



UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
FACULTY OF
HUMANITIES

Contribution ID: 67

Type: **Presenters (Oral Presentation)** – Live ZOOM Presentation

Bilingual lexicographic resources in support of acquiring legal terminology for translation purposes

Friday, 29 April 2022 14:30 (20 minutes)

The support of bilingual lexicographic resources is crucial in mastering legal terminology both in the target and source language. The present study has focused on bilingual Latvian-English and English-Latvian printed and online lexicographic resources accessible for all parties interested in acquiring legal terminology in both languages, in particular in the light of the new school reform “School 2030” where translation is mentioned among other competences that should be developed already at school. Even though several bilingual legal terminological dictionaries have been published it must be recognised that currently there is no comprehensive Latvian-English-Latvian dictionary of legal terms. At present the success or failure in mastering legal terminology largely depends on the background knowledge of the user. Trends prevailing in the study process as well as in translation practice confirm a marked movement towards the use of lexicographic resources in the digital format. It should be noted that this format also offers considerable advantages in designing dictionaries in respect of their content, volume, structure and user-friendliness. Digital format would allow developing a comprehensive multilingual dictionary of legal terms involving collaboration among legal professionals, terminologists and lexicographers. The microstructure of this dictionary should include labels, glosses and illustrative examples giving additional information and contexts where legal terms are used, thus providing important information for diverse groups of users – learners, legal professionals, translators and interpreters.

Biographical note(s) of the author(s)

Laura Karpinska (Dr. philol.) is an Assistant Professor at the University of Latvia where she lectures in lexicography, lexicology, semiotics, and English for law. Her research interests include lexicography, lexicology and corpus linguistics. Her doctoral thesis “Critical Analysis of English-Latvian Lexicographic Tradition”, providing a survey of the development and characteristic features of this lexicographic tradition and offering solutions for improving the quality of English-Latvian dictionaries, was defended at the University of Latvia. A monograph based on the doctoral thesis was published by De Gruyter. She has also conducted research on various aspects of Latvian-English-Latvian dictionaries of legal terms.

Dace Liepiņa (Dr. paed.) is an Associate Professor at the University of Latvia where she lectures on Stylistics, Legal Translation and Interpreting, English for Law and Business. Her research interests include terminology, stylistics, translation and interpreting. During the EU pre-accession period she was involved in terminology development as an interpreter and translator for various PHARE projects on harmonization of Latvian legislation. After EU accession she has continued to follow developments in Latvian term-formation practice and quality of English-Latvian dictionaries in the field of law.

Recommendation (for student section)

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Session Classification: Terminology, translation and interpretation in LSP

Track Classification: In English: Multilingualism in LSP: Translation and interpretation in LSP