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WG 1 Multilingual glossary in neology

Task 1.1 Exploration of the Lambert-Lucas corpus

Deliverable 1.3: The drafting of glosses as a mediation for equivalence

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About this deliverable

As part of the ENEOLI Cost Action, WG1, *Multilingual Glossary of Neology*, focuses on developing an open-access glossary that defines key concepts in lexical innovation across multiple languages. Its primary goal is to ensure terminological clarity and consistency by identifying and systematizing the metaterminology used to describe and analyse neological processes, categories and phenomena. By establishing a standardised conceptual framework, the glossary facilitates interdisciplinary and multilingual discussions on neology.

WG1 actively drafts glosses to support equivalence across the various languages in multilingual neology thesaurus hosted on the ENEOLI Wikibase. The working group has undertaken extensive corpus-building efforts, compiling references in *NeoCorpus*, a Zotero-based database.

The validated terms (Silva et al., 2024 and 2025), which will serve as lemmas in the *Multilingual Glossary of Neology*, were derived from six recent French monographs on neology used as reference sources. These terms were then integrated into *NeoVoc*, a multilingual neology thesaurus hosted on the ENEOLI Wikibase. The group's current focus is on identifying equivalents in 26 languages, including Portuguese.

Glosses play a crucial role in this process, facilitating cross-linguistic equivalence and enhancing terminological precision. They not only support the structuring of knowledge by linking multilingual terminological data but also improve interoperability in digital lexicographic databases (Bowker, 2003, p. 112).

1. The role of glosses in multilingual terminology

Multilingual terminology refers to the systematic study and management of concepts and terms across multiple languages, ensuring that equivalent designations are accurately aligned in different linguistic and cultural contexts (ISO 704, 2009; Cabré, 1999). It plays a fundamental role in specialized communication, translation, and knowledge organization, allowing for precise and unambiguous exchange of information across linguistic boundaries (Temmerman, 2000).

According to Felber (1984), terminology work in a multilingual setting requires concept-based equivalence rather than direct lexical translation. This means that terminologists focus on defining concepts first and then identifying the most appropriate linguistic representations in each language. This approach helps manage cross-linguistic variation, conceptual discrepancies, and the influence of cultural factors on term usage.

Multilingual terminology is particularly important in emerging fields, such as lexical innovation or neology, where newly coined words or specialized terms often require careful definition and harmonization across languages to avoid misinterpretation (Sager, 1990).

Terminology in human sciences differs from technical terminology as it intersects with ordinary language and reflects theoretical diversity. While terminology in natural sciences and technology often follows a more standardized and universally accepted framework, terminology in human sciences is more closely linked to natural language, shaped by academic discourse, and influenced by various linguistic theories. In this context, linguistic terminology is positioned within theoretical frameworks, highlighting the fluidity and variability inherent in human sciences, in contrast to the more fixed nature of terms in natural sciences.

A gloss is understood as a concise explanation of a specific meaning of a lexical unit, designed to provide just enough information for users to distinguish between different concepts. In multilingual terminology

management, glosses play a crucial role in ensuring that terms are accurately and consistently aligned across languages (Svensén, 2009; Cabré, 1999). By offering brief but precise descriptions, glosses help terminologists, translators, and lexicographers navigate cross-linguistic equivalence, reducing ambiguities that may arise from polysemy and contextual variation (ISO 704, 2009).

This is relevant in the field of neology, where terms often exhibit multiple meanings and require precise clarification to avoid misinterpretation. For example, the term *mot-valise* in French and *palavra-valise* in Portuguese both refer to a word formed by blending two or more words, such as *brunch* (breakfast + lunch). However, *mot-valise* is more commonly used in French to refer specifically to blends with overlap, while in some contexts, *palavra-valise* may be used more broadly to describe any word-formation process that merges lexical units, extending beyond classic blending.

Additionally, glosses contribute to knowledge structuring by linking terminological data across multilingual resources, enhancing interoperability in digital lexicographic databases (Bowker, 2003).

2. Equivalence and variation in terminology

According to ISO 1087 (2019), equivalence refers to the relationship between designations in different languages that represent the same concept. For example, *néologisme* in French and *neologismo* in Portuguese are considered equivalent because they refer to the same phenomenon—a new lexical unit in a specific language.

On the other hand, variation concerns denominative diversity within a single language (Freixa, 2006). This can occur due to regional, stylistic, or diachronic factors. For instance, in Portuguese: *truncação* (Portugal) and *truncamento* (Brazil) refer to the same word-formation process but differ in their preferred usage depending on the linguistic variety; *afixação* and *derivação afixal* are sometimes used interchangeably to describe the process of adding affixes to a base form.

By including precisely crafted glosses, lexicographic resources ensure clarity when mapping equivalents or distinguishing between near-synonyms. For instance, in linguistic terminology, the concept of morpheme may vary depending on the theoretical framework: in structuralist approaches, it is seen as the smallest meaningful unit, while in generative grammar, it may be analyzed differently within morphological structures.

3. The importance of glosses in knowledge organisation

Glosses serve as an essential tool in structuring domain-specific knowledge. By providing concise explanations that distinguish between related concepts, glosses enhance conceptual clarity and ensure coherence in multilingual resources. For example, in digital humanities, glosses are crucial for linking terminological data across different knowledge systems, allowing for semantic interoperability.

Bowker (2003) notes that glosses contribute to terminological precision, making them a key element in database construction, text mining, and multilingual knowledge organization.

4. Glosses vs. Lexicographic definitions

Glosses and lexicographic definitions serve distinct functions in linguistic description (Bergenholtz & Tarp, 2010; Atkins & Rundell, 2008):

- Gloss: a concise explanation providing only essential distinguishing features, typically used for disambiguation. Glosses are often found in lexicographic databases, terminological resources, and computational applications (Svensén, 2009).
- Lexicographic definition: a detailed description elaborating on a lexical unit's meaning, usage, and linguistic context, often

including syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic aspects (Landau, 2001).

While lexicographic definitions aim to capture the meaning of words as they are used in everyday language, terminological definitions focus on precisely defining concepts within a specific field of knowledge. Terminological definitions prioritize clarity, consistency, and unambiguity to ensure accurate communication among specialists, while lexicographic definitions may reflect polysemy and variation inherent in natural language. As a result, terminological definitions are typically more rigid and standardized, whereas lexicographic definitions are more descriptive and context-sensitive.

Examples:

affix

Gloss: unit that is not autonomous and attaches to a base form.

The gloss highlights the fundamental properties of an affix: (i) it lacks autonomy (i.e., it cannot stand alone as a word); (ii) it attaches to a base form (indicating its dependent nature in word formation). The primary function of a gloss is disambiguation.

Lexicographic definition: a morpheme that is bound to a base form and contributes to its meaning or grammatical function without being able to stand alone as an independent word.

It expands on the concept by specifying: (i) that an affix is a morpheme (providing a linguistic classification); (ii) that it is bound to a base form (explicitly reinforcing its non-autonomous nature); (iii) that it modifies meaning or serves a grammatical function (clarifying its linguistic role); (iv) that it cannot stand alone as a word (stating a defining characteristic explicitly).

neology

Gloss: **process of creating new lexical units.**

The gloss provides a concise explanation by emphasizing the essential aspect of neology: (i) it is a process rather than a static phenomenon; (ii) it involves the creation of new lexical units.

Lexicographic definition: **process of forming new lexical units, either through morphological, semantic, or borrowing mechanisms, in response to communicative or cognitive needs within a language.**

This definition expands on the concept by specifying: (i) that neology is a dynamic process (rather than a single event); (ii) that it includes various mechanisms (morphological derivation, semantic shifts, borrowing, etc.); (iii) that it arises due to communicative or cognitive needs (contextual motivation); (iv) that newly formed units may enter the lexicon depending on their usage and acceptance (lexical integration criteria).

In summary, glosses streamline concept alignment and facilitate cross-linguistic comparisons, helping to map equivalent terms in multilingual contexts.

Lexicographic definitions offer a richer, more contextualized understanding of a lexical unit, making them indispensable in dictionary-making and linguistic analysis.

5. Conclusion and further steps

Gloss drafting in the ENEOLI framework is a fundamental process that enhances the consistency, usability, and cross-linguistic comparability of the Multilingual Glossary of Neology. By providing clear, concise, and contextually relevant glosses, WG1 supports the accurate alignment of neological terms across different linguistic and terminological systems, contributing to a robust and effective multilingual resource.

6. References

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Annexes

Annex A. Alphabetical order *(to be provided later)*