

Terms as linguistic and domain-specific units:

A translation perspective

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Abstract

Representation of specialized domain knowledge has been used in different forms and for several purposes in order to describe the system of concepts behind the terms of a certain domain. Terms and their relations are rather central in specialized texts and become even more important when texts are transferred into another language, i.e. within specialized translation. This paper explores two axes, both related to terminology, that intersect. The x axis represents specialized translation, and the y axis represents domain representation. On one hand, the x axis includes the different levels of equivalence in specialized translation starting with the narrower which includes words and also terms and goes up to the pragmatic level. The y axis represents levels of depth in domain representation. The point where these two axes intersect, the so-called “origin” or (0,0) point is where terms are found.

But what are terms, and more precisely what are terms for specialized translation? How can they and their relations be represented in the best possible way, so that this representation method can be of assistance for specialized translation? This paper is found at the intersection between domain representation and specialized translation. The analysis goes beyond terms as linguistic and domain units and discusses the needs of specialized translation and how they could be covered through a knowledge representation method in order for it to be a useful tool for translators of specialized texts.

Selected references

Baker, Mona (2011): *In Other Words. A coursebook on translation*. 2nd ed. London & New York: Routledge.

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