

SPECIAL REPORT FROM THE TAMA TERMINOLOGY CONFERENCE

BY SUE ELLEN WRIGHT

The lure of *Sachertorte* and *Terminologie* drew a healthy off-season crowd to Vienna to participate in the recent TAMA '98, the fourth TermNet Symposium for Terminology in Advanced Microcomputer Applications held January 15-16. Organized by TermNet (the International Network for Terminology) and supported by Infoterm (The International Centre for Terminology), the conference was hosted by the United Nations Office Vienna (UNOV) and represents a growing cooperation between the United Nations Vienna Center, TermNet, and the University of Vienna. The program was packed with user-oriented presentations, ranging from terminology-management systems (TMS) to terminology-oriented Web applications, validation and quality-assurance projects, and interchange environments. A provocative roundtable discussion entitled, "Does the Electronic Terminology Market Meet User Expectations?" wrapped up the final session.

An address by yours truly on "Trends in Language Engineering" kicked off the program with an emphasis on integrated systems and the delivery of commercially viable, user-friendly products to a much broader audience than anyone could have imagined at the first TAMA conference in 1989.

Terminology Management Systems (TMS) and Workbench Environments

The early years of the TAMA conference often featured a proliferation of TMS options. In contrast, this year's conference reflected the gradual "shake-out" in the industry, which has produced market leaders like the Trados and the German Star families of products (represented respectively by users Klaus-Dirk Schmitz, Cologne University of Applied Sciences, and Birgit M. Hoppe, Star Deutschland). Together with the IBM Translation Manager (Guido Schmidt, IBM Deutschland), these systems all combine terminology management, translation memory, and machine-translation tools in integrated workbench environments.

The "new kid on the block" was Danterm for Everyone, a relational database application developed in Microsoft Access and designed to appeal to a wide range of TMS users. Based on the philosophy of the familiar Danterm data bank operated at the Copenhagen School of Business, the new Windows application represents an effort to incorporate a highly intelligent terminological data model with a user-friendly interface.

Another newcomer to the terminology-management scene was Igor Jourist Verlag, with its introduction of the Polyglossum electronic dictionary project and the Pars full-text translation pro-

gram, both of which focus on German-Russian-German translation capabilities.

Web and CD-ROM Applications

New delivery media for terminological products took center stage on the first day of the conference, with presentations from Ulrich Roos (Trados Stuttgart) and Pavla Stancikova (Center for Eco-Information and Terminology (CEIT) Bratislava). Roos demonstrated online resources such as Travlang, Logos, and Eurodicautom. His presentation of the Euterpe dictionary, which is also available in CD-ROM format from Trados (see page 38), highlighted Trados's MultiTerm Web Interface and MultiTerm Dictionary electronic-dictionary publishing software.

Stancikova also focused on Web and CD-ROM media for electronic terminology resources. She introduced the user-friendly Iris interface for CDS/ISIS data resources, which has made it possible for CEIT to implement a wide range of Infoterm information products in the form of a CD-ROM. CEIT also announced the availability of Micro CDS/ISIS-based resources at their new Webis-NT Web site (www.infoterm.or.at/ceit). The two media offer slightly different mixes of terminological data resources, bibliographical information, and such useful items as the ROOT (BSI) and TIT (AFNOR) thesauri.

Amid the strong emphasis on electronic media, Peter Schmitt (University of Leipzig) presented a persuasive explanation of the parameters involved in creating database-generated specialized printed dictionaries. His presentation was obviously designed to meet criticisms that have been directed at the frequent physical cross-references that occur in hardcopy formats as the result of the inevitable need to conserve space in hardcopy books and showed there is still room for development of hardcopy technology, provided all the parameters are mastered for delivering a high degree of detail.

Implementation Scenarios

Wearing his CMR TermSoft hat, Alan Melby reported on Medtronic Corporation's establishment of a centralized terminology database designed to meet the needs of the company's 10,000 employees worldwide. Melby described the integration of the Multiterm Plus TMS, supplemental data-management utilities, and a Web (company Intranet) interface designed to create and deliver a consistent, constantly updated terminology product.

Achim Blatt from the European Commission further underscored the integrated-systems approach with an overview of the EU

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working environment. He described the online full-text databases SDTVISTA (for EU original texts and translations) and CELEX (for legal texts). Other components in the system include SDT's own alignment tool, EURAMIS translation memory, machine translation, and document-related terminology applications. In addition to using customized solutions such as Trados Multiterm and Workbench, the EU is currently developing further integration tools, as well as an expert system designed to guide the user through text-related decision-making processes.

Data Validation and Quality


In an environment where institutions and enterprises are increasingly posting their terminology to the Web and agreeing to exchange terminology, the need to verify accuracy and applicability of individual resources becomes critical for the reuse of terminological data.

Khurshid Ahmad described efforts to use special subject-field corpora to identify term frequency. These data reflect natural consensus among subject-field experts and can be used for the validation of terminology resources. Speaking on behalf of the INTERVAL (Interlinguistic TERminology VALidation) project, Alexis Crespel outlined the goals of that project, i.e., to facilitate the reuse of terminology and thus reduce costs by creating tools for validating terminological resources. The current goal of the project is to acquire terminologies and validate terminological corpora in the fields of telecommunications and finance.

Data Interchange

Since integration, interaction, and data reusability were the recurring themes of the conference, it is not surprising that formats and procedures for data interchange also played a significant role. Johannes Ritzke (Gesellschaft für Multilinguale Systeme, GMS) presented the Open Lexicon Interchange Format (ÖLIF) designed within the framework of the OTELO (Open Translation Environment for Localization) project for exchanging lexical data among machine-translation systems.

Sue Ellen Wright, Klaus-Dirk Schmitz, and Alan Melby teamed up to present the basic aspects of MARTIF (ISO Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) 12200, Machine-Readable Terminology Interchange Format). Wright demonstrated data analysis, mapping, and modeling strategies based on the data categories contained in ISO/FDIS 12620, Data Categories. Schmitz presented a short introduction on the basic principles and formalisms of MARTIF as specified in ISO/FDIS 12200 and discussed the parameters of results of MARTIF testing conducted by the German work group in ISO TC 37.

Melby outlined current research designed to create a second-stage MARTIF-compliant format called "Blind" MARTIF. The object of this variation on the standard is to create a more restrictive environment where terminologists working in different environments can nonetheless interchange data without the prior negotiation currently assumed as a prerequisite for MARTIF Part 1. (For more on MARTIF, see *LI* 9.2.) 

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