

TRANSLATION AND TRANSFER OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC REALITY

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Abstract:

Addressing the challenges of translating economic texts requires, first, an analysis of the economic system itself, its nature, content, forms, etc. The difference between the economic systems of different countries is a major problem in terms of translation, which involves transferring the economic reality of the source language into the economic reality of the target language. This paper will analyze in the first part some examples of terms and concepts considered untranslatable, and in the second part it will discuss some formal and structural elements specific for the economy of the European Union.

Key words: translation, economics, terminology, untranslatable, transfer

JEL classification: Y80

Addressing the challenges of translating economic texts involves, first, an analysis of the economic system itself, its nature, content, forms, etc., as the translation of an economic text represents a confrontation of different economic systems, even if they belong to the same economic system. The difference between the economic systems in different countries is a major problem in terms of translation involving the transfer of the economic reality from the source economic reality to the target economic reality. This paper will analyze, in the first part, some examples of terms and concepts considered untranslatable, and in the second part it will discuss some elements of formal and structural correspondence, as well as some elements and principles specific to the economic texts found within the European Community. In terms of quality, the final EU text translation must be a re-expression in the target language of the content of the original text observing the required parameters regarding semantics, style, spelling, etc. The translator must consider the fact that the European Community economic system is nowadays a supranational one and the economic strength of the acts of the European Union is superior to the economic strength of the national acts.

A quality translation should express the content of the source text keeping its style and it should contain forms used by native speakers of the target language, which involves identifying the semantic fields and the appropriate terminology as well as a clear understanding of the overall tone and message of the text, in order to provide the correct interpretation of the lexical items, collocations and phrases which they form, and evidently, the text as a whole. If the translator has managed to convey the nuances in the target text in a language that is grammatically and syntactically correct, it is assumed that the quality of the translation was achieved.

Several additional requirements are identified when translating a specialized text. International standardization of specialized languages imposes certain rules that must be observed in both the source language and the target language. The standardization phenomenon facilitates the task of the translator, but it also has its drawbacks. The specialized text consists largely of vocabulary and elements of the lexicon, so the translators should observe morphological, syntactic, lexical, etc. rules of the general language, but they also have to attach importance to the rules specific for the

specialized language. Another important element of the specialized language is that it uses many syntagmatic units and complex terminological units, causing additional translation difficulties according to the nature of each language.

Various studies have shown that most terms are composed of several lexical units, thus the difficulty consisting not only in the declination of nouns, plural formation, verb conjugation, which are common translation operations but it also consists in the correct order of all the elements constituting the compound unit. Knowledge of the terminology is not enough for a good translation, but it is an important aid to obtain a specialized translation, as the terminology defines and systematizes the concepts. (Hometkovksi, 2008: 206)

Economists and translators note that between different economic systems there are major structural differences, there is a different excerpt of the economic reality, notions and concepts without equivalents, hence there is a tendency that the economists have, first, to consider that some terms are untranslatable thus justifying loan and calque. (Hometkovksi, 2008: 207). Notional fields of different economic systems do not overlap completely. These difficulties encountered by economists are largely valid for translators. The difference between the economic systems in the different countries is a major problem in terms of translation, which involves the transfer of the economic reality of the source language into the economic reality of the target language.

Usually, for translating economic terms, the translator uses specialized bilingual and multilingual terminology sources for choosing the appropriate equivalents and contexts of use to confirm the correct term choice. If there is no equivalent in the dictionary, a descriptive (explanatory) translation is used or the original term is kept. (Hometkovksi, 2008: 209) However, the descriptive translation represents a solution to the economic texts belonging to only one state, i.e. one language only, whereas the transnational economic system requires a transfer of content using the same concepts, notions and equivalent categories throughout the union, as the Community economic system is based on values and principles valid for the entire geopolitical area.

Roger T. Bell (2000: 59-60) lists several competences a professional translator requires: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence.

a). Grammatical competence requires knowledge of code rules, vocabulary, word formation, pronunciation/spelling and sentence structure;

b). Sociolinguistic competence involves the necessary knowledge and ability to produce and understand context utterances, to perceive the real meaning intended by the subject, the status of participants, the purpose of interaction, etc.;

c). Discourse competence involves the ability to combine form and meaning in order to obtain written and oral texts of different genres with a unitary character.

d). Strategic competence involves mastery of communication strategies, with the purpose to improve communication.

Within the European institutions legislative, political, administrative and economic documents are translated being complex and rigorous in terms of form and content. In this kind of translation, repetition and strict rules of structure and style are signs of good practice in the official EU languages.

The table below shows the structure of Community documents, as depicted in the style guide for translators use - the *Acquis Communautaire*, with primary and secondary legislation. The main structural elements of the Community acts are the title, preamble, which includes introductory words, references and considerations; the operative, which includes general provisions, substantive provisions, transitional provisions, miscellaneous and final provisions. (1998: 43)

Table 1. The main structural elements of Community documents

EN	FR	DE	RO
Title	Titre	Titel	Titlu
Preambles	Préambule	Preämbel	Preambul
Citations	Visas	Bezugsvermerke	Referiri
Recitals	Considérants	Erwägungsgründe	Considerente
Enacting terms	Dispositif	Verfügender Teil	Partea dispozitivă
Subject matter	Objet	Gegenstand	Obiectul
Scope/Field of application	Étendue/Portée sau Champ/Domaine d'application	Geltungsbereich sau Anwendungsbereich	Sfera/Domeni ul de aplicare
Definitions	Définitions	Begriffsbestimmungen	Definiții
Subsidiary definitions	Définitions subsidiaries	Ergänzende Begriffs- bestimmungen	Definiții subsidiare
Rights and obligations	Droits et obligations	Rechte und Pflichten	Drepturi și obligații
Basic provisions	Dispositions de base	Grundbestimmungen	Dispoziții de fond
General provisions	Dispositions générales	Allgemeine Bestimmungen	Dispoziții generale
Procedural provisions	Dispositions procédurales	Verfahrensvorschriften	Dispoziții procedurale
Miscellaneous	Dispositions diverses	Sonstige Bestimmungen	Dispoziții diverse
Provisions			
Other provisions	Autres dispositions	Andere Bestimmungen	Alte dispoziții
Notification and reporting	Notification et rapports	Mitteilung und Berichte	Notificări și rapoarte
Technical adjustments	Adaptations techniques	Technische Anpassungen	Adaptări tehnice
Implementing measures	Mesures d'application	Durchführungsmaßnahmen	Dispoziții de aplicare
Transitional provisions	Dispositions transitoires	Übergangsbestimmungen	Dispoziții tranzitorii
Final provisions	Dispositions finales	Schlussbestimmungen	Dispoziții finale

The translators must remain faithful to the source text; in this case their role is not to interpret. The translated document must correspond formally (regarding structure and pattern) with the source text. This allows accurate identification of any position of the original text. The acts of the European Community legal and economic system follow this rule. The table below is an example of formal and structural correlation in (EU) Regulation 1173/2011 of the European Parliament of 16th November 2011 regarding the effective enforcement of budgetary surveillance in the euro area. One can also notice the parallel graphics related to text alignment and its formatting model: highlighting in bold the titles of the documents, writing complete words in capital letters. The translators are obliged to take account of these aspects in their translation formatting.

Table 2. (EU) Regulation 1173/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of 16th November 2011 to the effective enforcement of budgetary surveillance in the euro area.

RO	FR	EN
REGULAMENTUL (UE) NR. 1173/2011 AL PARLAMENTULUI EUROPEAN ȘI AL CONSILIULUI	RÈGLEMENT (UE) No 1173/2011 DU PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN ET DU CONSEIL	REGULATION (EU) No 1173/2011 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
din 16 noiembrie 2011	du 16 novembre 2011	of 16 November 2011
privind aplicarea eficientă a supravegherii bugetare în zona euro	sur la mise en oeuvre efficace de la surveillance budgétaire dans la zone euro	on the effective enforcement of budgetary surveillance in the euro area
PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN ȘI CONSILIUL UNIUNII EUROPENE,	LE PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN ET LE CONSEIL DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE,	THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,
având în vedere Tratatul privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene, în special articolul 136 coroborat cu articolul 121 alineatul (6),	vu le traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, et notamment son article 136, en liaison avec l'article 121, paragraphe 6,	Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 136, in combination with Article 121(6) thereof,
având în vedere propunerea Comisiei Europene,	vu la proposition de la Commission européenne,	Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,
după transmiterea proiectului de act legislativ parlamentelor naționale,	après transmission du projet d'acte législatif aux parlements nationaux,	After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,
având în vedere avizul Băncii Centrale Europene (1),	vu l'avis de la Banque centrale européenne (1),	Having regard to the opinion of the European Central Bank (1),
având în vedere avizul Comitetului Economic și Social European (2),	vu l'avis du Comité économique et social européen (2),	Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee (2),
hotărând în conformitate cu procedura legislativă ordinară(3),	statuant conformément à la procédure législative ordinaire(3),	Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure(3),
întrucât:	considérant ce qui suit:	Whereas:

(1) Statelor membre a căror monedă este euro le revine responsabilitatea și au un interes deosebit să aplice politici economice care promovează buna funcționare a uniunii economice și monetare și să evite politicile care pun în pericol funcționarea acesteia.	(1) Les États membres dont la monnaie est l'euro ont un intérêt et une responsabilité particuliers à mener des politiques économiques qui contribuent au bon fonctionnement de l'Union économique et monétaire et à éviter toute politique susceptible de le compromettre.	(1) Member States whose currency is the euro have a particular interest in and a responsibility to conduct economic policies that promote the proper functioning of the economic and monetary union and to avoid policies that jeopardise that functioning.
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Source: www.europa.eu

As a general observation, it is worth mentioning that the vocabulary used in the Romanian version as well as the English and French texts of the community acts has a very high proportion of neologisms of Romance origin: e.g. (Ro) *administrativ*/ (Fr) *administratif*/ (En) *administrative*; (Ro) *conformitate*/ (Fr) *conformité*/ (En) *conformity*; (Ro) *control*/ (Fr) *contrôle*/ (En) *control*; (Ro) *a corespunde*/ (Fr) *correspond*/ (En) *to correspond*; (Ro) *instituție*/ (Fr) *institution*/ (En) *institution*; (Ro) *procedură*/ (Fr) *procédure*/ (En) *procedure*; (Ro) *securitate*/ (Fr) *sécurité*/ (En) *security*. Most of these neologisms in the Community documents have an abstract sense and their congestion often creates a formal effect, on the one hand, and can create difficulties in understanding, on the other. (Cozma, 2006: 159) The following example is relevant in this case:

“Council Decision 1999/468/EC of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission” (cf. Romanian version) “Decizia Consiliului 1999/468/CE din 28 iunie 1999 de stabilire a modalităților de exercitare a competențelor de aplicare conferite de Comisie.”- 32003D0291 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/ro/index.htm>)

If the neologisms mentioned above are known to the ordinary speaker, it can also be noted that there are new categories of words that are recently created in Romanian through the process of derivation with suffixes and are unfamiliar to the natives: (En) *non-formal*/ (Fr) *non formelle*/ (Ro) *nonformal*; (En) *after-treatment*/ (Fr) *post-traitement*/ (Ro) *post-tratare*; (En) *cross-border*/ (Fr) *transfrontalière*/ (Ro) *transfrontalier*; (En) *non-road*/ (Fr) *non routiers*/ (Ro) *nerutier*, (En) *macromarketing*/ (Fr) *macro-marketing*/, (Ro) *macromarketing*. As these examples of the translated variants of the community documents illustrate, we might maintain this type of composed structure, offering Romanian equivalents formed through borrowings or calque (Newmark, 1988: 84). Although these words are known to the natives, they are not frequently used.

Regarding the legal and administrative terms, in the community documents there are more general or semi-technical terms that generally denominate instruments, as in organizations or procedures that help apply the law or the economic decisions. Such examples are: (En) *the Conciliation Committee*/ (Fr) *le comité de conciliation*/ (Ro) *comitetul de conciliere*; (En) *financial responsibility*/ (Fr) *responsabilité financière*/ (Ro) *responsabilitate financiară*; (En) *capital stock*/ (Fr) *action de capital*/ (Ro) *capital fix*, etc, even though these terms have a more general character than the accepted European terminology, this does not mean that these terms have not been acknowledged in the target-language. So, the translator that works in the European field has to carefully identify the official equivalents of these economic or legal terms, because, otherwise the translation might not fulfil its purpose.

Besides the fact that the community vocabulary resorts to borrowings, it can be noted the creation of new community concepts, that can be divided according to different criteria. Some examples would be the following:

a) neologism that denominate EU institutions: (Fr) *Agence européenne de gestion des frontières extérieures (FRONTEX)*/ (En) *European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union*, (Ro) *Agenția Europeană pentru Gestionarea Cooperării Operative la Frontierele Externe*; (Fr) *Communauté Économique Européenne*/ (En) *The European Economic Community*, (Ro) *Comunitatea Economică Europeană*; (En) *Paris traded options exchange*/ (Fr) *Marché des Options Négociable de Paris (MONEP)*, (Ro) *Piața opțiunilor negociabile din Paris*, (Fr) *Banc Centrale Européenne*/ (En) *The European Central Bank (ECB)*/ (Ro) *Banca Central Europeană (BCE)*, etc.;

b) abbreviation neologisms: *COREU*, *Coreper*, *Cosac*, *CIG*, *PESC*, *CMFBetc.*;

c) neologism formed from the root *euro-* from Europe or with the entire toponim: *euro*, *eurocrate*, *Euroland*, *eurotarifs*, *eurojust*, *EUROPOL*, *eEurope*, *Europe à la carte* etc.;

d) borrowed neologisms (from other languages or specialized terminology): (En) *antitrust*/ (Fr) *antitrust*/ (Ro) *antitrust*, (En) *comitology*/ (Fr) *comitologie*/ (Ro) *comitologie*, (En) *democratic deficit*/ (Fr) *déficit démocratique*, (Ro) *deficit democratic* etc.

e) neologisms that have in their structure proper names or toponisms: (En) *Schuman declaration*/ (Fr) *déclaration Schuman*/ (Ro) *declarația Schuman*, (En) *Maastricht criteria*/ (Fr) *critères de Maastricht*, (Ro) *criteriile Maastricht*, (En) *Schengen space*/ (Fr) *espace Schengen*/ (Ro) *spațiul Schengen*, (En) *the Luxembourg Compromise*/ (Fr) *compromis de Luxembourg*/ (Ro) *compromisul de la Luxemburg*, etc.

The problem of the community translators is that they have to translate terms that belong to different fields, so they have to do some research to be able to access, every time it is needed, the specialized information and terminology. Such an example could be the term *gilt* (En) that can be a linguistic trap, because it can be translated in various ways, according to the words associated with it. For example: *gilt-edged securities* – *hârtii de valoare sigură*, *gilt-edged papers* – *obligațiuni de aur*.

Hometkovski (2008: 211) also points some characteristics of the community texts:

a) The denomination of the issuing entity are to be translated in Romanian in its original form. The abbreviation is possible only in the original text of the legislator: Ex: LE PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN ET LE CONSEIL DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE – PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN ȘI CONSILIUL UNIUNII EUROPENE (and under no circumstance PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN ȘI CONSILIUL UE);

b) The difference of the denomination of the international organisms from the capital letter point of view: the Treaty establishing the European Community (*Treaty*, *European* și *Community* with capital letters) – le traité instituant la Communauté européenne (*Communauté* with capital letter, dar *traité* și *européenne* with small letter) – Tratatul de instituire a Comunității Europene (*Tratatul*, *Comunității* și *Europene* with capital letters). This agreement does not violate the paralelism under discussion and results from the specificity of the language, or even better from the standard applied to each language for the writing of the documents of the international organizations. The translator has to observe the language standards.

c) Geographical names of the regions, places etc., as well as the dates that appear on the European documents are to be translated according to the standards in force: (Fr) *Fait à Bruxelles, le 27 septembre 2001*/ (Ro) *Adoptată la Bruxelles, 27*

septembrie 2001/ (En) Done at Brussels, 27 September 2001; (Fr) La convention de Berne/ (Ro) Convenția de la Berna/ (En) The Berne Convention, etc.

d) Persons' proper names keep their original form while their positions are to be translated: (Fr) La présidente N. Fontaine/ (En) The President N. Fontaine/ (Ro) Președintele N. Fontaine. The feminine (Fr) La présidente is translated into Romanian using the masculine Președintele, although the DEX also recognizes the feminine form Președintă.

The translator that translates into Romanian has to pay attention to these standards. The characteristics mentioned above are of major importance in the translation of the European Community texts, because in some sources it is mentioned that the denomination of the authorities from the source-text has to be maintained in the target-text, and the translation has to be given between brackets.

e) The European documents, having more than one issuing entity, it is signed by representatives of all organisms. The translator cannot omit the name or the position from the documents, because these are part of the document.

For the correct translation of all technical elements and for the translators to be able to provide a correct rendering of the information there are lists and guides that have all the specificities mentioned above. For the texts in Romanian the European Institute from Romania (IER) published a Guide "Ghid stilistic de traducere în limba română pentru uzul traducătorilor acquis-ului comunitar", available on the web page of the IER (www.ier.ro).

From a quality point of view, the final translation of a community text implies rendering in the target-language the content of the original, following all the translation criteria – semantic, grammatical, stylistic, orthographic, etc. Making the political, economic and social relations international inevitably influences the economic vocabulary. The translators have to transmit all these evolutions, and the unification of the economic vocabulary. The harmonization of the economic system is an essential factor in their work.

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