ABSTRACT

Malta's accession to the European Union in 2004 heralded a historic phase in the development of the Maltese language. Through recognition of Maltese as an offical EU language, an unprecedented volume of content has been constantly produced and published and, seven years on, the available corpus of Maltese texts has increased exponentially.

Particularly on the internet, most content in Maltese is thatproduced on a daily basis by translators and other language workers in the European institutions. These translations (and also some original texts) originate out of the legal obligation to translate the bulk of the content produced by the European Union, from legal texts to websites and varied informative material into Maltese.

This development has created the need for new terminology, which frequently has to be coined rapidly and have an immediate reliability. The translation of most EU texts has also meant that, for the first time in history, the Maltese language been confronted with the need to develop terminology to express a plethora of complex concepts (eg. in the scientific field) which had never been dealt with due to the prevalence of use of English in certain domains.

In the European Commission's case, terminology creation is of paramount importance due to the fact that this particular institution is the prime originator of legislation and therefore the prime source of conceptualisation. This presentation will give an overview of the powerful multilingual IATE (Interactive Terminology for Europe) database, whilst discussing its great potential for the development of various aspects of Maltese language and linguistic policy. Itwill also present a number of case studies of how Maltese terminologists at the Commission have compiled glossaries of challenging terminology in problematic semantic fields. This will involve, inter alia, the various strategies used in coining, extraction and creation of technical and other specific terminology, and also ways of redeploying availble terms for newer or more specific uses, thus using 'historical' terms to express finer differences in emaning and register.