters are finally listening to each other for the sake of better understanding each others' approaches.

ISO-IEC-ITU-UN/ECE Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concerning standardization in the field of eBusiness

The MoU/MG defines eBusiness as covering the whole range of eCommerce, eProcurement, via ePayment up to mCommerce. On behalf of ISO/TC 37, Infoterm participated in the Management Group (MoU/MG) meetings in Geneva (2004-04-07/08) and Boston (2004-11-22/23), where it reported on strategic partnerships of ISO/TC 37, on the one hand, and ISO/TC 184/SC 4 and JTC 1/SC 32/WG 2, on the other hand. ISO/TC 37 was asked to provide a list of all its standards, which are of particular importance to multilingual activities, especially terminology standardization.

At the MoU/MG Meeting in Boston, some trends in eBusiness standardization became clear, which should lead to enhanced security for investment by companies and governments alike. For instance, some of the industry standards of OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards) in the field of eBusiness either have already become ISO standards or are in the process of becoming International Standards. The following standards can be considered "state-of-the-art" in electronic commerce:

- ebXML – eBusiness eXtensible Markup Language (ISO/TS 15000 parts 1-4);
- UBL 1.0 – Universal Business Language (to be further developed to UBL 1.1):
- CCTS 0.2 – Core Components Technical Specifications (ISO/TS 15000 part 5).

These standards allow versions and user interfaces in national languages, while guaranteeing full interoperability across national and language boundaries. The Danish government, therefore, decided to use UBL for its eProcurement implementations. Industry and governments, that develop "individual" solutions in eBusiness and eProcurement without taking account of these standardization trends at international level, are running the risk of huge "stranded investments".

In conjunction with a recommendation for an ISO/IEC strategy for maintenance and updating mechanisms (comprising existing maintenance agencies [MAs] and registration authorities [RAs] as well as future registries) for all kinds of federated repositories for metadata and data (values), Infoterm pointed out on various occasions that these MAs and RAs would also have to be supplemented by:

- typologies, taxonomies, nomenclatures, ontologies, ...
- data dictionaries
- data models, XML schemas and formats;
- metamodels
- interfaces
- (well specified and documented) software components
- syntactic communication protocols
- etc.

The organization of a world-wide network of such repositories for the sake of 'global semantic interoperability' under a coherent strategy would guarantee organizational interoperability and semantic interoperability throughout the 'semantic web', without which it cannot perform as efficiently and effectively as expected by its users. In this connection also,

- new methods for net-based distributed co-operative content development
- respective workflow management standards
- provisions to comply with copyright and other IPR management

will have to be formulated.

On-line Terminology Tutorial

Infoterm promoted the online tutorial on terminology standardization based on ISO/TC 37 standards, which was programmed by Public Works and Government Services of Canada (PWGSC) under a co-operation agreement with Infoterm. The Tutorial complies with Canadian CLF (Common Look and Feel) standards taking into account requirements for people with special needs. *The Pavel, Terminology Tutorial* is accessible via the Internet at the following address: <http://www.termium.com>.

For the moment, *The Pavel* is available in: French and English. A Spanish and a Portuguese versions are being developed and will be made available as soon as possible in the next few months. Infoterm has recommended to the Canadian government and to UNESCO to make *The Pavel* accessible to as many language communities as possible – preferably also in cooperation with UNESCO. A tool for sharing knowledge in terminology and standardization, the Tutorial is intended not only for members of Canada's federal public service, but also for other active national and international institutions and groups interested in producing glossaries and vocabularies in one or more languages and in harmonizing their own terminology. It allows users to become familiar with terminology and standardization at their own pace and to carry out work related to these activities within their organizations.

Project activities

TDCnet – European Network of Terminology Information and Documentation Centres

Infoterm continues to hold the secretariat of the TDCnet. In order to activate its documentation activities, talks were initiated between Infoterm and

- the EAFT (European Association for Terminology) concerning a Special Interest Group within the framework of the EAFT to continue TDCnet activities;
- UNESCO to implement some of the design aspects of ETIS (European Terminology Information Server) on its website as a contribution of the TDCnet to the multilingualism policy of UNESCO.

Co-operation with UNESCO

Co-operation with UNESCO Headquarters concentrated on two activities:

- the preparation of “Guidelines for Terminology Policies”
- co-ordination of standardization activities concerning content integration and semantic interoperability.

Created in 2000, the Information for All Programme provides a platform for international policy discussions and guidelines for action on preservation of information and universal access to it, participation of all in the emerging global information society and ethical, legal and societal consequences of ICT developments. On 27 May, the Austrian Commission for UNESCO created the Austrian Committee for UNESCO's Information for All Programme (Austrian IFAP Committee), on which Infoterm is represented. Its aim is to ensure the implementation of the Programme in Austria and to worldwide showcase Austrian good practices for the Information Society.

In 2003, one of UNESCO's long-term goals became “to achieve world-wide access to e-contents in all languages, improve the linguistic capabilities of users and create and develop tools for multilingual access to the Internet.” Since 2000, UNESCO intensified its activities to create better awareness for the important role of language in bridging the digital divide and building knowledge societies. In this connection it was recognized that the digital divide next to always

comprises access inequality, which in most cases is also a linguistic inequality. This linguistic inequality is largely due to the lack or inadequacy of terminology, which results in ‘functional illiteracy’ for accessing information and using the computer. This is the reason, why countries or language communities increasingly feel the need to formulate a systematic ‘terminology policy’ (comprising also a terminology planning implementation strategy) in order to improve their competitiveness in the era of globalization. Today’s accelerated globalization thus needs to be complemented by accelerated localization, i.e. the adaptation of goods and services (comprising also the required documentation) to comply with local cultural and linguistic norms. The complementarity of globalization and localization is referred to by the term ‘globalization’.

Guidelines for Terminology Policies

Given the fact that terminologies are

- primary means of domain-specific communication;
- a form of domain-specific knowledge representation (at the level of concepts);
- essential in higher education;
- important also for popularizing scientific-technical knowledge;
- indispensable for accessing knowledge via the Internet;

languages not comprising terminologies are not suitable for these functions.

Therefore, Infoterm teamed up with a group of experts to prepare “Guidelines for Terminology Policies” for UNESCO. These Guidelines provide a systematic framework for decision and policy makers to initiate such a policy in support of the long-term and sustainable development of their country or language community. They are useful to developing countries with less developed terminologies as well as to developed countries boasting of highly developed terminologies, terminological activities and an existing terminology market for terminological products and services.

Roadmap for methodology standards necessary to achieve ‘semantic interoperability’

UNESCO calls upon Member States and international organizations to encourage open access solutions including the formulation of technical and methodological standards for information exchange, portability and interoperability, as well as online accessibility of information. In this connection “Governments should promote the development and use of open, interoperable, non-discriminatory and demand-driven standards” (WSIS Action Plan). This in fact reflects the recommendations, which Infoterm had frequently voiced within the framework of UNESCO activities. It might be the beginning of a re-vitalization of UNESCO’s former pioneering role in the field of methodology standardization. Discussions are under way to assist UNESCO to develop a roadmap for methodology standards necessary to realize ‘semantic interoperability’ in the age of the ‘semantic web’.

Activities in Europe

Baltic Countries

There seems to be a great need for co-operation among the Baltic countries with respect to terminological activities. This is due to the fact that terminology is indispensable in any scientific-technical development – not to mention in the educational system – for the sake of the socio-economic wellbeing of a country or language community. The Austrian Commission for UNESCO requested Infoterm to provide input to the International Seminar on “Problems and tasks of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian terminology in the European Union”, which took place in Vilnius on 5 and 6 October 2004. The main purpose was to offer Infoterm’s assistance in getting experts from the Baltic countries involved in the activities of ISO/TC 37 and to help them in the creation of a “Baltic Terminology Council”, similar to the “German Terminology Council” (RaDT), whose usefulness has been proven over year.

Central and Eastern European Countries

In his capacity as member of the Think Tank of the Mobile Open Society through Wireless Technology, the Director of Infoterm attended the 3rd MOST Think Tank Summit & Conference: “Mobile Technology for European Integration and Growth”, held on 30 October in Bucharest and hosted by the Romanian Association for Electronic and Software Industries (ARIES).

About 100 participants from Central and Eastern European countries gathered in the splendid Romanian Parliament Building (the second largest building after the Pentagon) to listen to a number of pertinent presentations and discuss the issues related to the impact of mobile technology on Central and Eastern Europe society, education, content development etc.

Activities in Asian Countries

Open Forum on Metadata Registries (OMFR)

Not the least due to the co-operation with ISO/TC 37 experts in the last couple of years, ISO/IEC JTC/ 1/SC 32/WG 2 managed to clarify its terminology and massively improve its conceptions concerning metadata, data modelling and metadata registries. At present, ISO/TC 37 and SC 32 agreed to co-operate with respect to ‘semantic interoperability’ (which can be further sub-divided into syntactic interoperability, conceptual and pragmatic interoperability).

At the Open Forum on Metadata Registries (OFMR 2004) in Xian, China, 17-19 May, it was felt that there are still too many obstacles (administrative, legal and not the least psychological ones) against fully paperless processes, so that for the time being the attempt to render ‘conventional’ practices more efficient and effective could be the optimal approach in practical eBusiness implementation. In this connection, the ‘right’ – i.e. not too complex, but nevertheless comprehensive – content management geared towards extensive re-usability of data and resource-sharing (for instance by cooperative workflows) could well yield the best results.

Three projects in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea combined ebXML and UBL with metadata approaches and metadata registries as well as other kinds of unified content repositories. Such best practices avoid the normal ‘stove-pipe’ results of simplistic model approaches still common in programming and result in huge cost savings at national level – in fact benefiting everybody.

ISO/TC 37 and its basic methodology have become well appreciated in other quarters of standardization.

2004 China-Japan International Joint Forum for eCommerce Standardization

China with its booming economy is gaining importance in the world economy by the day, the number of today's five million SMEs is predicted to multiply during the next 5 to 10 years. China's economy is possibly developing in the direction of a European situation characterized by a majority of SMEs in a highly multilingual and multicultural environment. Therefore, China should be duly represented also in eBusiness standardization, including content interoperability standardization, at international level.

Infoterm contributed under the heading “Semantic Interoperability” to the “2004 China-Japan International Joint Forum for eCommerce Standardization”, which took place on 15/16 June in Tokyo and on 18 June in Beijing, jointly organized by EA-ECA (East Asia Electronic Commerce Association) and CNIS (China National Institute of Standardization, an Infoterm Member) and supported by OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards).

The response from the audiences indicated high interest in eBusiness matters in Japan and even more so in China, where CNIS is registering all organizations – whether public or private.

Infoterm arranged for a co-operation agreement between CEN/ISSS (the Information Society Standardization System of the European Committee for Standardization) and CNIS. The road has been also paved to have China represented not only in Workshops of CEN/ISSS, but also at international level in the Management Group of the ITU/ISO/IEC/UN-ECE Memorandum of Understanding (MoU/MG) concerning standardization in the field of eBusiness.

International Terminology Awards 2004

The **ITA/TFR Award 2004** (for outstanding achievements in theoretical/fundamental research in the field of terminology) was won by Ms. Marzia Sebastiani, of the Scuola Superiore di Lingue Moderne per Interpreti e Traduttori at the University of Bologna, Italy, for her thesis "Le parole del nostro lavoro corso multimediale di meccanica automobilistica in lingua inglese e tedesca per Ferrari SpA: approfondimento metodologico e messa a punto della componente terminologica-didattica". The Award was presented to her on 27 November on the occasion of the 2nd Terminology Summit in Barcelona. This award is sponsored by the European Association for Terminology (EAFT), which holds the Secretariat of the ITAs, the Association for Terminology and Knowledge Transfer (GTW) and Infoterm.

Association matters

The 16th Meeting of the Infoterm Executive Board was held on 24 August at AFNOR, Paris in conjunction with the ISO/TC 37 meetings.

Conference activities

Infoterm was actively involved in the following events:

Symposium on Terminology and Knowledge Management, organized by the German Society for Terminology, Cologne, Germany, 26-27 March 2004

20th Meeting of the "Rat für Deutschsprachige Terminologie" (RaDT) at the University of Applied Sciences Cologne, 28 March 2004 and at the German Commission for UNESCO, Bonn, 29 March 2004

12th Meeting of the MoU/MG, ISO Building, Geneva, 22-23 April 2004

ISO IEC JTC 1/SC 32 Conference on Metadata, Xian, China, 15-17 May 2004

General Assembly of the Austrian Commission for UNESCO, Vienna, Austria, 27 May 2004

2004 China-Japan International Joint Forum for eCommerce Standardization, Tokyo, Japan, 15-16 June, and Beijing, 18 June 2004

International Seminar on "Problems and tasks of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian terminology in the European Union", Vilnius, Lithuania, 5- 6 October 2004.

3rd MOST Think Tank Summit & Conference: "Mobile Technology for European Integration and Growth", Bucharest, Romania, 30 October 2004

21st Meeting of the "Rat für Deutschsprachige Terminologie" (RaDT), Vienna, 5-6 November 2004

13th Meeting of the MoU/MG, Boston, USA, 22-23 November 2004

Liaison activities

Infoterm is in liaison with a number of ISO/TCs, such as

- ISO/TC 37 “Terminology and other language resources (and its SC 1, SC 2, SC 3)
 - ISO/TC 46 “Information and documentation”
 - ISO/TC 154 “Graphical symbols”
 - ISO/TC 173/SC 2 “SC on Classification and terminology of the TC on Technical systems and aids for disabled or handicapped persons”
 - ISO/TC 176/SC 1 “SC on Concepts and terminology of the TC on Quality management and quality assurance”
- It represents ISO/TC 37 in the MoU/MG.

Infoterm is member or associate in:

- CEN/ISSS/EC – CEN/ISSS Workshop “Electronic Commerce”
- CEN/ISSS/eCAT – CEN/ISSS Workshop “Multilingual e-catalogues”
- RaDT – Council for German Terminology

It enjoys an official status with:

- UN/DPI (Department of Public Information of the United Nations in New York) as “Associate”
- WHO (World Health Organization) as “International Collaboration Centre for Terminology”
- ISONET (Information Network of ISO) as “Information Centre for Terminology Standardization”

and co-operates closely with:

- UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- ISO – International Organization for Standardization
- TermNet – International Network for Terminology
- IITF – International Institute for Terminology Research
- TDCnet – European Network of Terminology Information and Documentation Centres

For further information, please consult the Infoterm Website <http://linux.infoterm.org>