

International Terminology Policy Standards

VIII EAFT Terminology Summit (2016)

Delyth Prys

Bangor University, Wales

d.prys@bangor.ac.uk

Ten years of Terminology Policies

- 2006: Guidelines for Designing Terminology Policies (UNESCO)
- 2007: Dublin seminar on Minority Languages and Terminology Policies (EAFT)
- 2010: New International Standards Organization standard to guide the development and implementation of terminology policies (ISO 29383:2010)
- 2016: ISO begins revision of 29383 standard

Main sections of ISO 29383:2010

4 Language planning and terminology planning

4.2 Language planning

4.3 Terminology planning

5 Formulating and implementing a terminology policy

6 Preparation, formulation and implementation of terminology policies

6.1 General

6.2 PHASE I – Preparation of the terminology policy

6.3 PHASE II – Formulation of the terminology policy

6.4 PHASE III – Implementation of the terminology policy

6.5 PHASE IV – Sustaining the terminology infrastructure

Annex A (informative) Tools for stakeholder analysis

Annex B (informative) Example of an authentic corporate terminology policy

“This International Standard provides policy makers in governments, administration, non-profit and commercial organizations with guidelines and a methodology for the development and implementation of a comprehensive policy or strategy concerning the planning and management of terminology”.

Terminology Policies for All?

- Business and industry
- Governments and public institutions
- Voluntary organisations and NGOs
- Language planners
- For languages with any number of speakers, from any socio-economic background
-which is why it comes under the Socioterminology Working Group in ISO TC37/SC1

Importance of terminology policies

- For multilingual communication
- For exports and the global economy
- For the European single market
- For public administration
- For digital technologies
- For language planning, status planning, corpus planning, language revitalization....

Despite its wide remit....

ISO 29383:2010 has been deemed a success:

- “In general I think it has become quite a reference in the International Organizations”.
- “ISO 29383 is a module taught in all the ECQA trainings and at TSS”.
- “This standard is a very important document...for a number of developing countries faced with problems of managing the use of languages”.

Based on sound scientific principles

“Key success factors for terminology policies include them being:

- evidence-based;
- visionary (long-term view);
- based on standards and quality management;
- support driven (top-down); participatory (bottom-up);
- sustainable;
- consistent and forceful;
- participatory and empowering;
- transparent and informed;
- geared towards capacity building”

(from ISO 29383:2010)

But how do we measure success?

- ✓ Useful tool for international organisations
- ✓ Used in terminology training and education
- ✓ Used in language planning

Not necessarily that it helped write good terminology policies!

Revision process

- ISO has regular cycles to confirm, revise or update standards
- Member bodies are invited to comment and vote whether revision is needed
- Committee process used to update standard based on consensus

Initial comments received

- Need to add a section on the evaluation of language policies policy and terminology policy
- Document should be updated to reflect the new technology
- More concrete examples need to be included
- Look at the mutual interdependence of terminology planning and terminology policies
- Improve annexes, especially the example of corporate terminology policy

Other considerations

- Should it contain a section on language policy or even a separate new standard?
- Given that this standard is used in teaching terminology, how do we capitalize on this?
- Should it elaborate further on policy/planning for translators? (maybe under an update on technology?)

Help from Academia

(some PhDs referencing ISO standards)

- Juan Carlos Díaz Vásquez (2010) *The influence of International Terminology Standard ISO 29383 in the context of Colombian exports*
- Úna Bhreathnach (2011) *A best-practice model for term planning*
- Abolfazl Zarnikhi (2016) *Towards a Systemic Model for Terminology Planning*

“The treatment of terminology as a commodity to be standardised, along with the authority of ISO, has stunted research rather than fostering it, according to Temmerman (2000, 14). This may suggest an uneasy relationship between ISO and academia, as well as between ISO and language planning.....ISO could perhaps be seen to address the linguistic system orientation and the translation orientation of terminology but not the language-planning orientation, except for ISO 29383:2010”.

(Una Bhreathnach)

“There appears to be a conflict in the literature between the ideal as suggested by ISO and a pragmatic description of actual terminology work.....The main value of the ISO standards is, perhaps, to establish precise definitions and descriptions of fundamental aspects of terminology. They also establish the norm for terminology resource creation and evaluation, and provide guidance on some – chiefly commercial – aspects of socioterminology”.

(Una Bhreathnach)

“The international effort on the standardization of terminology can positively influence the improvement of developing economies. The application of terminology standards is a development factor not only in specialized communication of a given sector, but also as a necessary element in the process of quality management, within which standardization is increasingly becoming a part of success in the international trade”.

(Juan Carlos Díaz Vásquez)

Conclusions

- ISO 29383:2010 has succeeded in providing guidance for widely differing situations
- It has proved unexpectedly popular as a teaching tool
- It has generated new academic research despite the “uneasy relationship between ISO and academia”
- A revision can hopefully take on board comments through the usual committee processes but also from academic research and the wider terminology community, including EAFT.